

## AFTERBURN REPORT 2004

### Earth Guardians

Earth Guardians use various methods and media to communicate a Leave No Trace (LNT) ethic to the Burning Man community. We focus on emerging issues that have the potential to impact the playa or our community and develop and promote LNT principles and practices to reduce impacts. We also visit the Black Rock Desert outside the week of the Burning Man event, both to introduce participants to the beauty of the area and to participate in restoration and education activities. Our volunteer teams include groups focused on LNT for theme camps and art projects, restoration of sensitive areas around the playa, outdoor education, and monitors for hot springs and burn platforms. We also have communication specialists who work on LNT messages that go out to the larger Burning Man community via email, web, radio public service announcements (PSAs), and video (LNTV).



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#### LNT Train the Trainer Annual Backpacking Trip

For the first time in 2004, we completed the entire annual training session in the field, including our viewing of the Leave No Trace video. Participants joined the trip from several different Burning Man volunteer groups, along with a few Burning Man virgins. One virgin, who was also a member of the Reno Sierra Club, went on to work with Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and lead a fall Train the Trainer LNT backpacking trip in High Rock Canyon for the Sierra Club. He is one example of how Earth Guardians are working more with other wilderness-oriented groups to promote LNT practices and restore areas around the Black Rock National Conservation Area (NCA).

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#### Events and Classes at the EG Pavilion

We experienced growing interest in our classes and nature lectures at the Earth Guardian pavilion in Black Rock City. We've turned our access to crowds of BRC into opportunities for education on LNT and MOOP (matter out of place) collection, giving out many MOOP bags so that everyone has a chance to help clean our city. The LNT self-guided walk also got a lot of traffic from visitors and helped to educate Black Rock City residents on LNT techniques. Our Earth Party was a big success, including the debut of LNTV. Our video experts developed several pilot LNTV videos which played on our LNTV screen at the front of the pavilion and on the Space Cowboy Unimog video screens. The pilot videos covered LNT practices, such as storing cigarette butts in a tin, along with Earth Guardian volunteer activities and events. This year's coordination with BLM and the Friends of Nevada Wilderness led to an exceptionally successful joint outreach program. The groups considered their efforts to be a success in terms of both the level of outreach that they achieved and the opportunity to try new communication techniques. We will look for opportunities to build on these efforts next year.





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## LNT Outreach

Our LNT outreach crusaders expanded their numbers and efforts in 2004. We're hoping to really grow this group and build their group culture and interest over the next year by building on the success of the "LNT ponies" as a visible volunteer group with a presence in the Burning Man community. Other partnerships allow us to use the Space Cowboys Unimog as an outreach vehicle and LNT best-practice example for large-scale sound installations. We highlighted 17 LNT model camps this year, representing camps of all sizes and showcasing best practices including grey water handling and disposal, reuse of materials and structures, MOOP avoidance techniques, and LNT education. It was a tough year to pick winners in the camp-of-the-day contest, but due to their outstanding efforts, 7 Sins Lounge, Nose Fish, HeeBeeGeeBee Healers, Swingers Lounge, and Borrachos Y Bicicletas were the 2004 winners.

Our mobile patrols spent Sunday after the Man burned scanning burn platforms for problems. Signs placed at burn platforms proved a great way to educate participants! They took notice of the messages, and our volunteers found the signs to be helpful references for starting discussions. We noticed a reduction in burning of synthetic materials (hopefully due to community education and awareness). Most problems were associated with overloading of the platforms. We do like to burn! To keep these problems under control, Earth Guardians need more volunteers from other Burning Man departments and from campers and artists, as well! While we did get help from on-duty Rangers watching for problems, we didn't receive volunteers from many other departments, and we really need help on the Sunday and Monday after the event. On Monday we were not able to cover any shifts, since most of our volunteers were on their way out of town or spending their last hours in BRC cleaning and packing up our own camp. We will continue to push the recycle, reuse message in our outreach material and work with the Department of Public Works and artists on improved designs for burn platforms.

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## Ideas for 2005

As we plan for 2005, we would like to see continued promotion of the benefits of recognition, rewards, and incentives for smart camping and art that leaves no trace. LNT model camps and the LNT Tour of the City will continue to provide examples of LNT camping practices and technologies that participants can visit out of general interest or when they have specific questions about issues like grey water or trash management. Tickets are awarded to camps that best exemplify LNT in our camp-of-the-day. This year's pilot effort of LNTV united compelling PSA-type video messaging with popular dance music, making a hit with participants. The idea will return on a bigger scale next year. We will continue to put energy into restoration of the Frog Farm site. We're hoping to plant more native species (such as cottonwoods) and remove more of the non-native species around the hot springs. We're also hoping to expand our education and outreach efforts with BLM and groups such as the Friends of Nevada Wilderness and Friends of Black Rock, High Rock in 2005.



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