

Conservation Connections

Newsletter of Plateau Restoration from Moab, Utah

Winter 2014

Service, Science, Education and Exploration since 1995



Enjoying a wonderful spring hike on a Geotour in Natural Bridges National Monument with a family from Connecticut.

Volunteer & Outdoor Programs Update

Once again, PRI continues to draw groups of students from universities and colleges across the country for our Alternative Spring Breaks, as well as for service-learning opportunities at other times of the year. We welcomed three new colleges this year from our own backyard: Snow College, Ephraim, UT, Fort Lewis College, Durango, CO and Weber State University, Ogden, UT, in addition to

Colorado Outward Bound School and several returning schools.

Our non-service education program, Moab Geotours is expanding its reach. We hosted several other schools and dozens of curious visitors on educational journeys, including Colorado River trips and exploration of our nearby Parks. These programs are gaining a reputation of delivering highest quality, up-to-

date education, while enlightening the public about threats to these remarkable lands, in particular, climate change, oil and gas development and unsustainable recreation.

In addition to conducting our programs, PRI continues to be of specialized service to our partner organizations, Canyonlands Field Institute and Four Corners School with instruction and support on conservation projects.

Inside this issue:

Fast Facts	2
Canyonlands 50th	2
Candid Quotes	2
Tribute to Martin Litton	3
Farewell Robert Wood	3
Conservation projects	3
About Plateau Restoration	4



Students from Sheridan College, WY communing on the water during an overnight educational river trip on the Colorado.



Verde Valley High School students ready to begin seeding lower Pinhook Draw above Castle Valley during a fall service-learning program.



Participants in the 2014 River Rendezvous join together for a service project in Professor Valley at the old Canyonlands Field Institute field camp.

Quality Presentations Continue at the Rendezvous

For the sixth year the River Rendezvous featured outstanding presentations and films, plus a volunteer project and river trip. This year the event took place over two weekends, with outdoor activities on October 25 and 26 and indoor presentations and films at the historic Star Hall on the following Saturday.

A small group from Moab, Colorado, the Netherlands and Salt Lake joined us for the traditional service project, replacing

an old wooden fence with a new range fence at CFI's former field camp. The new fence will protect a freshly seeded area of the old camp, which relocated this spring. After finishing the project, we gathered at the Plateau home-office over-looking the Moab Valley for dinner and lively conversation.



Colorado boat builder, Marc Tittle shows off his replica cataract boat and discusses building plans in front of Star Hall during a break.

.....Cont. on page 2

River Rendezvous (cont.)

The day for the river trip, Sunday Oct. 26th was in the 70's, a beautiful, clear day but, winds being predicted, we set up our boats with paddle assist and miles went by without much effort. We stopped for a river side lunch, hike and presentations by Tamsin McCormick on geology and by Roy Webb about local river history. Our take out was at Red



Roy Webb, of Univ. of Utah, gives a river history presentation on the beach during the river trip.

Cliffs Lodge; after all boats were on the trailer, we stopped in for afternoon snacks and drinks before the drive back. A great weekend with new and old friends.

The indoor symposium on Nov. 1st at Star Hall began with a presentation by Utah Wildlife Resources staff on native and non-native fish of the Colorado River. Two boats they use for research were set up outside and after the indoor presentation, we enjoyed a demonstration and discussion of the equipment and methods used.

Geology Prof. Andres Aslan, from Colorado Mesa University, came once again. He gave a lively, informative presentation on the age of Westwater Canyon and abandonment of Unaweep Canyon, based on composition of river cobbles, at 0.8-1.4 million years.

Cody Perry of Rig to Flip treated us

to a first showing of his superb new film about changes to Warm Springs Rapid on the Yampa River, before we broke for dinner. The dinner-time social and drawing for great prizes, generously donated by Northwest River Supply and Canyon Voyages, was held at Eddie McStiff's restaurant.

The final two-hour presentation, after dinner, was truly amazing: a sneak peek of the feature-length film, "Les Voyageurs Sans Trace" by Ian McCluskey. This is the true story of the French trio that that kayaked the Green and Colorado Rivers from Wyoming to Lee's Ferry in 1938. It was simply outstanding and Ian received a standing ovation at the conclusion.

Many thanks to all the speakers and sponsors, NRS, CV and the University of Utah. See more photos and articles at: www.MoabRiverRendezvous.com.

Fast Facts—Wildlife

"Let nature be your teacher" William Wordsworth

Great Blue Heron

Type: Bird
Diet: Carnivore
Avg. Life Span: 15 years
Size: Body 3.2 to 4.5 ft.
Wingspan 5.5 to 6.6 ft.
Wt: 4.6 to 7.3 lbs.
Group name: Colony
Did you know? Though they are best known as fishers, mice constitute a large part of their diet along with insects.

Source:
NationalGeographic.com

Bobcat

Type: Mammal
Diet: Carnivore
Avg. life span: 10 to 12 years
Wt: 11 to 30 lbs.
Did you know? The Bobcat is the most abundant wild cat in the U.S. and has the greatest range of all North American cats.

River Catfish

Type: Fish
Diet: Omnivore
Avg. life span: unknown
Wt: Up to 99 lbs.
Did you know? One in every four freshwater fish, and one in every 10 of the world's fish is a catfish.

Prairie Dog

Type: Mammal
Diet: Herbivore
Avg. lifespan: 3 to 4 years
Size: Head and body: 12 to 15 inches
Tail: 3 to 4 inches
Wt: 2 to 4 lbs.
Group name: Town
Did you know? The largest recorded prairie dog town covered 25,000 sq. miles. And this Texas location was home to four hundred million prairie dogs.

Candid Quotes

"You've still got to try to save the Earth, even though we know its hopeless— it's too late. But that's when great, heroic things are done— when you're going down with the ship."

Martin Litton

"Any glimpse into the life of an animal quickens our own and makes it so much the larger and better in every way."

John Muir

PRI is a part of Canyonlands N.P. 50th

Plateau Restoration played an active role in the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the establishment of Canyonlands National Park. Canyonlands became a National Park on Sept. 12, 1964 when President Johnson signed the bill. Our founder, Michael Dean Smith, who was a backcountry patrol ranger at the Needles in the late 1980's, signed on as a host/driver of a van shuttle of speakers for the dinner at the Squaw Flat Campground. Speakers Terry Tempest Williams and former Superintendent Walt Dabney were among his passengers. Some insightful conversation

took place during the ride about the possible park expansion and new boundaries it might have in the future. It is exciting to think that this could happen during the next two years, over 20 years since the concept was initiated.

Michael attended some of the employee/alumni gatherings and was lucky to hook up with some of his old crew at Needles and meet some of the current staff. An outstanding cowboy meal was provided as Bates Wilson would have wanted it. Thanks so much to the Park and the Bates Wilson Fund for letting us help with this great event.



A great crowd for the Canyonlands 50 gathering.

Conservation From The Ground Up

PRI is involved in several long-term on-the-ground projects along the Colorado River and in the mountains. With some help from volunteers, we are continuing revegetation at Jackson Bottom, a 65-acre riparian restoration project on land owned by Intrepid Potash. Our restoration is following mechanical clearing of Tamarisk, a non-native invasive riparian shrub.



Activities this year included making about 1 acre of new clearings in dead and dying Tamarisk thickets, planting these with trees, shrubs and grasses and seeding with a blend of species, with three forbs for pollinators. Results from this seeding has been remarkable and plantings continue to show impressive survival rates, with shade from the remaining Tamarisk.

Working with several partners, we started a project treating resprouts of Tamarisk that had been previously cleared from conservation properties, including Bobcat Ranch, near Cisco and Peach Beach, which is owned by Nature Conservancy.

Positive results from seeding (left): purple Rocky Mountain beeplant flourishes in a clearing in the Tamarisk at our Jackson Bottom riparian restoration project.

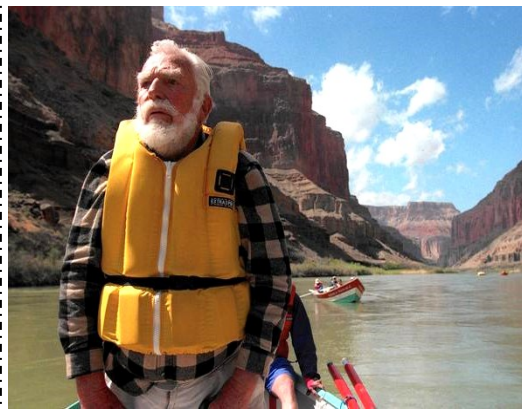
Following up our revegetation efforts from 2009 through 2011 in upper Castle Valley, after the Porcupine Ranch Fire, we seeded over 200 acres of lower Pinhook Valley with 800lbs of seed to help prevent more erosion. We are delighted to help again with this valuable project.



Non-native Tamarisk is the target of our spraying at the 167-acre Bobcat Ranch (above), located along the Colorado River near Cisco.

Tribute to Martin Litton

One of the true heroes of the conservation movement, Martin Litton has died at 97. Martin was a boatman, pilot, writer and photographer but above all he was a passionate defender of wild places. **"Nature has its rights"**, he once said. **"It has a right to be here untrammelled, unfettered..... Man doesn't have to screw everything up."** Thanks for everything, Martin. You will continue to inspire us.



Leif Johnson Fund Update

We are pleased to announce that this fund now has enough support, via contributions and matching from the PRI general fund, to begin an intern position that will begin this spring. The internship will include components in sales and marketing, social media, resource management, guiding land and river based programs, along with teaching and sharing the natural history of the Canyonlands region with our guests. Recruitment will begin in January 2015.

Farewell Robert Wood



Robert Wood, author

We lost a true friend of PRI and the River Rendezvous when Robert Wood passed away in January at his winter home in Sedona, AZ. Michael Smith met Robert and his wife Deanne on a Westwater Canyon trip for Canyon Voyages about 8 years ago and they struck up a long conversation that kept them in touch long after the trip. Robert was a well-known author and was one of the speakers at the first River Rendezvous held at the Red Cliffs Lodge. He may be best known as the author of *"Desert Riverman, The Free-Spirited Life of Murl Emery"*. In some ways

Murl and Robert shared the free spirit and individuality that made up their lifestyles. Robert loved the outdoors, protecting the environment and wildlife.

Michael has one of the first copies of "Desert Riverman" distributed, and in it Robert wrote: "For fellow river nut Michael Smith, who put me on the trail that led to the publication of Murl's story". Robert, it was an honor to know you and spend time with you.

To learn more about Robert and his writing go to: www.RobertWoodBooks.com or to www.fretwater.com

THANKS... for all your help!!!

Jennifer Speers

Bill Topper

Herm Hoops

Brad and Cindy Moore

Dave Cooley

Howard McPherson

Robert Wood

Stuart Kingsberry

Barbara Chase

Dave Tobin

Dan Tobin

Sue Shrewsberry

Don & Alice Hudson

Wayne Ranney

Marcus LaFrance

Keith Green

Daniel Usher

Canyonlands Field Inst.

Four Corners Sch. CCYC

Tim Severns

Roy Webb

Becci Webb

Andres Aslan, PhD

Grand Canyon

River Guides Assoc.

Don Oblak

Denise Oblak

Canyon Voyages

Clint Wirick, USFWS

Northwest River Supply

KZMU

Jeff Flanders

Oneway Boatworks

U of U Marriott Library

Moab Area Travel Council

UT Forest Fire State Lands

Eddie McStiff's Restaurant

Pam Hackley

Bob Lippman

Paul J. Zilis

University of Wyoming

Ft. Lewis College

Snow College

University of Montana

CO Outward Bound School

Sheridan College

Weber State

Off the Beaten Path

Ian McCluskey

Cody M. Perry

Utah Division of Wildlife

Resources

Amber Dalton

Verde Valley High School

Vista's & Vineyards

Marc Tittle



Yampa, the Golden Retriever
Fun Raiser

Board of Directors

Michael Dean Smith- President & Founder
Outdoor Educator/Guide, PRI
Moab, Utah

Tamsin McCormick, PhD.- Sec./Treasurer
Geologist/Guide/Educator, PRI
Moab, Utah

Tim Severns- Vice President
Guide/Musician/Educator
Salt Lake City, Utah

Herm Hoops
One Way Boat Works Repair, Owner
Jensen, Utah

Paul J. Zilis
Attorney
Boulder, Colorado

Roy Webb
Multi-media archivist, University of Utah
Salt Lake City, Utah

Pam Hackley
Soil Scientist
Moab, Utah

Blooming Success



Sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*) is grown for its edible oil and fruit. Acres of Sunflowers bloomed at Jackson Bottom this year after high water, some of which being the result of the seed we had broadcast. Other species in our seed has come up, especially native grasses and other wildflowers. This is once again a great location for pollinators such as bees, wasps, moths and butterflies.

Plateau Restoration, Inc.

A 501(c)(3) tax exempt non profit organization

Mission

To protect and restore native habitats of the Colorado Plateau through hands on education, landscape restoration, revegetation and research.

How we accomplish our mission

Plateau Restoration was founded in 1995 to enlighten, inspire and involve the public in the long-term care of landscapes of the Colorado Plateau through service and science-based learning adventures. We focus on building a connection with nature, and encouraging the spread of the message to make the choir bigger.

We raise funds through memberships, donations, grants and services we provide. Members of the public can learn more about the natural and cultural history of the area while helping support our mission by signing up for a Volunteer Vacation or a Geotour (land and/or river-based education program). We also provide natural resource education to the broader community through workshops.

You can help by joining the organization, by sharing in an adventure or by sharing the word.

To learn more about Plateau Restoration, become a supporter or join one of our programs please visit our website

www.plateaurestoration.org, or contact us:

P.O. Box 1363, Moab UT 84532;

info@plateaurestoration.org

435-259-7733 / 1-866-202-1847