

SAN JUAN MOUNTAIN NOTES

Issue 2: 15 April 2007 (Winter and Spring 2007 News)

AN ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER FROM THE



NEWS

Field Work Begins for Mercury Pollution Study While the debate continues over the possible impacts of coal-fired power plants in the Four Corners region, MSI has begun a study to collect data needed to better inform policy-makers and the public. MSI's project, funded by an EPA Air Toxics grant and additional support from the USFS, focuses on inputs of mercury to the San Juan high country. Despite unexpected spring snowfall, MSI staff and collaborators successfully began sampling in late March. MSI's Dr. Koren Nydick and Blake Meneken worked with USGS scientists to collect snow samples at mountain passes; these samples will be analyzed for mercury deposited during the 06-07 winter season as well as mercury in dust layers resulting from winter wind storms. Shortly after the snowpack sampling, MSI began collecting weekly samples of precipitation at Molas Pass in order to measure spring- and summer-time mercury deposition. Additionally, MSI's Meneken, Will Hobbs (a graduate student from University of Alberta-Edmonton), and local assistants collected sediment cores from ice-covered lakes. Ice as thick as 1.3 meters provided challenging conditions, but in the end the precious mud samples were in hand. These cores will be used to look at changes in levels of mercury deposited in lakes over the last 150 years. Check the MSI website for updates as sampling continues throughout the summer.



A sediment core from Crater Lake, April '07.

MSI Awarded \$25,000 for Animas River Trails Planning and Implementation MSI was recently awarded \$25,000 by the Laura Jane Musser Fund for implementation of trails-related components of the Animas River Corridor Revitalization Plan. Silverton and San Juan County residents will work alongside local government and partner organizations to identify and prioritize which trail segments and interpretive displays can begin to be constructed. This project will continue the momentum generated during the 2006 community visioning and planning process as well as build upon the past hard work of many dedicated citizens. Summer 2007 activities may include marking and building trail sections, as well as community art projects. Volunteers will be needed.

San Juan Climate Initiative Takes Shape To follow up on MSI's October 2006 conference, *Climate Variability and Change in the San Juan Mountains*, an initial draft of The San Juan Climate Initiative- An Action Plan, has been prepared by MSI and is out for initial review and comments. The action plan synthesizes input from a diversity of stakeholders and scientists that was collected at the 2006 conference. The Initiative combines action items across broad interacting categories: (1) scientific studies, including those that use existing information and those that generate new, needed data, (2) outreach and training to adapt to and cope with climate change based on the best information available, and (3) development of partnerships and strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and

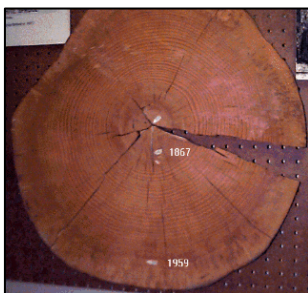
water supply problems in our own communities while strengthening our economies. Implementation of the action items will proceed in steps as funding and resources become available to initiative participants. Partners and funders are sought. To view the conference proceedings, please visit www.mountainstudies.org/Research/sjClimateInitiative.htm. A draft of the action plan will be available on the website soon.

Who's Been Staying at the Avon? Winter may bring peace and quiet to the mountains, but not the Avon! Once again, Prescott College students were in residence for the month of January to complete a three-week long Avalanche Forecasting course with the Colorado Avalanche Information Center. Dr. Lee Dexter of Northern Arizona University returned to Silverton in February with a dozen students for a week-long winter field camp. MSI's Dr. Koren Nydick and Chris Landry of CSAS served as guest instructors to the field camp participants. Visitors from Durango included the non-profit radio station, KDUR, as well as the *Introduction to Historical Preservation* class from Fort Lewis College. Additionally, researchers and students from Colorado State University, University of Colorado, Boulder, and Northern Arizona University have been in and out of Silverton collecting data and hoping to find time to ski. March was full of activity when a youth group from Colorado Springs chose Silverton as their destination for an annual "Spring Break Service Trip." The 60 youths and chaperones completed projects all over town, including work for the Silverton Public School, Youth Center, Historical Society, senior citizens, and churches. The Avon served as an ideal location to house the group, with plenty of gathering space and a kitchen. One student had such a great experience that she claimed she had "left her heart in the Avon and Silverton." *The Avon Field Station in Silverton is available to accommodate research, education, or non-profit users.* www.mountainstudies.org/Avon/default.asp

MSI Thanks Outgoing and Welcomes New Board Members, Officers Sincere thanks to Dr. Janet Potter of Lake City, and Dr. Jill Baron of Fort Collins, for their many contributions as MSI Board Members. Bill Dodge, Silverton's occasional Interim Town Administrator, was recently elected to serve as MSI's Board President. He succeeds Charlie Burnham, who will remain on the board as Secretary. MSI welcomes Dr. Susan Avery, Vice Chancellor for Research and Dean of the Graduate School at the University of Colorado, Boulder, to the board. One opening remains on the MSI Board; interested individuals should contact Dr. Koren Nydick, Mountain Studies Institute (koren@mountainstudies.org, 970.247.7071).

MSI Seeks Individual and Corporate Donors Every month MSI sends out requests for funding to government agencies and private foundations. While we are successful on many of these efforts, it has become clear that private giving from individuals and corporations is absolutely critical to sustain and expand our work. Funds are sought for operations, facilities acquisition and improvement, and specific projects. Please consider providing a gift as an individual or corporation today. Gifts can be made via the form on pg. 4, online at www.mountainstudies.org/member.htm, or by contacting MSI.

OPPORTUNITIES / FUTURE



Tree rings record climate history.

Water Management Workshop in Durango, CO, May 31, 2007 This half-day workshop will cover the climate information recorded in tree ring data and how climate reconstructions can be used in water management. The workshop is sponsored by MSI and Western Water Assessment, and is intended for water managers, stakeholders and interested community members. To register, visit www.mountainstudies.org and complete the registration form available under "What's New," or contact Dr. Koren Nydick (koren@mountainstudies.org, 970.247.7071). Please register by May 18th or earlier.

Summer 2007 Internship with MSI A two-week internship is available to a Fort Lewis College student for the upcoming summer field season. The intern will work alongside MSI staff to survey mountain lakes for water quality and biology, as well as in the lab to process water samples. For more information or to apply, see www.mountainstudies.org/research/opportunities.asp.

Fort Lewis College Funding for Field-Based Education A FLC-MSI partnership provides opportunities for FLC classes to stay at the Avon and also for students' mountain research projects. Winners of the 2007 FLC-MSI Mountain Mini-Grants will be notified soon. Faculty proposals for summer and fall field trips to Silverton are due April 27. Please visit www.mountainstudies.org/Research/opportunities.asp.



The *Value of Place* class field-trip.

MSI 2007 Mini-Grant Program MSI offers funding for current undergraduate and graduate students, as well as recent graduates, to conduct research in the San Juan Mountains. Projects must be related to one of MSI's five research themes. Proposals were accepted through March 21, and recipients of the 2007 awards will be announced soon. See www.mountainstudies.org/Research/minigrant.htm for more information on the Mini-Grant Program.

Summer events in Silverton will include a seminar and film series at the Avon Hotel (schedule coming soon). Look for MSI at the Silverton Jamboree, June 1-3, and the Animas River Watershed Festival, June 30.

Mountain Studies Institute (MSI) is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit mountain research and education institution and high-altitude field station with headquarters in Silverton, Colorado and offices at Fort Lewis College in nearby Durango. MSI's mission is to enhance understanding and sustainable use of the San Juan Mountains and its communities through research and education.

Please see www.mountainstudies.org for more information, including how to become a member. To be added to or removed from our mailing list, please go to: www.mountainstudies.org/contact/.

BECOME A MEMBER

The board of directors of the Mountain Studies Institute invites you to support MSI. Your membership will:

- Ensure the continuation of MSI's mountain research and education programs and mission to enhance understanding and sustainable use of the San Juan Mountains;
- Sustain MSI's field station facilities at the Avon Hotel and Mayflower Mill Field Laboratory;
- Strengthen the support services MSI provides to college and university students and faculty, researchers, land and environmental managers, elected officials and community planners, visitors, and residents of local San Juan Mountain communities.

Members receive MSI's *Benchmark*, periodic e-newsletters, and a 10 percent discount on special lectures, education programs and study tours, conference registration fees, MSI merchandise, and lodging and meeting rooms at the Avon Hotel.

Membership information:

Title _____ First Name _____ Last Name _____
 Mailing Address _____ City/State/Zip _____
 Day Phone (____) _____ Eve. Phone (____) _____ Fax (____) _____ Email _____

Indicate your preferred level of membership:

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sapling (Student) \$15 | <input type="checkbox"/> Ponderosa (Family) \$75 | <input type="checkbox"/> Timberline \$500 | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Foothills (San Juan Mountain Resident) \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Upper Montane \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> Alpine \$1,000 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Woodland (Adult Individual) \$40 | <input type="checkbox"/> Subalpine \$250 | <input type="checkbox"/> Peak \$2,500 | |

MEMBERSHIP TOTAL.....\$ _____

Give the gift of membership – It's a great way to acknowledge special occasions (holidays, birthdays, weddings, anniversaries) and show your support of the MSI mission. We'll send a note card to your friends or loved ones and let them know about your gift.

Recipient First Name _____ Last Name _____
 Mailing Address _____ City/State/Zip _____
 Special Occasion and Message _____

GIFT MEMBERSHIP TOTAL.....\$ _____

Select from the following MSI merchandise: (*member prices – non-members add 10%*)

- | | | |
|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patagonia Synchronilla Vest (see page 9) | Sizes/Colors: Women's Black S-L, Men's Slate Blue M, Black L, Navy XL | \$70 members (\$74.85 with sales tax) |
| Indicate: Quantity _____ | Women's Sizes: _____ Men's Sizes: _____ | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> T-Shirt / Organic Cotton (see below) | Sizes/Colors: Women's Cream S-XL / Men's White S-XL | \$15 members (\$16.05 with sales tax) |
| Indicate: Quantity _____ | Women's Sizes: _____ Men's Sizes: _____ | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Canvas Ballcap (see page 14) | One Size / Colors: Sky Blue, Navy, Black, Tan, Maroon | \$15 members (\$16.05 with sales tax) |
| Indicate: Quantity _____ | Colors _____ | \$ _____ |

MERCHANDISE TOTAL.....\$ _____

GRAND TOTAL.....\$ _____

- Check payable to Mountain Studies Institute is enclosed; or

Credit card information:

Visa MasterCard Card No. _____ Exp Date _____
 Name on Card _____ Billing Address _____
 Signature _____ Date _____ Amount to be charged now.....\$ _____

Please send this form with payment to Mountain Studies Institute, P.O. Box 426, Silverton, Colorado 81433. For more information on capital campaign, planned giving, or giving to MSI's endowment fund, please contact Debra Childers at 970.387.5161. MSI is a federally recognized 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization. We will promptly send your tax receipt letter. Thank you for your generosity!



Mountain Studies Institute

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Mountain Studies Institute



Science for Sustainability
 Silverton, Colorado

MSI T-SHIRT - SEE ORDER FORM