

RHYOLITE RIDGE NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2020

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Readers,

During these unprecedented and uncertain times of the COVID-19 pandemic, I hope that this first issue of the Rhyolite Ridge Quarterly Newsletter finds you in good health and spirit. We extend a big "Thank You!" to those essential employees, first-responders, healthcare workers and public servants who have continued to keep our communities safe and running.

While travel and certain activities have been slowed or halted, Ioneer has taken considerable and meaningful steps towards the development and realization of the Rhyolite Ridge Lithium/Boron Project including acceptance of a formal plan of operations by the BLM. We have also hired several new Nevada employees including our first full-time Fish Lake Valley employee, Sandra Carson.

I would like to extend my personal appreciation to the many local residents, community and business leaders who have provided letters of support and participated in the recent Nevada Division of Forestry hearings. Your support is and will continue to be vital, especially as we move into the required NEPA and public scoping portion of the permitting process that should begin in the coming months.

Although it may be some time before I can personally return to the area with international travel restrictions still in place, I can continue to pledge Ioneer's unwavering and ongoing commitment to the local communities that stand to benefit from the Rhyolite Ridge project.



*The first signs of winter at Rhyolite Ridge in early November.
Credit: Sandra Carson*

RECENT TIEHM'S BUCKWHEAT NEWS

Earlier this fall there was widespread news coverage regarding reported destruction of a portion of Tiehm's buckwheat located at Rhyolite Ridge.

A statement released on December 4 from the United States Fish and Wildlife service (FWS) stated that environmental DNA analysis supports the conclusion that damage was caused by herbivory. The statement cites that "nearby soils and rodent scat strongly links small mammal herbivory to the widespread damage and loss of Tiehm's buckwheat reported in September 2020". Scientists from the University of Southern Utah conducted an environmental DNA analysis, where it found squirrel and deer DNA on root samples near damaged plants. Researchers also found the buckwheat's DNA in animal scat, which showed a strong match (96.9-99.8%) to ground squirrels.

Unfortunately, the efforts to respond to the attack were frustrated by some who suggested that this destruction may have been the work of individuals with nefarious intent which triggered a state and federal investigation.

Following the incident, activists petitioned the FWS to emergency list the Tiehm's buckwheat on the Endangered Species Act. However, in early November the agency formally rejected this petition. We are pleased by this decision and look forward to continuing our ongoing work with state and federal agencies to responsibly complete the project's environmental

permitting process, while continuing loneer's commitment to preserve and protect this plant.

The summer of 2020 throughout the western United States was record breaking both in terms of heat and drought. In fact, many areas including Fish Lake Valley did not receive a trace of rainfall from April of 2020 until the first winter storms in late October. When coupled together, this extreme weather provided harsher than usual conditions for desert wildlife as water and vegetation were increasingly difficult to find during the late summer and early autumn.

Indeed, it appears that a changing climate may be partly to blame for this unfortunate event, as are many prolonged periods of extreme weather across the globe. At loneer, our mission is to produce the materials necessary for a sustainable, lower carbon future as we work to be a significant and responsible producer for lithium and boron - crucial elements in humanity's pursuit of a more sustainable future.

The full statement by FWS on December 4, as well as a link to their eDNA report can be found here:

<https://www.fws.gov/reno/news/environmental-dna-analysis-supports-conclusion-damage-rare-tiehm-buckwheat-plants-was-caused>





COMMUNITY MEETINGS

This past July, Ioneer representatives hosted a community meeting at the Fish Lake Valley Community Park. Nearly 50 residents from the community attended the event where they were able to chat one-on-one with Ioneer about various aspects of the project including geology, material processing, permitting, occupational opportunities and the future of lithium.

Thank you to all those who attended the meeting to learn more about Ioneer and the project! Due to COVID-19 complications, we will look to delay our next community meeting for a couple months. Our next community meeting is tentatively scheduled to be held at the Fish Lake Valley Community Center in late March 2021 - please visit therhyoliteridgeproject.com website for updates.

SANDRA CARSON - IONEER'S FIRST FULL-TIME FISH LAKE VALLEY EMPLOYEE

We are excited to welcome Sandra Carson to the Ioneer team where she will serve as Chief Environmental Engineer. Sandra joins Ioneer with extensive project and operational environmental experience working for various mining companies including Kinross, BHP Billiton and Newmont. She will assist in coordinating the many federal and state permitting activities and requirements for the development of the Rhyolite Ridge project and will then work to establish environmental requirements and protocols as we move into construction and then operations. Sandra recently relocated to the Fish Lake Valley area and will be a prime focal point for activities taking place at site and around the community. Sandra

has vacationed several times in the Eastern Sierras and looks forward to living in FLV. Please help us in welcoming Sandra to our team!"

IONEER JOINS NATIONAL GROUP TO ADVOCATE FOR 100% ELECTRIC VEHICLES BY 2030

Z E T A

On November 18, Ioneer announced that it had joined a group of 28 companies to launch the Zero Emission Transportation Association (ZETA), an organization that is dedicated to achieving 100% electric vehicle sales in the United States by 2030. Other Nevada job creators alongside Ioneer include innovators Tesla, Southern Company, and Redwood Materials.

A central policy pillar that ZETA will be advocating for is increased domestic manufacturing across the EV supply chain - spanning from critical materials like those produced at Rhyolite Ridge, through vehicle manufacturing. Ioneer looks forward to collaborating with other leaders across the renewable energy and electric vehicle industry to advocate for a greener future and ensure access to a domestic supply of critical materials, all while simultaneously creating thousands of jobs across Nevada and beyond.

To learn more about ZETA, visit: zeta2030.com

PERMITTING UPDATE

In August, 2020 Ioneer reached a major point in development of the Rhyolite Ridge project when the BLM formally accepted the Plan of Operations and deemed it complete. This Plan of Operations is the central NEPA permitting document for Rhyolite Ridge, and will serve as the basis for compliance during operations and closure. The plan contains 14 separate baseline studies including hydrology, wildlife, and others that have been completed over the last 2 years.





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