Monday March 23 – Conference Day I
Topic: Ecological Dimensions of Lake Management
15:00-17:00: Round Table 1: Management of Water Quantity

Title: When the going gets tough, the tough think outside of the box.

Briefing: Los Angeles is known for its movie stars, beautiful people, and beaches—the stereotypical image of a lush green lawns, palm trees, and a swimming pool in the sunshine is not all that far from reality. Los Angeles is a city where 4 million people live in a desert, in denial of that desert. Though this major metropolitan area is 350 miles (560 km) away from Mono Lake, it is inextricably connected to Los Angeles by water. Beginning in 1941 Los Angeles took nearly all of the fresh water from the Mono Basin—providing 15% of the city's water—leaving the lake 45 vertical feet (14 meters) lower and on the brink of ecological collapse. Acknowledging that Los Angeles does have a need for water and taking on the water-wasteful mindset of a rapidly growing population was critical to securing water for Mono Lake. Through an ongoing commitment to creative water conservation programs and innovative municipal water conservation projects, today the people of Los Angeles are world-class water conservers, and more water for Mono Lake does not mean that Los Angeles goes to another beautiful and ecologically valuable watershed to get its water. Mono Lake, millions of birds, miles of riparian habitat, thousands of tourists each year, inner city community groups, and even the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power all benefit in this case study. We will talk about the power of 1 million toilets, people's fear of "toilet to tap" water, unlikely allies, and the essential role of an NGO in thinking outside of the box in order to manage water quantity effectively at both ends of an aqueduct, and how this model can and should be used to balance human and ecosystem needs for water around the world.

Contact:
Arya Degenhardt, Communications Director
Mono Lake Committee
arya@monolake.org
(760) 647-1004
PO Box 29
Lee Vining, CA 93541
USA