

## **August 2011 Overview**

### **Inyo Backcountry Trail Crew**

#### **Agnes Vianzon: Supervisor**

August. The constellation Orion now greets us early in the morning. A sign that we are nearing the end of our season together. But not yet. This month has been a whirlwind of events and also adaptations to changes in our cooks, camp location, and some cooler temperatures. LB (Laura Gunter) who graciously volunteered her time to cook for us has now reunited with the Sequoia Vets crew here in the Inyo to finish their season with them. We will be re-united with Lilia Otero whom started off with us cooking in Los Padres.

We delayed our camp move from the beginning of August to the end of August to improve the trail for safer stock access. As Crater Creek got lower and lower our rock project locations got further and further. But before the month's end we packed it all up and watched the multiple strings of mules navigate safely down the Fish Creek switches on newly constructed projects. We are loving our new location to finish the season. The valley is beautiful and Fish Creek is open and warm. Our new camp also greeted Kaitlin Hossom with a multi-day birthday celebration.

**CURRICULUM:** We got down to business and many evenings were spent busting out our crew T-shirt. We also continued following Randy Morgenson and reading The Last Season and our crew autobiographies. Mary Hunter also taught us how to make friendship bracelets. Russell Juncal joined us for another in-depth discussion of poetry, philosophy and life.

**WEEKEND ADVENTURES:** Ivabell Hot Springs has become a weekend home away from home. We also visited Fern Lake, McLeod Lake, Crater Meadow and some also made another attempt at Lion's Point.

**WE APPRECIATE YOU:** Big hugs and thanks to Sylvia Tran and Stacey Bauer both Backcountry Alumni (Stan '10) for coming in to volunteer time on the trail and to cook as we buttoned up camp and projects to move. Thanks to Alex Keim's father, Michael "MD" Keim, for his great presence and visit to our crew.

#### **CORPSMEMBERS WORDS OF WISDOM:**

Monday 8-01-11. This is our last day at this campsite. As I look around, I can see how much this place has changed since we first arrived here. Our footpaths have become distinct trails and the peaks in the distance no longer have snow on them and there are mosquitoes even at mid-day, now. I hope our next camp will support us as this one has...

I reflect upon something Agnes said this morning and which the "VIPs'" visit re-enforced. The idea I speak of is the importance of having humility and perspective. As cocky, powerful, or bad-ass as I think I am, I must remind myself that I am part of something larger. Most days, I only concern myself with my personal situation (my gear, my stuff, my food, myself) – rarely considering all (or even any) of the factors that lead to this moment. There are forces far beyond my control (and comprehension) that impact me. I am subject to the things that came before me – both "good" and "bad." Thankful for the

opportunities I have had in my life, while understanding that I feel a responsibility to change what I feel is unjust. Learning to be at peace with a world I cannot control is challenging. The drive to single-handedly perfect the world can be motivating, but it is surely heavy and exhausting. I am not alone in this world. Interacting with the VIP guests reminded me that there is so much that goes into this program happening. From the financial aspect, to the organization, to the relentless support and inspiration that so many people contribute. There have been crews that have come before me, and (hopefully) crews that will come after me. The ego to which I depend so much on and attach myself to so strongly is completely useless and distracts me from the most important things – living life simply as it is, doing my best to enthusiastically experience what it feels like to be alive, and love.

May the scale of the mountains and rivers humble me.

-Colby