

CITY  
**10,000-year clock project encourages slower pace**

Warren Bates  
443 words  
20 February 2000  
The Las Vegas Review-Journal  
Final  
9B  
English  
(Copyright 2000)

By Warren Bates

Review-Journal

BAKER - If life weren't moving slowly enough in Baker, population 80, a worldwide consortium of high-tech types and artists want it to go a little slower.

The Long Now Foundation, based in San Francisco, has purchased 80 acres of land on Mount Washington, about 12 miles from Baker. There, it intends to install a 10,000-year clock that will tick once a year, bong every century and whose cuckoo - if one is included - will come out every millennium.

The group's founders, according to administrative assistant Camille Davila, believe "the whole civilization has been going into a shortened attention span."

The idea is to encourage longer-term responsibility, said president Stewart Brand, who also is president of the Whole Earth Catalog.

Plans are to build the 8-foot-high timepiece into the face of white limestone cliffs at the 10,000-foot elevation on the west side of the Snake Mountain range. The property, purchased for \$140,000 last year, previously belonged to a mining company whose claims dated back to 1916.

Most of the two-mile-long stretch of land just outside Great Basin National Park is covered by a forest of bristlecone pines, among the world's oldest living things. Davila said New Mexico and Northern California were considered as potential sites, but the idea of a remote spot coupled with the fact some of the trees have survived nearly 5,000 years won the day for the Snake Range.

The clock is being designed by Danny Hillis, touted by the foundation as having built some of the world's fastest computers. Details on its progress can be found on the foundation's Web site ([www.longnow.org](http://www.longnow.org)). Entirely mechanical rather than electronic, the group says the clock "utilizes a new form of digital calculation and synchronizes with the noon sun to achieve accuracy over very long periods of time."

A working prototype was finished in time for the turn of the millennium. It bonged twice.

It is hoped that people will be able to walk through the area where the clock will stand, providing "a meditative experience," Davila said.

The thing about 10,000-year clocks, though, is there is no rush to put them in. Davila speculated project completion is "10, maybe 20 years" down the road. The foundation is also working on a second similar clock for an urban area in a more controlled environment.

She acknowledged the project is "going to be really expensive. Really, really, really expensive."

ten thousand year clock project timepiece mount washington davila brand

Document lvs000020010808dw2k002y0