

WHAT'S THE GOV UP TO?

Al Bolshazy

Your federal government has been very busy lately. At the behest of Diane Feinstein, Pres. Obama created three new monuments in the Southern California desert. This makes a total of four new Monuments over the last two years and comprises several thousand acres taken out of public lands. Rock hounding was not written into the monument language and rock collecting in the monument was prohibited. ALAA (American Land Access Association) and the CFMS (California Federation of Mineralogical Society) along with other groups have been working very hard to get rock hounding written in to the Monument language. As of the date of this report, we have written language allowing rock hounding in the Monuments; however, the battle is not over yet. Ultimately Congress has to approve this language. Secretary Sally Jewell, Department of the Interior, received a letter from Sen. Dianne Feinstein requesting that recreational rock hounding be allowed.

We need your support. We need you to write a letter/ email supporting recreational rock hounding in the National Monuments to Sec. Sally Jewell. Further, we also need to write letters to our representatives especially Congressman Mark Amodei. He is more sensitive to our needs than anyone else, so far. Just go to the DOI and at the bottom of the page is "Contact us" and/or you can get the physical address to send a letter to. Same process for Mark Amodei.

Just so you know, we are members of the California Federation of Mineralogical Societies and ALAA. Both groups are working very hard to keep public lands open for all of us.

I attended a meeting with BLM in Lovelock on May 17, 2016. **Webb Varnum** gave a presentation describing over 100 minerals that could be collected in the wilderness area. Webb also gave the Pershing Commissioner Darin Bloyed a detailed document listing the minerals and locations. He requested that these locations remain open for recreationally collecting these minerals. His report was accepted by the Commissioner who said he will work with Webb. Briefly, BLM has approximately 162,000 acres for sale. BLM will allow the county commissioners to sell the land and receive money for their efforts. The county is in desperate need of money and has proposed a Bill to privatize portions of this land and turn the other portion into wilderness areas. It is also proposed at this time to allow all the activities that are now going on to continue in the wilderness areas including rock hounding. At this meeting there were several ranchers, cattlemen, and residents but for the most part it was environmentalists and a representative from the

CAMP PARADISE

Camp Paradise raffle tickets are now available at our meeting on the first Wednesday of the month. Of course you can contact me any time for tickets. If you win, you will receive one full week of 16 different crafts (Your Choice of one or all of them) and included is your room and three meals a day. If you were to pay for a week it would cost you \$400.00. Raffle tickets are \$5.00 each or 5 for \$20.00. Camp starts on 8/28 thru 9/2 then 9/4 thru 9/10. The drawing will be held during our August meeting. You do not need to be present to win. You will need to select which week you can attend when you are notified. If you can not attend, another name will be drawn. Any questions please call me at 775-530-9302.

Thanks. Al Bolshazy



Al Bolshazy, Master Silversmith



Mary Love, Silversmith winner

GOV. continued

Mining Association which wants to purchase the land. This is a complex issue, one they been working on for over 10 years. The commissioners may make a decision to complete work on the Bill, postpone making a decision, or reject the Bill altogether. This decision will be made on June 1, 2016. More info can be found on the Pershing County's web site. (Pershingcounty.net)

If there is anything you know or find out that would be helpful, please contact me via the *Conglomerate*.