



**EASTERN SIERRA HISTORY CONFERENCE  
Virtual  
October 30, 2021**

**Saturday, October 30**

- 9:00 a.m. Welcome and Introductions**
- 9:05 a.m. *Miracle Country*  
Kendra Atleework  
Author**
- 9:40 a.m. *A Pertinent History of Fire in Eastern California*  
David Carle  
Historian and Author**
- 10:15 a.m. Morning Break**
- 10:25 a.m. *The Making of Yosemite*  
Jen Huntley  
Author and Historian**
- 11:00 a.m. *From Miners Inches to Acre Feet: The  
Commoditization of Water in the Mono Basin, 1900-  
1930*  
Robert Marks  
Author and Historian**
- 11:35 a.m. Lunch Break**
- 12:30 p.m. *Born Free and Equal Book – Ansel Adams Project*  
Jeff Gabriel and Bernadette Johnson**
- 1:20 p.m. Conference Wrap-up**
- 1:30 p.m. Conference Ends**

## **Speaker Bios**

### **Michael Adams**

Michael Adams was born August 1, 1933, in Yosemite National Park, CA. He attended Stanford University, Stanford, CA, 1951-1953, and then joined the United States Air Force as an Aviation Cadet. Upon graduating from pilot training in 1955, he was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant and sent to Vance AFB, OK, for B-26 transition training.

In 1962, Michael and Jeanne Victoria Falk were married in a ceremony at the Old Village Chapel in Yosemite Valley, 61 years to the date that his grandfather and grandmother married in Yosemite under Bridalveil Fall (July 28, 1901). In 1963, Michael began his medical training at Washington University School of Medicine. Jeanne continued teaching in St. Louis high schools. Upon attaining his M.D. degree, Michael interned at Malcom Grow USAF Medical Center in Washington, D.C., having re-entered the United States Air Force in 1966 as a senior medical student.

Following training in Aerospace Medicine at Brooks AFB, San Antonio, TX, Michael requested and was assigned to the 36th Fighter Wing at Bitburg Air Base, Germany. Michael became Chief of Flight Medicine in 1968 and was Chief of Aerospace Medicine, 1969-71. Michael was selected as Flight Surgeon of the Year for the United States Air Forces Europe in 1969. Michael was appointed as one of a select group of pilot-physicians and flew with the 53rd Tactical Fighter Squadron as an Aircraft Commander in the F-4D "Phantom II".

In 1971, Michael began his training in Internal Medicine at Valley Medical Center in Fresno, completing the program in 1974, becoming Board Certified in Internal Medicine that year. He established a private practice of Internal Medicine in Fresno and practiced medicine actively until his retirement in August 2000. In 1990, Michael was honored by being named a Distinguished Alumnus of California State University Fresno. In 1991, Michael was elected a Fellow of the Aerospace Medical Association. In 1994, he was elected a Fellow of the American College of Physicians (FACP). Also in 1994, Michael was honored as a Distinguished Alumnus of Wasatch Academy. In 2007, Michael received the Washington University School of Medicine Alumni Achievement Award.

In 1976, Michael was appointed an Assistant Clinical Professor of Medicine, University of California San Francisco, School of Medicine, and taught in the UCSF Fresno medical training program until 2020.

In 1971, Michael rejoined the California Air National Guard as flight surgeon and pilot-physician. He continued to fly with the 194th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron as a pilot-physician in the T-33A and as the 144th USAF Clinic Commander. In 1988, he was promoted to Brigadier General and assigned as the Air National Guard Assistant to the Strategic Air Command's Surgeon General at Offutt AFB, NE. In 1991, he was promoted to Major General and became the Deputy Surgeon General, United States Air Force, for Air National Guard Affairs at Bolling AFB, Washington, D.C. Michael retired in 1993 with a wonderful ceremony at Bolling AFB.

In 1971, Jeanne and Michael assumed responsibility and control of Best's Studio, Incorporated, the family business in Yosemite Valley, established in 1902. The name was changed to **The Ansel Adams Gallery** in 1972, and has continued under the able management of Jeanne Adams as President/CEO and more recently, their son, Matthew Adams. In 1996, with the purchase of the historic Mono Inn at Mono Lake, the Adams family enlarged its retail focus in a magnificent landscape to provide additional hospitality services as well as a fine restaurant. Michael and Jeanne's daughter, Sarah, managed this restaurant until 2009. The Mono Inn was sold in 2021. Michael remains Chairman of the Board of these family businesses.

Michael and Jeanne are the proud grandparents of Scarlet and Ellery, daughters of Sarah Jeanne Adams and Robert Fletterick, PhD. Michael continues today as an active council member of the Yosemite Conservancy.

### **Kendra Atleework**

Kendra Atleework is the recipient of the Ellen Meloy Desert Writers Award. Her first book, *Miracle Country*, tells the story of her family's life in the Eastern Sierra, woven with the history of landscape and community. *Miracle Country* is the winner of the Sigurd F. Olson Nature Writing Award, the Women Writing the West WILLA Literary Award in Creative Nonfiction, and the 2021 pick for the statewide program Nevada Reads. Kendra holds an MFA in writing from the University of Minnesota. She has been awarded fellowships and residencies from the Bread Loaf Writers Conference, the Anderson Center, and the Minnesota State Arts Board. Her writing has appeared in *Best American Essays*, *The Atlantic*, *The Los Angeles Times*, and elsewhere. She now lives in her hometown of Bishop, California, where she can be found roaming the mountains and desert and growing a big garden.

### **David Carle**

David Carle is the author of 15 books of natural and cultural history, focused on both California and the Mono Lake region. He was a California State Park

ranger for 27 years, finishing that career at the Mono Lake Tufa State Reserve (for 19 years), where he still lives. David grew up in Orange County, California, received a bachelor's degree at University of California Davis, in Wildlife and Fisheries Biology, and a Master's degree from California State University Sacramento in Recreation and Parks Administration. He taught biology and natural history courses at Cerro Coso Community College in Mammoth Lakes. He is the current President of the Mono Basin Historical Society.

### **Jeff Gabriel**

Jeff Gabriel is the executive director of the Eastern Sierra Interpretive Association (ESIA). In his current position, he is responsible for all aspects of the ESIA organization from long-range planning, budgeting, daily operation, supervision of personnel, marketing, and public speaking to working closely with the organization's official public land agency partners (U.S. Forest Service, U.S. National Park Service and Bureau of Land Management).

Gabriel worked previously as the executive director of Kansas STARBASE. He was responsible for all aspects of the STARBASE program which was a U.S. Department of Defense youth educational program. Before Kansas STARBASE, he worked previously as the vice president of member services for the Agricultural Retailers Association (ARA) in St. Louis, Missouri. He was responsible for the educational and training programs, membership recruitment and retention efforts, and affinity programs. Prior to ARA, Gabriel was the director of environmental services for the National Pork Producers Council, directing all environmental programs, including policy, education, communication, research, and legal. Before joining NPPC, he worked for Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc in Des Moines, Iowa as government affairs manager. He also served as confidential assistant to the assistant secretary of natural resources and environment at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Gabriel had two years' experience on Capitol Hill working for former Congressman Dave Camp as his legislative director and former Congressman Bill Schuette as his agricultural legislative assistant.

Gabriel was born and raised in Topeka, Kansas and has a Bachelor of Science degree in wildlife biology and political science from Kansas State University. He also has a master's degree in Public Administration with a specialization in agricultural policy from Kansas State University.

### **Jen Huntley, PhD**

Jen Huntley, PhD., author of *The Making of Yosemite: James Mason Hutchings and the Origins of America's Favorite National Park*, is an environmental historian of the Sierra Nevada and Pacific Rim. She was a co-founder of the University of Nevada Academy for the Environment, a visiting

assistant professor in the University of Nevada Department of History, and tenure-track faculty at the Truckee Meadows Community College. She was consulting Historian for the California Historical Society's 2014 celebration of the Yosemite grant sesquicentennial, "Yosemite: A Storied Landscape," and for the Nevada Discovery Museum in Reno Nevada. She is past president of greenUP!, "Where Sustainability is the New Business-as-Usual," hosted New Books in Environmental Studies, wrote the regular feature, "Edible Traditions" for Edible Reno-Tahoe, and was on the board of several Reno nonprofit organizations. Jen currently lives on Vashon Island, Washington.

### **Bernadette Johnson**

Bernadette Johnson began her 31-year federal career by joining the National Park Service in 1990 and has served as the Superintendent for Manzanar National Historic Site since June 2014. She has worked for the National Park Service for 17 years at Grand Canyon, Glacier, and the former Southwest Regional Office in Santa Fe. She worked for the Bureau of Land Management in Lake Havasu City, Bishop, and Carson City. In 2014 returned to the Payahuunadu (Owens Valley) and to the National Park Service to become the Superintendent for Manzanar. She has a life-long interest in social justice issues and believes that it is vital to teach about the importance of equality for all people.

### **Robert Marks, PhD**

Robert (Bob) Marks is Professor Emeritus of History and Environmental Studies at Whittier College (in Whittier, California). He is the author of several books and articles on Chinese and world environmental history, most notably *Tigers, Rice, Silk, and Silt: Environment and Economy in South China* (1998), *The Origins of the Modern World: A Global and Environmental Narrative from the Fifteenth to the Twenty-first Century* (4th ed. 2020), and *China: An Environmental History* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2017) (all translated into Chinese). Since retiring after 41 years on the faculty of Whittier College, he has been working on an environmental history of the Eastern Sierra, starting with the Mono Basin. The first article in that project, "Sheep Replace Pronghorn: An Environmental History of the Mono Basin," has been published in the *Eastern Sierra History Journal*. He lives in June Lake with Joyce Kaufman and their black lab Seger.