

THE PELICAN

MAR/APR 2016

NEWSLETTER OF GREAT SALT LAKE AUDUBON

www.greatsaltlakeaudubon.org



G R E A T
S A L T L A K E
A U D U B O N

BIRDS 'n BITES

Join us for our monthly informative, entertaining programs. The meetings are free and open to all and presented at the Education Building in the Tracy Aviary at Liberty Park. Doors open at 6:30 PM for refreshments and socializing, the programs begin at 7PM.

March 15th, Skiing for Conservation

By Maura Olivos, Sustainability Coordinator & Ecologist, Alta Environmental Center, Alta Ski Area
Ski areas or ski bums are not the first folks one thinks about when talking conservation or environmental awareness - sometimes it is just the opposite. However, just over 25% of the ski areas nationwide operate on National Forest lands, spreading over 58 or 37% of all the National Forests. With this comes great responsibility, compliance, and ultimately ownership of our natural resources. If that wasn't enough to steer this industry's management strategies, ski areas are also one of the few industries that have a direct relationship and economic dependency on nature and climate change. Alta Ski Area will be sharing some of their efforts and those of the ski industry that address the concerns over climate change, stewardship and resource conservation. Alta has implemented a number of sustainability initiatives, both internally in the organization, such as serving food, and externally in the environment as extensive energy management upgrades, to tree planting and bird counts, and partnering with a number of non-profits like Tracy Aviary and Friends of Alta.

April 19th, Aids to Birding Sites in Utah

By Wayne Martinson, Utah Important Bird Areas Coordinator for National Audubon Society
Wayne will present on the recently released Birding Utah app and entertain questions about its use. He will provide a history that led up to the app including the three hard copy birding trail maps that started in 2001, the Utah IBA bird book and then the app on iOS and then android systems. If time permits he will provide updates regarding the Northwest Quadrant, prison relocation, and other issues regarding GSL. Wayne started with Audubon as the Lobbyist for the Audubon Council of Utah in 1989 and has worked for National Audubon Society since summer 1991.

SAGEBRUSH HABITAT RESTORATION MARCH 29TH-31ST

Volunteer Event with the Utah Chapter of The Nature Conservancy: TNC is restoring native sagebrush habitat by planting more than 5,000 sagebrush bushes near Monticello.

The volunteers will have a chance to visit a Gunnison Sage Grouse lek. This is a rare opportunity as Gunnison Sage Grouse lek exclusively on private property in Utah. **UPDATE:** We may need to move the date if there is snow on the ground. Stay tuned!

Please contact Andrea at anelson@tnc.org if you are interested or have questions about this opportunity.

SAVE THE DATES!!!

June 11th and 12th, 2016

BASIN AND RANGE

to be held at FREMONT INDIAN STATE PARK

UTAH AUDUBON COUNCIL MEETING

WILL BE HOSTED BY

RED CLIFFS AUDUBON ON

MAY 7th, DETAILS TBA

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THE PELICAN

NEWSLETTER OF GREAT SALT LAKE AUDUBON

Printed on recycled paper.

Mission Statement: Great Salt Lake Audubon is dedicated to protecting and enhancing habitat for wild birds, animals and plants, and to maintaining healthy and diverse environments for wildlife and people throughout the state.

GREAT SALT LAKE AUDUBON DIRECTORY

www.greatsaltlakeaudubon.org

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Submission Guidelines: Original articles and photos are welcomed. The editor reserves the right to choose and edit as needed. Email articles to newsletter@greatsaltlakeaudubon.org. *The Pelican* is published 6 times a year. Submission deadline for the May/June issue is April 10, 2016.

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BOARD HIGHLIGHTS, JAN/FEB

By Secretary, Heather Griffiths

The 2015 Christmas Bird Count and potluck enjoyed good participation and many birds were counted. The Christmas Bird Count for Kids and the Little Chicks also had a great turn-out. We greatly enjoyed spending time with the young birders. Thank you to everyone who attended.

Our New Year's Day Jordan River Christmas Bird Count was also a success. We were able to identify 82 species and 15,512 individual birds. Thank you for helping us start the New Year off with a big communal effort!

GSLA continues to work on enhancing our support of child and family-focused education effort. To that end, the GSLA Board has chosen to support the following two programs:

- 1) Tracy Aviary's Nature in the City program "Books and Boots," an outdoor story time for young children and their caregivers. Visit Tracy Aviary's website to learn more and sign up for their great Nature in the City programs.
- 2) The Salt Lake Charter Science and Engineering Fair on February 12th. GSLA will attend the Fair and will sponsor awards for qualified students from 5th to 12th grade.

GSLA is excited to announce that Ian Batterman, our new field trip coordinator, will also be serving on the Board as a new Board member. We look forward to his contributions.

Finally, this time of year sees many GSLA email alerts about issues and bills being discussed in the Legislature. We hope you are taking the time to read these important and timely messages. Thanks to all those who speak out for conservation and the environment!

GSLA is now on Instagram!

We are excited to share beautiful birding photos with our members and would love to feature yours! Tag your Instagram photos with #greatsaltlakeaudubon or email them to our GSLA Secretary Heather Griffiths at heather.griffiths@gmail.com. Please be sure to put GSLA Instagram in your subject line. To follow us visit <https://www.instagram.com/greatsaltlakeaudubon/> We look forward to seeing your photos!

GSLA says "THANKS to Our Generous Donors!!!"

Great Salt Lake Audubon would like to express great appreciation for the many generous donations received this past year. We could not run this organization without your support. We continue to be an all-volunteer organization that constantly strives to meet the goals of our mission which is to protect and enhance habitat for wild birds, animals and plants, and to maintain healthy and diverse environments for wildlife and people throughout the state.

The Pelican

HI FELLOW AUDUBON VOLUNTEERS,

I'm Barb Eastman. My job is to track all of the volunteer hours for Great Salt Lake Audubon. GSLA gets grants based on the number of volunteer hours and numbers of volunteers. The calendar year goes from June 1-May 31st. I've been busy and pretty lax about pestering you guys for your hours. I'd really appreciate it if you could take a few minutes to total up your hours and send me an email. For those of you leading trips, we'd like to know how many hours (including time taken to organize) and how many participants were on your field trips. Email me @ tombarpaul@gmail.com

Thanks,
Barb
801-466-0542 hm
801-671-8932 cell

Three ways to join or renew your membership:

1. Great Salt Lake Audubon-only membership is \$30 a year. All dues support local education, advocacy, habitat restoration, field trips, newsletter publication, and more. (See membership form on page 8 of *The Pelican*). Local membership is very important, as GSLA is primarily self-supporting.
2. A new membership to National Audubon Society (NAS) costs \$25, with renewal of \$35 after the first year. Benefits include the quarterly national magazine and automatic membership in GSLA. Most of your dues support environmental campaigns at the national level. As a new NAS member, you will receive a courtesy subscript to our newsletter, *The Pelican*, for one year. Thereafter, if you wish to continue to receive *The Pelican*, please join Great Salt Lake Audubon.
3. You can join both GSLA and NAS if you wish to support both local and national activities.

Show up! Speak out!

A Voice for Wilderness Citizens Hearing
Wednesday, March 2, 6:30 – 9:30 PM
Orson Spencer Hall Auditorium
University of Utah campus, Salt Lake City
10 minutes north of South Campus Trax station

Utah Rep Rob Bishop has unveiled his “Public Lands Initiative” and it is an utter disaster for Utah’s wild lands. Show your support by simply showing up! Better yet, come and speak! Share your view on the Public Lands Initiative and the future of Utah’s wild places. All comments will be recorded and submitted to the U.S. Congress as well as the Utah delegation.



Credit: Kiah Walker/USFWS

Wisdom, a Laysan albatross who is now the oldest known banded bird in the world, has continued to surprise wildlife officials and her fans by reappearing every year at the Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge in the Pacific, and this year was no exception.

Now believed to be at least 65 years old, Wisdom returned again earlier this year with her mate who has been dubbed Goo or Mr. Goo by refuge staff because of the number on his leg band. Wisdom was spotted earlier this winter incubating yet another egg.

Earlier this month, to the delight of her fans, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced that her newest chick was spotted and was named Kūkini, which is Hawaiian for messenger.

Albatross and petrels, some of the most majestic birds on the planet, are in serious trouble. Albatross soar across oceans on up to 12-foot wingspans, but their lives are too often cut tragically short after becoming hooked on fishing lines and drowning. The good news is that new legislation has just been introduced in Congress that would help protect these spectacular birds from needless deaths and save them from extinction.

Please urge your U.S. Representative to support and cosponsor the ***Albatross and Petrel Conservation Act***.

The new bill will help Wisdom and other albatross by allowing the U.S. to comply with the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP), a treaty that coordinates global work to conserve these species. Audubon has championed joining this agreement, because international cooperation is vital for protecting these wide-ranging birds. Thirteen nations have signed on, but the U.S. has yet to join. *The bill addresses other challenges to albatross and petrels as well, including the vast problem of plastic in our oceans. A recent study estimates that nine out of ten seabirds are ingesting plastic.*

Calendar of Events including Field Trips for Mar/Apr 2016

Beginning birders and nonmembers are always welcome. We encourage carpooling on our field trips. Contributions towards gas money would be appreciated. Be sure to call the field trip leader to confirm that arrangements are still as published.

Physical Difficulty:

EASY - little or no walking, smooth paths.

MODERATE - 1 mile or more, possible rough terrain.

DIFFICULT - extensive walking which could include rough terrain and significant changes in altitude.

Despite our best efforts, ratings for the field trips are still somewhat subjective. Please consult with the leaders.

******PLEASE NOTE: EXPECT FIELD TRIPS TO LEAVE ON TIME SO ARRIVE 5-10 MINUTES EARLY TO ARRANGE CARPOOLS.******

Wednesday March 2nd, 8:30AM MODERATE MOUNTAIN DELL REC. AREA, PARLEY'S CANYON

Leader: Sylvia Gray

Our monthly bird surveys have begun again so we invite you to join us. Even in winter, interesting birds can still be seen. We'll meet by 8:30AM in the parking lot just west of REI on 33rd South and 3285 east for a morning of birding. Call Sylvia (801-532-3486) if you plan to attend.

Saturday March 12th, 8AM-10AM EASY BOUNTIFUL POND

Leader: Ian Batterman

Located on the outskirts of Farmington Bay WMA, Bountiful Pond is a lovely oasis for all kinds of birds. The large pond provides a stopover area for many gulls and waterfowl, and the surrounding trees and fields hide many songbirds, owls, and other birds with close viewing opportunities. Feel free to either meet at the SE corner of the Sugarhouse ShopKo to carpool at 8AM or at main parking area near the pond at 8:30. Contact Ian Batterman at 920-360-0805 or at imbatterman@gmail.com to let him know you are coming or if you would like more information.

Tuesday, March 15th, 6:30/7PM

BIRDS 'n BITES

Skiing for Conservation

Education Building in the Tracy Aviary

Saturday March 19th, 7AM EASY

BEAR RIVER MIGRATORY BIRD REFUGE

Leader: Ian Batterman

Join us for a field trip looking for spring migrant waterfowl at one of the premier birding hotspots in Utah. We will head

out on Bear River MBR looking for 10's of thousands of Tundra Swans as well as a great variety of ducks and other wetland birds. This will be a fairly long field trip (at least 5 hours including driving time to the refuge) so please plan accordingly. We meet at Shopko to carpool and leave at 7AM. Contact Ian Batterman at 920-360-0805 or at imbatterman@gmail.com to let him know you are coming.

March 29th-31st, Monticello

Volunteer Event with the Utah Chapter of The Nature Conservancy: TNC is restoring native sagebrush habitat by planting more than 5,000 sagebrush bushes near Monticello.

The volunteers will also have a chance to visit a Gunnison Sage Grouse lek. This is a rare opportunity as Gunnison Sage Grouse lek exclusively on private property in Utah.

UPDATE: We may have to move the date if there is snow on the ground. Stay tuned!

Please contact Andrea at anelson@tnc.org if you are interested or have questions about this opportunity.

Monday, Mar. 28th 8:30AM ISSR

INLAND SEA SHOREBIRD RESERVE (Kennecott's Mitigation Wetlands) - EASY

Leader: Bryant Olsen

ISSR is located on the south shore of Great Salt Lake. Come and enjoy the property and see which birds are making use of it at this time. PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED as the number of cars allowed is limited. Call or email Bryant if you plan to attend. (801-498-0362) bryant_olsen@yahoo.com.

Wednesday March 30th, 8AM- noon EASY

FARMINGTON BAY followed by areas north

Leader: Bryant Olsen

Hunting season will be over, so if the weather permits and the dikes can be safely travelled, we will be allowed to bird behind-the-gates. As usual, meet in the SE corner of the ShopKo parking lot on 13th E in Sugarhouse at 8AM to carpool or at 8:30 at the Nature Center on Glover Lane in Farmington. Contact Bryant at 801-498-0362 or bryant_olsen@yahoo.com to let him know you are coming.

Wednesday April 6th, 8:30AM MODERATE

MOUNTAIN DELL REC. AREA, PARLEY'S CANYON

Leader: John Middleton

Our monthly bird surveys have begun again so we invite you to join us. Even in winter, interesting birds can still be seen. We'll meet by 8:30AM in the parking lot just west of REI on 33rd South and 3285 east for a morning of birding.

The Pelican

Great Salt Lake Audubon, www.greatsaltlakeaudubon.org

(385) 313-0608

Calendar of Events including Field Trips for Mar/Apr 2016

Call John (801-322-2171) if you plan to attend.

**Friday April 8th, 5:30AM EASY
GREATER SAGE GROUSE LEK, HENEFER**

Leader: Sylvia Gray

This is a wonderful opportunity to witness the spectacular pageantry of male Sage-Grouse strutting on their ancestral lek at dawn. You may leave afterwards or join us for breakfast in Morgan, and continue birding in the Henefer area. Meet in the parking lot just west of the REI on 33rd South and 3285 East by 5:30AM sharp to receive handouts giving directions and lek etiquette information, and to arrange carpools. The drive to Henefer takes about an hour. Contact Sylvia at (801-532-3486) if you would like to go.

**Saturday April 9th, 8:30AM EASY
GILLMOR SANCTUARY**

Leader: Ella Sorenson

Join GSLA on a rare opportunity to see the Gillmor Sanctuary, one of the important wetlands of the Great Salt Lake. This Audubon property is normally off limits to the public, so it is a great chance to see some great birds. Meet at the Shopko at 8:30 AM to carpool as space is limited. Contact Ian Batterman at 920-360-0805 or at imbatterman@gmail.com to let him know you are coming.

**Saturday April 16th, 7AM EASY
ANTELOPE ISLAND**

Leader: Ian Batterman

Come join us at one of the greatest migratory stopover sites in Northern Utah. We will be start at the causeway, looking for migrating shorebirds, and if time permits, we could travel on to the island and to Garr Ranch to see what's around. Once again, this will be a fairly long birding trip, so please plan accordingly. For those carpooling, meet at the Sugarhouse Shopko at 7AM. or you can plan on meeting us in the parking lot just outside of the entrance kiosk at the Causeway by 7:45AM. Contact Ian Batterman at 920-360-0805 or at imbatterman@gmail.com to let him know you are coming. Bring your State Park Pass if you have one.

April 19th, 6:30/7PM

BIRDS 'n BITES

Aids to Birding Sites in Utah

Education Building in the Tracy Aviary

Monday, April 25th, 8:30AM ISSR

INLAND SEA SHOREBIRD RESERVE (Kennecott's Mitigation Wetlands) - EASY

Leader: Bryant Olsen See description for Mar. 28th.

MAR/APR

**Wednesday April 27th, 8am- noon EASY
FARMINGTON BAY followed by areas north**

Leader: Bryant Olsen

Hunting season will be over, so if the weather permits and the dikes can be safely travelled, we will be allowed to bird behind-the-gates. As usual, meet in the SE corner of the ShopKo parking lot on 13th E in Sugarhouse at 8AM to carpool or at 8:30 at the Nature Center on Glover Lane in Farmington. Contact Bryant at 801-498-0362 or bryant_olsen@yahoo.com to let him know you are coming.

**Wednesday, May 4th, 8AM MODERATE
MOUNTAIN DELL REC. AREA, PARLEY'S CANYON**

Leader: John Middleton

Join us for our monthly bird surveys. We'll meet by 8AM in the parking lot just west of REI on 33rd South and 3285 east for a morning of birding. Call John (801-322-2171) if you plan to attend.

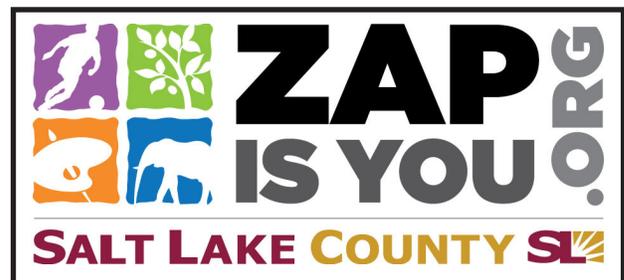
**Friday, May 6th to Sunday, May 8th - EASY
LYTLE RANCH, WASHINGTON COUNTY**

Leaders: Jeanne LeBer and Ray Smith

Depart at 6AM on Friday morning, with a couple of stops en route to St. George (Oak Grove and Red Cliffs Campground). Cox Park, Springs Pond, and Tonaquint Park are on the agenda for late day. We'll stay in motels (everyone is responsible for their own accommodations) and drive to the ranch early Saturday morning, checking for desert species along the way, then stop at Gunlock and Ivins reservoirs on the way back to town. Up early on Sunday morning to bird at Washington Fields, Sand Hollow, Grandpa's Pond, and other spots before heading home. This trip is limited to 15 people (4-5 cars only). Call Jeanne or Ray (801-532-7384) for more information.

GREAT SALT LAKE BIRD FESTIVAL, May 12-16, 2016

Register online @www.greatsaltlakebirdfest.com.



GSLA thanks the voters of Salt Lake County for their support of the **Zoo, Arts & Parks program.**

Sagebrush Ecosystem Initiative: One Bird, 11 States, 165 Million Acres

from <http://rockies.audubon.org/>

The sagebrush landscape has long epitomized the American West. But this unique habitat, home to scores of plants and animals, including the Greater Sage-Grouse, is rapidly disappearing. The 11 western states with sagebrush-steppe habitat and sage grouse are: Oregon, Washington, California (northern), Nevada, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, North and South Dakota.

The Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies has recognized that Greater sage-grouse are challenged since 1954. However, it wasn't until recently that land managers across the species' range have truly begun to address the threats to grouse. Unprecedented actions are being taken by private landowners, states, and federal agencies to avoid the necessity of federal protection for sage-grouse that would be associated with a listing under the Endangered Species Act. Because sage-grouse declines stem from loss and fragmentation of the sagebrush steppe, recovery strategies by land managers are focused on protecting and even improving what is left.

Greater Sage-grouse are referred to as an umbrella species, a recognition they've held since 2001 (Rich and Altman 2001). Their habitat needs, for large amounts of healthy sagebrush, overlap with many other species that are dependent on the sagebrush landscape. Throughout their life cycle, sage-grouse rely on sagebrush for food and shelter – nesting under the sagebrush canopy, their young foraging among the plants, and the plant itself providing food for the bird during the fall and winter.

Benefits to other species: The sagebrush steppe serves as a nursery for a wide range of wildlife species. It is frequently referenced that 350+ other wildlife species also depend on sagebrush habitat. In Wyoming (which holds the largest percentage of the bird and sagebrush habitat), where there has been extensive research, the number is even higher. In Cowboy Country, the sagebrush ecosystems provides habitat to nearly 450 species of mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles, and fish – many of which are recognized as non-game species (WGFD). Furthermore, approximately 6% of these are sagebrush-associated species that are identified by the state as being Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) – “whose conservation status warrants increased management attention, and funding, as well as consideration in conservation, land use, and development planning” (WGFD 2010).

The sagebrush ecosystem is found across much of western North America. Historically, this iconic landscape stretched across roughly 153 million acres. The sagebrush ecosystem is one of the most imperiled in the U.S. At one time, it spread over 62 million hectares (240,000 square miles) of the west, but today has shrunk to almost half, with 56 percent remaining. That loss comes from conversion to conifer woodlands, exotic annual and introduced grasses, croplands, and human developments. Today only about 106 million acres of sagebrush steppe remains, making it one of the most imperiled ecosystems in America. An ecosystem that may appear to be void of life to the casual observer is actually rich in wildlife. However, actions taken over the past two centuries have resulted in this landscape becoming increasingly fragmented and of lower quality. Loss and fragmentation of sagebrush habitats can have a particularly acute impact on wildlife because in the arid West, food, cover and water resources are distributed unequally across the landscape. This characteristic of sagebrush habitat means many sagebrush dependent wildlife species have evolved to require very large areas of intact habitat to meet their seasonal and annual resource need.

We need your help to stop SB 80 the Bear River development and Lake Powell pipeline funding bill, and its identical House companion, HB 257, are awaiting House committee votes, so contact your Representative and members of the Revenue and Taxation Committee - urge them to oppose these bills! Please also write to your state senator, the Governor and let them know that you oppose SB 80. This one bill poses a tremendous threat to the Colorado River, the Bear River, and the Great Salt Lake. This bill, SB 80, would help finance two of the largest proposed river diversions in the United States, the Lake Powell pipeline and the Bear River dam/diversion project in Utah. The bill would use taxpayer money to fund these water wasting projects that benefit only two small counties in Utah, while jeopardizing some of the most valuable and important wildlife habitats in the western hemisphere.

The Lake Powell Pipeline would pump 28 billion gallons of water 2,000 feet uphill across 140 miles of desert to St. George, Utah, where there is still tremendous opportunity for water conservation. This multi-billion dollar project would divert the Colorado River immediately upstream of the Grand Canyon. The diversion will unnecessarily dewater the Colorado River, a resource already stressed by extended drought and climate change.

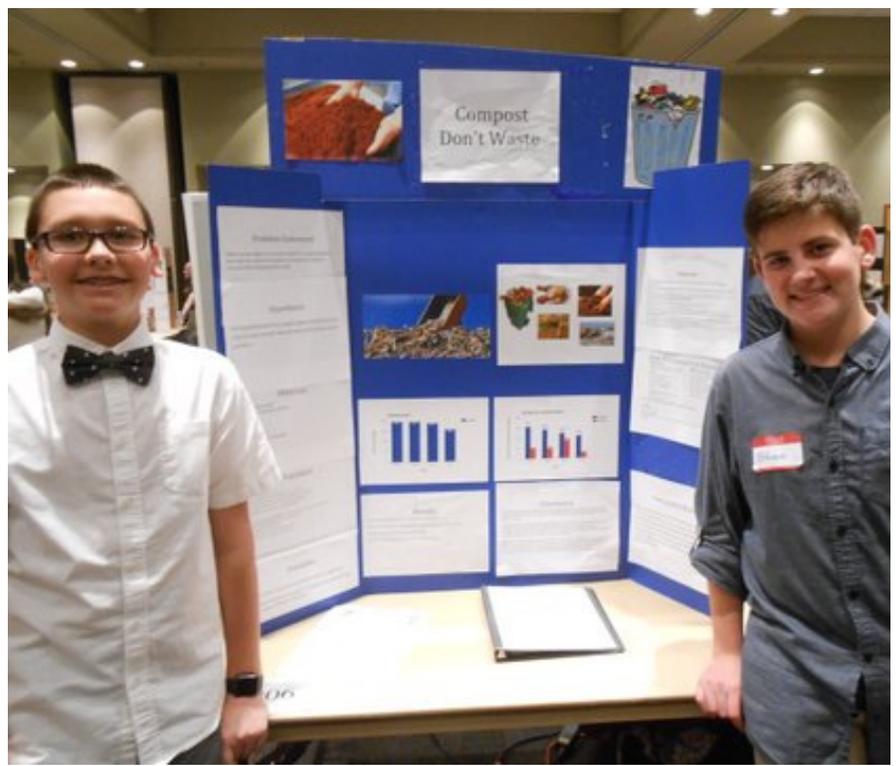
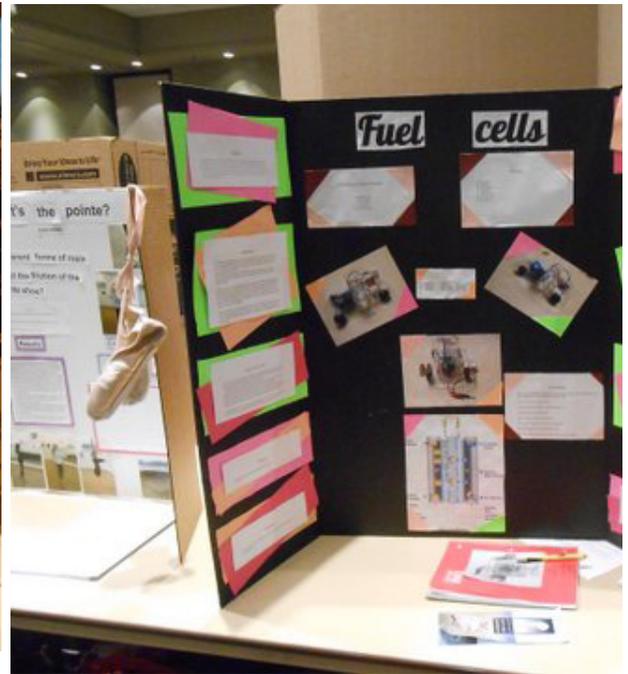
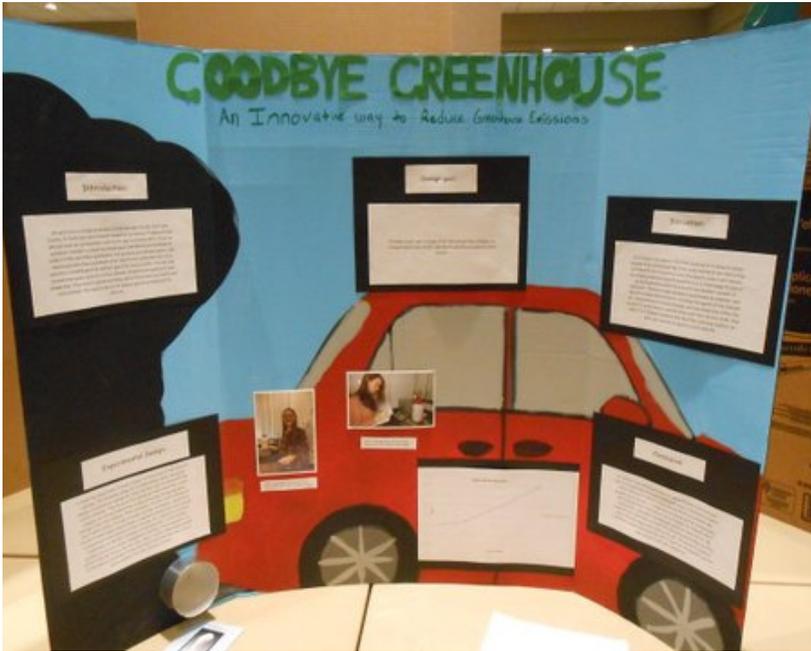
The proposed \$2 billion Bear River Development is the largest proposed diversion in the United States, which have major impacts on Great Salt Lake, already suffering from upstream water diversions and climate change. Since the Bear River provides nearly 60 percent of the Lake's annual water inflow, this massive water project will greatly impact the lake, its wetlands, and the millions of waterfowl and shorebirds that depend on them. This area contains several globally-significant Important Bird Areas of international conservation significance for birds.

Ignoring conservation in favor of water waste, these big water projects impact all Utah taxpayers and put our rivers and the Great Salt Lake at risk.

GSLA SPONSORS SALT LAKE CHARTER SCHOOLS SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING FAIR

Great Salt Lake Audubon was among the sponsors of the 2016 Salt Lake Charter Schools Science and Engineering Fair held February 12th at the Salt Lake Community College Miller Campus in Sandy. Additionally, members of GSLA's Education Committee attended the Fair and selected four projects representing science in the area of conservation to receive Special Awards.

Students who attended the Fair were from charter schools within Salt Lake, Tooele and Summit counties. Over 200 projects were submitted by students in grades 5-12. The winners from the district-level Charter School Fair advance to the regional-level Salt Lake Valley Science & Engineering Fair presented by The Center for Science and Mathematics Education at the University of Utah in March.





THE PELICAN
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**GREAT SALT LAKE AUDUBON
(LOCAL MEMBERSHIP ONLY)**

Please enroll me as a member of GSLA. My membership fee of \$30.00 includes a 1-year subscription to *THE PELICAN*.

Please clip and send your application and check to:

**GREAT SALT LAKE AUDUBON
P.O. BOX 520867
SALT LAKE CITY, UT 84152-0867**

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If you would prefer to receive *THE PELICAN* electronically, please make sure you have provided us with your email address and check this box . Great Salt Lake Audubon does not share your information with any other organizations.

Member fee \$ _____ + Donation \$ _____ = Total \$ _____
Local membership does NOT include Audubon Magazine

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

Please enroll me as a member of National Audubon Society. Please send Audubon Magazine and my membership card to the address below:

My check for \$25.00 is enclosed. (Introductory price only)

Please clip and send your application and check to:

**National Audubon Society Membership Services
P.O. Box 422250
Palm Coast, FL 32142-2250**

Name _____
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Check here if you prefer your free 1st year of *THE PELICAN* electronically and provide us with your email address

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