

Rio Grande Chapter Directory

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Sierra Club Structure

The Club has three structural levels. The National Board of Directors determines the overall direction of the Club. The National Organization is subdivided into Chapters, and each Chapter is further divided into Groups. One representative from each Chapter reports to the National Board through the Council of Club Leaders.

The largest part of the Chapter's budget goes to the salary and expenses for Jennifer and a part-time lobbyist, followed by the printing and mailing of this Newsletter.



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Contributions are welcome from members. Email contributions preferred. Send to jbuchser@earthlink.net or mail to John Buchser, 223 N. Guadalupe #419, Santa Fe, NM 87501. **All submissions MUST be received by the 10th of the month prior to publication.** (The Rio Grande Sierran is published in early January, March, May, July, September, and November.) Photos, artwork and poems are also welcome. Letters and articles are subject to abridgement.

Editorial practices as developed by the Grand Canyon Chapter and adopted by the Rio Grande Chapter will be used in production of the Rio Grande Sierran. Letters to the editor over 500 words will be edited for length or returned to the author for editing. Submissions of Rio Grande Chapter members will take precedence over other submissions.

Content of Group pages are the responsibility of the editor for that group and any policies that are in place from the applicable Group.

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Critters, Bikes, and Power

Game And Fish Steps Backwards On Species Protection

By James Bailey

During a February 15 hearing before the New Mexico Senate Conservation Committee, Larry Bell, Director of the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, thwarted efforts to expand the Department's authority for managing all of our state's wildlife, including many declining species. The issue arose during discussion of Senator Patrick Lyons' bill to amend the authorities of the State Game Commission and the Department of Game and Fish. Senator Lyons wants to allow the Department to lease habitat for game species involved in conflicts with landowners. His bill establishes a "wildlife partnership program" for this purpose. It also expands Department authority to accept grants and donations to include "materials, equipment and services" for game and fish projects.

In a meeting with conservationists, Senator Lyons had agreed to amend his bill by changing the narrow focus from "game and fish" to "wildlife." ("Wildlife" would be substituted in two places in the bill.) This would provide clear authority for the Department of Game and Fish to apply for and accept any state, federal or private funds, grants, materials, equipment, services or donations from any source for wildlife (not just game and fish) programs and projects. It also would allow the Department to lease habitat needed for any wildlife, not just game and fish. The expanded authority would allow the Department to participate in management and conservation of declining nongame species before they become so rare as to require listing as threatened or endangered under federal or state law. Examples of such species are the swift fox, black-tailed prairie dog and Chiricahua leopard frog. All are candidates for federal listing.

However, during the hearing, Senator Lyons amended his bill to focus, not upon "wildlife," but on "protected wildlife." Protected wildlife are defined in statutes by a list of game and sport fish. Clearly, Senator Lyons was being coached by Director Bell. If anything, this change narrows the focus of Department of Game and Fish wildlife conservation activities. I urged the senators to remove the word "protected" from "protected wildlife", stating that New Mexico needed to get "ahead of the curve" in conserving species before they require listing as threatened or endangered. Bell responded that the change would "take us too far ahead of the curve." Afterwards, Bell said that he opposed expanded authority to manage and conserve all our wildlife until there was also expanded funding for this purpose. However, he had just opposed expanded authority to seek grants or donations for anything other than game species.

Under Director Larry Bell, the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish seems happily mired in the wildlife conservation ethics of the 1960s.



Efforts to Include Renewable Energy in New Mexico's Deregulation Plans

By Gail Ryba

Energy Chair

Environmentalists are generally worried that electric utility deregulation will pull the plug, so to speak, on environmental protections that safeguard our air and water. However, environmentalists can shape the legislation controlling deregulation to promote development of renewable and sustainable energy production. There are two primary renewable energy policies being considered in states around the country, one called a System Benefits Charge, and a second called a Renewable Portfolio Standard.

In the NM Electric Utility Restructuring Act of 1999, provision was made to begin charging a System Benefits Charge of \$0.0003/kWh starting January 1, 2002. The expected \$5 Million annually is to be administered by the NM Environment Department to fund consumer education, provide assistance for low-income users, encourage the use of renewable energy for local government and tribes, and provide power to underserved rural areas.

However, if an unqualified delay of deregulation is passed by the New Mexico Legislature in their 2001 session, this important provision for renewable energy may also be delayed. It is hoped that the deregulation delay bill that Senator Michael Sanchez (D-Belen) is proposing will allow for the SBC to go forward, starting January 1, 2002. This would allow New Mexico to begin laying the groundwork for increased renewable energy, prior to the implementation of full-scale deregulation. If this is not done, there is a bill (SB 380) that was introduced by Senator Leonard Tsosie to preserve the SBC independent of deregulation or its delay.

Currently New Mexico makes no provision for a Renewable Portfolio Standard that would specify what percentage of electricity production must come from renewable sources. According to the Union of Concerned Scientists 10 states have adopted minimum renewable electricity standards, including 2.2% in Texas by 2009, and 11% in Massachusetts by 2009.

According to the U.S. Department of Energy New Mexico has the 12th largest wind resource in the U.S., and could produce 25 times the states annual consumption. Particularly in the Eastern Plains of New Mexico, the wind resource is strong and can provide electricity at cost-competitive rates. One 660 kW wind turbine has already been installed near Clovis, and second is planned.

New Mexico clearly has an abundance of solar energy, and this resource should also be developed.

New Mexico has 6 power plants that are older than the Clean Air Requirements and so have been grandfathered. Three of these plants are coal-fired, and the two largest, the San Juan (owned by Public Service of New Mexico) and the Four Corners (owned by Arizona Public Service) plants generate 70% of the electricity in New Mexico and don't have to meet emission limits that new plants must meet for NOx and SOx. There are no

Bicycle Advocacy Forms a Statewide Coalition

By Gail Ryba

In the early 1990s I worked with Stefan Verchinski and other members of a local Sierra Club transportation subcommittee to develop bike parking and other bike-related ordinances for the city of Albuquerque. From that network of concerned bicyclists grew another organization, the Greater Albuquerque Spokes People, which in December, 2000, became part of a Bicycle Advocacy Coalition of New Mexico, along with the Los Alamos County Cycling Coalition, the Mesilla Valley Bicycle Coalition (Las Cruces), New Mexico Alternative Transit in Santa Fe, and the Silver Spokes Bicycling Club in Silver City.

One of the Coalition's main goals in 2001 is to issue a report card to Governor Johnson on the performance of the New Mexico State Highway and Transportation Department (NMSHTD) with respect to promoting bicycling and other alternative forms of transportation. Since passage of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Equity Act (ISTEA) of 1991 NMSHTD is supposed to have been promoting bicycle safety and generally promulgating a "Share the Road" message, but their actions in this regard have been minimal. We expect to release this report on Bike-to-Work Day as part of May Bike Month.

In the 2001 Legislature we are backing a bill introduced by Senator Cisco McSorley (SB 390) to provide \$80,000 to "promote bicycling as a safe, healthy and fuel efficient alternative to driving, that provides bicycling information for driver education and that educates bicyclists and the general public on how to share the road."

The Coalition is seeking broad statewide membership and would especially like to find interested bicycle advocates in the cities outside of the Middle Rio Grande Valley. For more information contact Gail Ryba, gnyrba@cybermesa.com, 955-9578, or check the Website of Greater Albuquerque Spokes People (www.abqspokes.org) under the "Promoting Bicycling Campaign."



standards for mercury or carbon dioxide emissions, so these pollutants are dumped into our air with no limits.

Deregulation can benefit clean energy, but only if people let their elected officials know that they expect clean power generation to be promoted by the state.

Letters to the Editor - List Servers

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I read Courtney White's recent article (November/December) on grass banking with great interest. Public land livestock ranching is one of the two most pressing economic and ecological problems facing the Southwest and I welcome the variety of efforts being made by people like Courtney, Bill DeBuys, John Homing and others to address the problem.

I have two questions for grass bank advocates and the rest of us to contemplate. First, given that most areas of the Southwest have been grazed heavily, often overgrazed, since about 1880, does resting an area (an allotment) for two or three years really provide enough rest and recovery to make any real difference for the area's ecological health?

I sense that a two or three year rest for an area of desert or forest land is pretty insignificant and can only allow some grass recovery. If the BLM or Forest Service managers are going to do prescribed fire or brush removal on a grazed area while the cows are vacationing on a grass bank, are these management actions being done solely to restore the grazing potential of the area or to help restore the watershed and biological diversity of the area, including its ability to support rare plants and large predators? Prescribed fire is generally good in the Southwest, but when combined with continued grazing it does not mimic natural fire.

In the Rio Grande watershed, we continue to devote vast amounts of water to raising cattle and their feed. A majority of Rio Grande water goes to irrigate cattle feed and huge amounts of mountain runoff has vanished over the last century because of overgrazed watersheds. In a real

way, the Rio Grande runs low today because we are raising feed for cows and because public land ranching has so diminished watershed output. Since agriculture, including ranching, contributes so little to our economy and employment in New Mexico and since the water shortages it causes are impacting our active economy, we might start to wonder if grass banking and other improvements on the margins of the obsolete ranching economy really are doing much for people or for wild nature at all.

Tom Ribe
Santa Fe

Dear Editor,

However nice it may sound, the need for grass banks for ranchers who operate on our public lands only proves two things. 1) Their allotments are overstocked with cattle and can't sustain that number ecologically. and 2) Ranching is not an economically viable business even with the bargain basement subsidized rate of \$1.35 per month per cow/calf unit. When a rancher buys a base (private) property and gets a permit for the privilege of using a public land grazing allotment adjacent to it, a very specific number of cattle (permitted number) are allowed to use that very specific piece of public land (the allotment). The permitted number on an allotment is a highly inflated number, which has more to do with bank loans than ecological sustainability, and space doesn't allow more discussion of that issue here - (although it deserves much attention too). The number of cattle using the allotment at any moment (actual use numbers) is supposed to be a number that will not impair the productivity of the land throughout time. If natural fire has not been able to carry because of overgrazing, or if the grass-

Stay Connected With The Latest Information

The Sierra Club maintains many automated e-mail mailing lists, called list servers. In our chapter, we have just moved our lists onto the the National Club's hardware, after many years of using New Mexico Technet's free resources (thanks!) for this purpose.

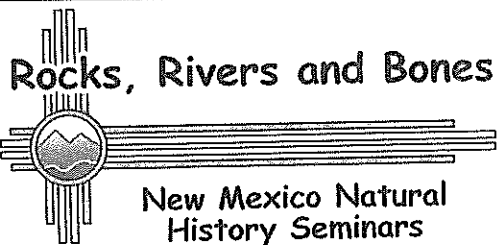
Two different kinds of lists are being maintained by our chapter. One is open to everyone to post items of environmental interest - meetings, hearings, news items. This list used to be called sierranews, it is now RIO-ISSUES.

The other kind of list has a lower volume, for those who don't want to get too much e-mail. It can only be used by specific chapter leaders. Each group has its own list.

See the back page of this issue for instructions on how to sign up.

land ecosystem is being replaced by pinon and juniper trees because of lack of fires, then there are too many head on the allotment and numbers should be permanently reduced. That's the whole concept of "sustained yield" one of the Forest Service's management guidelines. While some of us struggle to get current laws enforced and any kind of honest management from the forest service as if the public mattered, other win/win "consensus" groups continue to prop up an industry that never should have been in the arid west.

Michael Sauber
Silver City



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Legislative Report

Legislative Report

Legislature from Page 1

the poor rural Hispanic communities of Northern New Mexico. The study received very favorable notice in the press and strengthened the Club's credibility.

The opening of the legislature saw a change of the Democratic leadership of both houses; Representative Ben Lujan replaced Representative Sanchez as Speaker of the House and Senator Richard Romero replaced Senator Manny Aragon as President of the Senate, the former anticipated, the latter a divisive surprise.

A large number of bills that could affect the environment were introduced in both houses, in fact roughly 100 of over 1800 bills.

The Club Lobbyist Doug Fraser, along with outreach coordinator Paul Paryski, have worked closely with the legislators, have testified before numerous hearings and have maintained a bill watchlist in collaboration with the other environmental lobbyists and PVO's. A strategy session is held every Friday by these groups to coordinate their and our efforts.

Of these many bills, the following received the Club's particular attention:

- House Bill 681, introduced by Representative Roger Madalena, with the assistance of the State Land Office and the Sierra Club, requiring sand and gravel mines to be registered and that the mining company be required to restore the landscape after mining ceases. Sand and gravel pits scar the New Mexico landscape and cause extensive erosion. This bill was (unfortunately) tabled after requests from both the House Energy and Natural Resources Committee, where the gravel industry requested additional study. A House memorial is being prepared to establish an interim committee for this purpose. Hopefully a new and better bill will be passed in the next session.
- Senate Bill 1, introduced by Senators Aragon and Jennings, which would allow intrusion by local state authorities on Federal Forests and logging therein. The bill rightly points out the wildfire problems caused by over grown forests and mismanagement but would undermine the framework of both state and federal laws designed throughout the years to protect forests. The Club opposed the bill on these grounds, its unconstitutionality and the lack of appropriations to really address the problems of wildfires and watershed management. Lobbyist Doug Fraser's intervention in a committee hearing was quoted in the February 15, 2001 New Mexican editorial asking the lawmakers to heed the Sierra Club's advice.
- House Bill 241, introduced by Representatives Gubbels and Knauer, which would protect individuals and groups from lawsuits by large companies, lawsuits whose only objective is to impinge the legal right of individuals and groups to express their views to their elected officials and participate in the process of government; The Club vigorously supports this bill;
- House Bill 77, introduced by Representative Taylor, which would greatly diminish the ability of County Commissions to regulate and control subdivisions thus encouraging sprawl. The Club opposes this bill. Senator Feldman has proposed a more acceptable bill;

- A large number of water bills, some good some bad, including Senate Bill 730 which would totally restructure the management of water under the Environmental Department.
- House Bill 282, introduced by Representative Begaye, which protects amphibians and reptiles. The Club supports this bill;
- House Bill 445, introduced by Representative Gubbels, which gives the State Engineer's Office greater powers to enforce water laws and regulations. The Club supports this bill;
- Senate Bill 18, introduced by Senator Feldman, which provides fiscal measures to encourage the use of alternate fuel vehicles and require the State to purchase these vehicles for their fleets. The Club supports this bill

The second half of the session should see much fighting in both hearings, and particularly on the House and Senate Floors. Governor Johnson's veto power may once again prove to be a difficult hurdle.

We would particularly like to thank Senators Cisneros, Feldman, McSorley, and Robinson and Representatives Gubbels, Knauer, Madelena, Martinez, Picraux, and Stewart for their collaboration.

We appreciate your comments and hope that members will contact their legislators to express their views on environmental issues. A bill watchlist is available upon request; contact Doug Fraser at fraser@thuntek.net or Paul Paryski at pparyski@AOL.com.

Doug Fraser and Paul Paryski

Chapter Meetings March 17 & 18

On March 17 from 9am to 3pm, the Rio Grande Chapter Conservation Committee will meet at Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge. On March 17 and 18, following the Conservation meeting, the Executive Committee will meet. All meetings are open to members. We encourage your involvement!

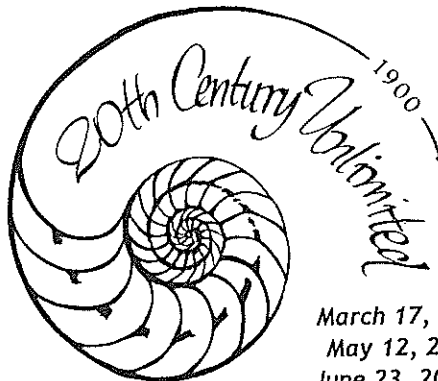
Housing is available at only \$10/day. For reservations, please contact Jennifer Johnson at 289-9183, or yomi@nm.net

The summer meetings will be held at Cottonwood Gulch, courtesy of host Martin Heinrich. This will occur June 9 and 10.



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Bosque

Bosque from Page 1

On the other hand, some species of birds, such as the endangered Southwestern Willow Flycatcher will nest in tamarisk, and bees enjoy the copious flowers (and therefore so do beekeepers). However, optimal native biodiversity requires cottonwood.

Like cottonwood, tamarisk can germinate on wet riverbanks, coming up as dense as a newly seeded lawn, and can also spread through root sprouts at alarming rates. Add to this the fact that tamarisk has tolerance to drought and saline soils, and very few insects seem to impact it. In many ways, tamarisk is a super-invader that is a serious problem not only here in the southwest, but also in Australia, Egypt, and Israel, where some tamarisk species are native.

And so in its list of offenses, is tamarisk also 'beating up on' our native cottonwood? It has generally been said that the problem along the Rio Grande is that tamarisk out-competes cottonwood, and certainly cottonwood seeds aren't able to grow in the salty darkness beneath tamarisk. If this was the whole story, though, the future would be very dim indeed for cottonwood. Even if we created conditions good for cottonwood establishment, even if the river was reverted to its former wildness, there would be no hope. However, researchers throughout the southwest have been studying this problem and have news that may even be cause for optimism.

One of the biggest surprises: cottonwood can 'beat up on' tamarisk! Recently published in Conservation Biology is our research showing that when both tamarisk and cottonwood are planted at the same time, cottonwood seedlings grow taller faster than tamarisk and can suppress the growth of neighboring tamarisk seedlings by up to 75%. On the other hand, tamarisk, even when growing at a density of hundreds per square foot, seems to have little to no effect on the growth or survival of cottonwood! As yet unpublished findings suggest that this is true across a range of soil types. What this means is that when we are able to provide conditions that allow cottonwood to germinate - i.e. flooding and bare soil - seedlings should be able to establish, even if there are tamarisk also trying to get a foot-hold there.

At the Bosque del Apache Wildlife Refuge, biologist John Taylor headed a project that simulated the effects of historical flooding with impressive results; hundreds of cottonwood trees established on their own (i.e. without planting) and are still growing strong years later, even though the trees were surrounded by thousands of tamarisk seedlings initially. There were no efforts to remove the tamarisk seedlings - the ecosystem took care of them on its own. Combined with its strong competitive ability, cottonwood is also much better able to withstand flooding than tamarisk during their first year - flooding is the champion again. Another project conducted at Bosque del Apache with researchers from UNM revealed that flooding has important effects on many levels of the ecosystem, including microbial activity, soil nutrients, and forest productivity.

All of these results support what we have seen in many other habitats around the world: repair the health of the ecosystem by restoring disturbance, and the symptoms of dysfunction will often take care of themselves. In this case, allow the river to behave the way the native species adapted to it, and a whole cascade of benefits should follow. Many ecosystems' species benefit from regular distur-

bance: fire in prairies, grazing in savannas, and tree-falls in forests all can lead to increased biodiversity and a decrease in invasions. Either increasing disturbance (e.g. clear-cutting or overgrazing) or decreasing it (e.g. reducing flooding) can lead to ecological disaster.

So shall we bomb the dams? Clearly it is unrealistic, considering current human needs, to rip out all of the dams and jetties. The days of the wild and raging river that could rip out groves of trees to make room for new are long gone for the Middle Rio Grande. But that's where technology can play a part; although labor intensive, many management groups are putting resources into removing tamarisk to allow for the return of the cottonwood bosque. Biological control also looks promising; insects have been found that preferentially eat tamarisk and therefore could be used to reduce tamarisk numbers. Critical, however, is managing the river in such a way that cottonwood and other native species can benefit from the new space provided by removing tamarisk. Flooding must be restored to some degree.

Good news again: especially in the last five years there has been serious and dedicated cooperation between university researchers, US Army Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Reclamation, Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District, US Fish and Wildlife, and other agencies to find ways to balance human needs with an ecosystem-friendly management of the river. In fact, the US Army Corps of Engineers, which controls much of the river's current activity through dam releases, has 'ecosystem restoration' as a part of its civil works mission.

Cooperation is essential; not only between agencies, but with landowners as well. Currently, there is active dialogue to keep development out of the 100-year floodplain. This protects their investment as well as allowing a dam-release program to simulate historical flooding patterns. Also necessary for flooding is the re-building of the San Marcial railroad bridge, which is currently too low to allow high flows. The Corps has identified this problem, but will require an additional agency or organization to assist in the financing.

Perhaps the most exciting, recent cooperative effort is the Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Act Collaboration Program, to be signed this spring. This extensive project involves multiple parties, including state and federal agencies, in the protection and restoration of habitat for threatened species, including the Silver Minnow and the Southwestern Willow Flycatcher. While protection of 'flagship species' such as these can also mean protection of other animals and plants, we must also be aware that species-centered projects are exactly that and may not benefit all potential species in need. For example, an area cannot be cleared of tamarisk if the flycatcher is nesting there - never mind that the original willow that the flycatcher could nest in might be restored.

And yet, even though there are a myriad of reasons why we will probably never be fully rid of tamarisk, we should not be disheartened. Juliet Stromberg of Arizona State University has shown with over-bank flooding, mixed stands of tamarisk with cottonwood and other native species are possible, and these mixed stands can even function well ecologically.

The moral seems to be this: our bosque has been in trouble, but if current trends to understand and protect it continue, we may succeed in preserving and restoring some of its original biodiversity. This is cautious optimism; balancing hu-

man and ecosystem needs involves many difficult and complex issues; many more, even, than are touched upon here. A key is flooding, but many other changes must be made in conjunction with any alteration in the way the Rio Grande runs. However, as awareness grows that we humans also have a need for a healthy bosque (i.e. ecosystem needs and human needs are not such separate issues), there is increased likelihood that the necessary changes will be made. There is hope.

Dr. Anna Sher is currently temporary faculty at the University of New Mexico, where she also conducted her dissertation research on tamarisk. She wishes to acknowledge Mark Harborg of the US Army Corps of Engineers and John Taylor of the US Fish and Wildlife for contributing information for this article.

Dr. Sher wrote this article at the request of the editors of the Albuquerque Tribune. An edited version appeared in the February 17 issue of the Tribune. Further information about Anna's work can be found at her website, www.anna.sher.com

All Creatures Great and Small



Photo by Cow Forster

"Every good thing, great and small, needs defense." — John Muir

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Jemez Mountains

Valles Caldera from Page 1

ment of Interior. The Forest Service is under a different national cabinet, the Department of Agriculture. The Valles Caldera National Preserve has added to this bureaucracy a Board of Trustees, two of whose members represent two different national cabinets.

Ultimately, the agency that has been granted the greatest power is the Forest Service, since they were responsible for initial management of the land until the Board of Trustees was appointed and capable of management. The legislation also specifies that the Forest Service will supply personnel to handle many of the caretaker duties, for which the Baca Ranch will reimburse it. Since the passage of the legislation, Buck Sanchez of the Jemez Ranger District, in Jemez Springs, has undertaken much of the initial work concerning the Ranch. The Forest Service has plans to detail an employee to the board until the board hires an executive director.

The Board of Trustees had a non-public orientation meeting in Santa Fe, in January. At that meeting the Forest Service invited various agencies to speak on the resources of the Ranch and presumably about land management. Since then, the Board has held several public meetings, the first of which was poorly publicized. But, they have numerous other public meetings planned in communities surrounding the Jemez Mountains. Two of the meetings will be regular Board of Trustee meetings at which they will handle business. The others will be listening sessions at which community members and the interested public will be able to voice their opinions and concerns about management of the Valles Caldera National Preserve.

The schedule announced includes:

March 8, 6 PM-9 PM (listening session). College of Santa Fe on St. Michael's Dr., in "The Forum".

March 9, 1 PM-5 PM (Board meeting) and **6 PM-9 PM** (listening session). Los Alamos, in Fuller Lodge.

March 10, 1 PM-4 PM (listening session). Ghost Ranch north of Abiquiu between miles post 224 and 225 on US Hwy 84 (the Chama Hwy), in the Social Center.

The first few meetings, because they were poorly announced, had small attendance. The meeting on February 13, however, had better attendance and showed the Board to have strong environmental sensibilities. A summary of some of the issues the board addressed follows.

The Board agreed with the Valles Caldera Coalition, of which the Rio Grande Chapter is a member, that before any activities are planned for the Ranch, a thorough program for inventoring and monitoring of the soils, water, vegetation, wildlife, and visual qualities must be set up. The Board voted to ask Craig Allen, an ecologist with the US Biological Survey and based at Bandelier NM, to put together a team of scientists to do the inventoring. This will give the Board information on and condition of the natural resources. The State has offered to do surface water quality baseline studies.

The Board also, wisely, turned down a proposal by the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish to hold an elk hunt this fall on the Preserve. This proposal would have set a precedent for how special interest groups could and would lobby for their desired activity.

This summer a staff of archaeologists will

Land Management, Boundary Changes, And You

By Jennifer Johnson

Conservation Committee Chair

Located in the Jemez Mountains, the Bandelier watershed lies on an easterly sloping plateau and comprises nearly 49,200 acres. Its western boundary is Cochiti Canyon and its eastern boundary is the Rio Grande River. Most of the land management in the watershed is split between two government agencies. The National Park Service manages the larger, lower elevation, eastern portion—nearly 32,070 acres. The USDA Forest Service manages the smaller, higher elevation, western portion—approximately 16,200 acres. Until recently, a small portion, 930 acres, was in private ownership.

In 1998, in the "Bandelier National Monument Watershed Protection Act", PL 105-376, Congress modified the Monument's boundaries by adding to it the privately owned parcels of land—the Elk Meadows subdivision, the Gardner parcel, the Clark parcel, and Baca Land & Cattle Co. lands. These privately owned parcels comprised the headwaters of Alamo Canyon and presented a grave threat to the integrity and management of the lowest portions of Alamo Canyon located in Bandelier National Monument. Most of the private lands have been purchased, including the Elk Meadows subdivision in 1999 and the Baca Ranch and Valles Caldera last year. The Valles Caldera legislation, PL 106-248, authorized minor corrections in the originally authorized boundary between the upper Alamo watershed and Valles Caldera which is reported to change about 30 acres.

The final maps of the Valles Caldera National Preserve and Bandelier National Monument are supposed to be made available for public inspection at the Santa Fe National Forest Supervisor's office in Santa Fe, and also at the survey for archeological sites along the roads that the Board proposes to keep open. The Valles Caldera Preserve has a very high density of roads left over from logging in the past decades and the Board is interested in whether many of these might be closed.

The president of a Santa Fe jeep club advocated against road closures and asked that trails in the reserve be open to ATVs and jeeps. He offered to help the Board inventory roads, and suggested the Board could earn money by opening the Preserve to jeep rallies. Two fishing guides advocated for stream restoration and a catch and release fishing program which could monetarily benefit the Trust.

We have the opportunity to steer the Board of Trustees into an environmentally sound and ecologically sustainable management program for the Preserve. But there will be many who will be pushing the Board to maximize resource use, for their own pleasure but couched in monetary terms, which would be detrimental to the environment. This could be most detrimental to the wildlife of the Valles Caldera. They have been protected during the last century from the increasing human population and its spread into every other remote region of this small mountain range.

It is vitally important that members of the environmental community attend future meetings and listening sessions and voice their desire for wise management of the natural resources of this precious land.

Bandelier National Monument Superintendent's office at Bandelier.

The Valles Caldera legislation further requires the Forest Service, in cooperation with the Park Service, to prepare and submit a report to the Committees of Congress concerning alternatives which may provide coordinated land management of the upper watersheds of Alamo, Capulin, Medio, and Sanchez Canyons, which includes the Dome Wilderness. This report should also include alternatives which may allow for improved management of elk and other wildlife populations that range between the Forest and the Monument. The report should also include proposed boundary adjustments between the Forest and the Monument to facilitate these objectives.

The report has been completed and submitted to Congress but contained only the Secretary of Agriculture, Dan Glickman's, signature. During the negotiations the agencies were not able to agree on the report and in the end the Park Service did not sign it. On January 19, 2000 the Forest Service quietly released the report to the public. This is understandable, because instead of making any significant recommendations that would alleviate threats to the downstream portions managed by the Monument, the report basically proposes maintaining the status quo.

The report's Preferred Alternative calls for a Memorandum of Understanding establishing cooperative management of the area. History suggests that this is an untenable situation. The two agencies have very different missions, philosophies, and levels of interest in the Dome watershed area. Over the past several decades the lands managed by the Forest Service have experienced several large timber sales. Careless oversight of these sales resulted in damage to archeological resources and watersheds. Though post timber sale requirements call for numerous road closures, many road closures have been ineffective, and many of the old roads continue to be used. In 1996, careless campers on the Forest Service's lands started the Dome Wildfire. The timber sales, uncontrolled public use, and the wildfire have resulted in major erosion of the lower canyon areas and much damage to archeological and natural resources in the entire watershed.

In the last few decades, Congress has passed many pieces of legislation specifically aimed at easing management of watersheds by placing lands within a watershed solely under the management of one agency. Bandelier National Monument was helped by two of the Acts, one to protect Alamo Canyon, the other to protect Frijoles Canyon. In the recent Valles Caldera acquisition, the Baca lands within Santa Clara Canyon were set aside for purchase by Santa Clara Pueblo.

The Memorandum of Understanding has yet to be written, but meanwhile the Congressional Committees will be studying the report. Notify your members of Congress and let them know that the best environmental management for this area would be to transfer the western portion of the Dome watershed from the Forest Service to Bandelier National Monument.

For more information contact Dennis Vasquez, Superintendent, Bandelier National Monument at 672-3861, or Denise McCaig, U.S. Forest Service, Southwestern Region, at 842-3234.



Special Places

Sandia Mountain from Page 1

Open Space Program For Santa Fe County

tice religious and culture traditions unrestricted by government edict.

The position of the Sandia Pueblo is there should never be development of the mountain. This has remained unchanged for centuries. The mountain is sacred and must be preserved and protected. The people of the Pueblo need the mountain for religious and cultural uses. But currently, our access to gather from the mountain for these traditional cultural practices is held by permit and permission of the United States government. This is not right. The people of Sandia Pueblo respectfully believe they should be allowed unrestricted access to the mountain for traditional and cultural uses, and that this mountain should never be developed further for commercial reasons.

The Settlement Agreement

Sandia Pueblo has won twice in the Federal Court System on their Mountain Claim. Each time, the court remanded the case back to the Department of the Interior for a resurvey to place the eastern boundary of the Pueblo at the crest of the mountain. In an opinion released in January of 2001, the Department of the Interior after carefully looking at the historical record recognized the Pueblo's eastern boundary at the crest of the mountain. The Leshy opinion withholds a new survey until the end of the 107th Congress in accordance with the settlement agreement. This opinion, carefully written and evaluating the long historical record of the case, vindicates the Pueblo's position that the mountain was illegally taken from the Pueblo as the result of an errant survey by incompetent surveyor prior to the administration of Abraham Lincoln. The Pueblo believes if this case continues to follow the most litigious route, which they will eventually win, but they are committed to a Settlement Agreement reached between the United States, Sandia Pueblo and the Sandia Peak Tram Company in the spring of 2000. From the Pueblo's perspective; the settlement agreement represents a difficult compromise. The settlement favors protecting the mountain from future development and gaining unobstructed access for religious and cultural purposes by compromising the claim for Indian reservation trust status and complete control of the area by the Pueblo. Changing federal policy, economic and political expediency places the mountain at risk. The settlement also provides for the area to be designated as the T'uf Shur Bien Preservation Trust area. The name provides the Pueblo with a sense of ownership and eases the injustice to the Pueblo.

The settlement agreement provides benefits to private property owners, the public and the national forest service, which are not available without the settlement. The primary road into the national forest is without legitimate right-of-way; the settlement provides a permanent right-of-way. Roads and utility corridor rights-of-way and easements through Pueblo trust land and into the private property are of limited duration; the settlement provides permanent rights-of-way and easements. Forest trails in trespass or needing easement through Pueblo trust and fee lands are settled. All of the Pueblo's claims to the contested area are permanently extinguished by the settlement and the area will remain under the management of the forest service. The settlement agree-

By Susan Martin

In 1998, Santa Fe County voters passed a \$12 Million general obligation bond for the first time to acquire large tracts of land for conservation and recreation. This achievement was due to the efforts of many including Javier Gonzales, then chair of the Santa Fe County Commission, and community organizations such as the Trust for Public Lands and 1000 Friends of New Mexico. With the passage of the bond the Board of County Commissioners established and appointed a permanent citizens committee (COLTPAC) that provides recommendations to the Board on priority projects for acquisition.

Since then, county voters supported another bond in the amount of \$8 Million. In addition to outright purchase of real estate for open space, the language in that proposal allows the county to use bond monies to acquire easements for land use and preservation. The county will use a variety of voluntary methods to protect land as open space. These include conservation easements, donations, purchase with leasebacks, and transfer of development rights.

Voluntary donations of land or easements to the county open space program are encouraged! Edward Archuleta, director of 1000 Friends of New Mexico, a Sierra Club member, and a member of COLTPAC, provided an outstanding example with his donation of a parcel to the city of Santa Fe for its river trail.

County staff combined mapped resource information to identify Resource Protection Areas which are extremely important for their cultural

and natural resource values. Those areas are La Cienega, Two-Mile Reservoir, and La Puebla. RPA are also areas where multiple resources exist. They include archaeological sites, rivers, streams and wetlands, agricultural areas and grasslands. Those areas are: northern valleys' agricultural areas, wetlands and streams, including the Santa Cruz and Pojoaque Rivers; the Tesuque River; Western county grasslands and cultural-historic districts between La Cienega and Los Cerrillos; La Cienega Creek and the lower Santa Fe River; Galisteo basin and river area and San Cristobal and San Marcol Creeks; and the Los Cerrillos/Madrid area and historic mining district. Another COLTPAC goal is to provide community buffers and protect the traditional hinterland of communities. Buffers are delineated for the following communities: La Puebla; Cundiyo; Tesuque; La Cienega; Lamy; Galisteo; Los Cerrillos; Madrid; and Golden.

The COLTPAC program is still young. Properties purchased with the first bond funding are now in need of management plans and staffing to preserve and protect the characteristics that initially made them attractive for inclusion in the program. County staff assigned to the program is in need of assistance to carry out the multiple demands of the program, the public, the Board of County Commissioners and COLTPAC.

In the coming months, the Santa Fe Group will sponsor a presentation by COLTPAC staff to highlight the features of properties purchased with monies in the first \$12 Million bond.

ment will require legislation to take effect. Without legislation all of the compromise and the benefits arising from the settlement will never be realized.

What You Can Do

Opponents of the settlement agreement are now attempting to influence Secretary of Interior Norton, to withdraw the Leshy opinion, and to slow or stop any movement on the Settlement Agreement. This can only lead to further litigation, and further acrimony between neighbors. We encourage the members of the Sierra Club, and all those who love the mountain to write or call Senator Domenici, Senator Bingaman, Representative Wilson, Representative Skeen, and Representative Udall and tell them that you support the Settlement agreement as a way to put this controversy to rest while protecting the rights of all involved: the public, the Pueblo, and the homeowners.

For Further Information

To find out more about the Settlement Agreement, the Management Plan and other details, please go to Sandia Pueblo's website at www.sandia Pueblo.nsn.us Here you can read the entire text of the agreement and management plan. Sandia Pueblo also is willing to speak with those who are interested in protecting and preserving the mountain forever. Please call Frank Chaves at 867-3317 for further information.

Ecofacts:

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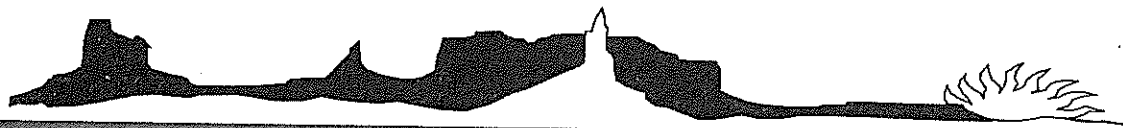
Percentage of dollars saved by replacing an incandescent lightbulb with a compact fluorescent.

Percentage by which energy consumption in developing nations is expected to grow by 2010.

Percentage of total paper used in Germany that goes towards packaging.

Percentage by which one can reduce pollution from an older car by keeping it well tuned.

Percentage by which fish species in Canadian lakes have declined due to acid rain.



Wilderness

Coalition for New Mexico Wilderness

by Jim O'Donnell

The Coalition for New Mexico Wilderness is an organization of organizations and businesses that have come together to push for more Wilderness designation in New Mexico. The Coalition now has 52 members!

The second meeting of the Coalition for New Mexico Wilderness took place January 19th, 2001 at the Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge near Socorro.

In attendance were: Edward Sullivan (NMWA), Jim O'Donnell (Coalition Coordinator), Garrick Delzell (NMWA), Martin Heinrich (Cottonwood Gulch, CNMW Board, NMWA Board), Siobhan Asgharzadeh (UNM PIRG), Randy Rasmussen (National Parks Conservation Association), Sara Scott (The Wilderness Society), Bob Howard (NMWA Board), Jennifer de Garmo (Sierra Club), Dave Simon (National Parks Conservation Association), Pam Eaton (The Wilderness Society, CNMW Board), Melyssa Watson (Wilderness Support Center), Jim Scarantino (New Mexico Republicans for Environmental Protection).

Dr. Bob Parmenter, the Director of the UNM Field Station at Sevilleta opened the meeting with a half-hour presentation on the history of the Sevilleta. A half-hour Q and A followed. The actual meeting began with Bob Howard. He gave a brief introduction and history on the wilderness movement in New Mexico and a little background on the path the current Coalition took to come together. Next, we dealt with the issue of how we can all work together to better facilitate the participation of member organizations. The Coalition was formed on the basis of that every member who chose to participate in the running of the Coalition would have that opportunity. From this discussion, the members present voted that: "Those members of the Coalition present at a given meeting will be extended voting rights at the beginning of each meeting for that particular meeting. The Board, in pursuance with New Mexico law, retains ultimate voting rights. All members of any particular organization that is present at the meeting will be allowed to enter into the dialogue. However, only one vote will be allowed per member organization." We decided that the election of Board officers and the election to fill the one vacant Board seat would happen at a future meeting. Organizations that want to be on the Board should be the ones that are wholly committed to the Wilderness campaign. In order for the Coalition to accomplish its goal of Wilderness protection there is a lot of other things this organization needs to take care of prior to taking off on its own and come up with a Wilderness Bill today. We have a lot of growing to do - who and what do we want to be and how do

Third Annual New Mexico Wilderness Workshop

May 19 - 20, 2001
Washington Ranch
Carlsbad, New Mexico

Mark your calendars! The Third Annual New Mexico Wilderness Workshop is not to be missed!

New Mexico's Wilderness Advocates will gather at the lovely Washington Ranch located 28 miles south of Carlsbad, New Mexico May 19-20, 2001. For any of you that attended last year's workshop you know how fun and informative this can be.

Learn more about the delicate Chihuahuan Desert ecology, the threats it faces and what you, as a lover of wild places, can do to protect these places from destruction. We will also discuss the Cabezon area of north central New Mexico and how you can use the Wilderness Act

as a tool to permanently protect these wild places. If you are a Wilderness advocate, this is the place you want to be!

Bird watching trips, an overnight backpack and maybe even some bat watching are planned.

There will be a registration fee (to be determined) that will include meals and lodging and costs of the workshop.

NMWA is trying to organize a car pool so that members from all parts of the state will have an easier time attending the workshop. If you are willing to drive a number of people from your area OR if you are willing to join in on a car pool, please call Jim ASAP so that we can start getting people together.

Please join us May 19-20 in the Chihuahuan Desert!

We want to expend our resources? We need to both strengthen and broaden the organization. Adding organizations to the list should be secondary to developing the current members and building a good, solid foundation for the Coalition. It was agreed that what the Coalition needs to have a strategic planning session at the next meeting. There was also a discussion concerning the everyday running of the Coalition. Where and how would we get the resources to develop and run the Coalition? To become a truly independent orga-

nization the Coalition needs to wean itself from NMWA and either do its own fundraising or gain contributions from members organizations. A subcommittee was formed to begin to figure this out.

The next meeting of the Coalition will be held March 12th, 2001 in Albuquerque. The meeting will begin at 10:00am. Location to be announced. I encourage all members to attend. Please contact Jim O'Donnell at 843-8696 for more information.

Join the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance!

It's easy!!

- 1) Fill out the form below
- 2) Select your membership class
- 3) Clip this coupon and send it in!

Membership Class*

Regular	\$20	Life	\$250
Supporting	\$30	Student/Senior	\$10
Contributing	\$100		

*Add \$5 each for "Household" Memberships

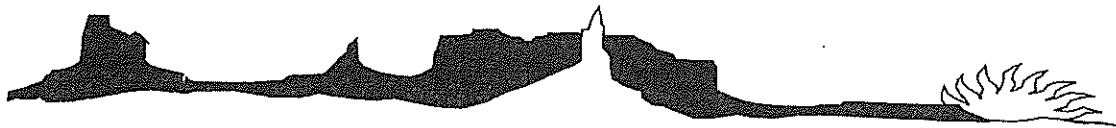
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All contributions to NMWA are tax-deductible

Protect Wilderness -- New Mexico's Natural Heritage



SANTA FE GROUP MEETINGS

DOUBLE FEATURE !! Tuesday, March 20, 7 PM

THE MEXICAN GRAY WOLF – Saving an Imperiled Animal

North America's most imperiled animal was the victim of a campaign of extermination that came within five animals of eradication. After two decades of an emergency captive breeding program, Mexican wolves are now being released into southern Arizona and New Mexico. But forces are working vigorously to sabotage this effort. The fate of the Mexican wolf may ultimately prove the destiny of the Southwest's ecosystem.

Join us to hear and see an inspiring slide show, presented by Michael Robinson from the Center for Biological Diversity, about the future of this program and learn what you can do to help this embattled species survive.

JAVIER GONZALES – Santa Fe County Commissioner

Javier is serving a second term representing District 3 (southwest Santa Fe County) and is President-elect of the National Association of Counties. In 1999, he was appointed by Interior Secretary Babbitt to serve on the National Parks System Advisory Board and was also instrumental in promoting Santa Fe County's Open Lands and Trails program, resulting in acquisition and protection of critical properties throughout the county.

The audience will have an opportunity to discuss with him his view of the future for development within Santa Fe County and the problems of water, open space and sprawl.

Santa Fe Group of the Sierra Club

621 Old Santa Fe Trail · Suite 10 · Plaza Desira · Santa Fe · New Mexico · 87501
505 · 983-2703

NOTES FROM THE ACTING CHAIR

Barbara Johnson

About 35 people joined us for our press conference in January to announce the publication of *Of Land and Culture: Environmental Justice and Public Lands Ranching in Northern New Mexico*. The story was covered in the *Santa Fe New Mexican*, the *Santa Fe Reporter*, and the *Taos News*. In addition, we expect it will be reviewed in *High Country News*. Thus far, the book has been flying off the shelves. If you are interested in receiving a copy (they are free), you'd better call soon.

The Santa Fe Group has been very active in the current Legislature, working closely with our Chapter lobbyist and with the representatives of other environmental organizations such as Audubon and Conservation Voters Alliance. (See the report on the session in this issue of the *Sierra*.) In addition, we manned a table at the recent River Day celebration – thanks to Norma McCallan.

We hope that you attended one of the public meetings of the Jemez y Sangre Water Planning Council. Despite the snow this winter, water remains an issue for Santa Fe and all of New Mexico – both in terms of quantity and quality. We will continue our work on water issues and will bring you more information about the Santa Fe Watershed at our April General Meeting (see information above).

If any of you are interested in working on water or other issues, please contact our Conservation Chair, Cliff Larsen, or come to our Conservation Committee meetings on the fourth Tuesday of the month, at 7 PM at our offices.

OPEN FORUM DISCUSSION

**Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)
Concerning the Santa Fe Municipal Watershed**

Tuesday, April 17, 7 PM

The Santa Fe and Pajarito Groups of the Sierra Club, along with Santa Fe Watershed Association, Audubon Society, and Forest Trust will host representatives from the City of Santa Fe and Santa Fe National Forest who will present information concerning the proposed vegetative treatments for the Upper Santa Fe Municipal Watershed.

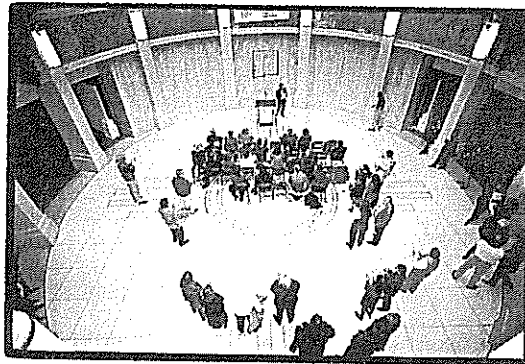
The DEIS is scheduled to be released by the end of March. There will be an opportunity to ask questions, to learn more about the proposed treatments and their expected effects, and to express your concerns.

This is an important step in efforts to prevent a catastrophic fire in the watershed. We hope you will attend and provide input to the City and Forest so that what treatments they undertake in the Watershed can be as effective as possible.

*Membership meetings are held at the Unitarian Church
107 W. Barcelona St (between Galisteo and Don Gaspar).*

*All meetings, outings, and activities
are FREE and open to the public.*

Santa Fe Group News



Enthusiastic response at our January 22 Press Conference at the State Capitol Rotunda. (Photo courtesy of Gene Peach.)

♦ ♦ SANTA FE GROUP OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS ♦ ♦

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Vice-Chair — Barbara Johnson*
Secretary/Treas — Lionel Soracco

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Political Committee—Susan Martin*
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SF National Forest—Greg Pollak 988-7650
Carson Nat'l Forest—George Grossman 982-1024
Activist Outings—Norma McCallan* 471-0005 nmccallan@mindspring.com
Growth—Eleanor Eisenmenger* 820-6401

* Member of the SF Group Executive Committee

SANTA FE GROUP OUTINGS

Sat Sun March

- 3 Stephen Markowitz (983-2829) Moderately Difficult Climb up Queen Mary Mesa near Los Alamos. Less than 5 miles distance, but vertical climbing. Info: docmark@attglobal.net
- 4 Bob McKee (672-3426 - If no answer try 471-0005) Moderate Hike 8 miles, no significant elevation gain, Galisteo Dam to Waldo and back, dogs allowed, meet at 8:30 AM.
- 10 Norma McCallan (471-0005) Easy Hike Cerrillos Hills, with local resident Bill Baxter as the guest leader, including a look at the ancient Indian turquoise mine at Mt. Chalchihuitl. Meet Sierra office 9 AM, or at the What Not Shop in the town of Cerrillos at 9:30 AM. Dogs OK.
- 11 Lionel Soracco (983-6715) Intermediate XC Ski Trip to wherever the snow is good. Leave 8 AM. Call for reservation.
- 11 Jeff Jones (466-2389) Easy-Moderate Hike **CANCELLED**
- 11 Cerrillos Hills Coalition Trail work **POSTPONED**. Call Paul Cusumano (983-6093-w) for notification on rescheduling.
- 17 Victor Atyas (438-9434) Easy Hike on Falls Trail to Rio Grande in Bandelier, 800-900' elevation gain. Leave 9 AM.
- 18 Ron Duffy (982-2890) Easy Birding Walk in or near Santa Fe. Beginners, non-birders and experienced birders are all welcome. Bring binoculars. Leave 8:30 AM.
- 18 Norbert Sperlich (983-1962) Strenuous Hike to Bandelier area backcountry, trail conditions permitting. Call for reservation.
- 24 Michael Di Rosa (663-0648) Moderate-Strenuous One-Way Hike Ancho Canyon to Frijoles Canyon, ending at Bandelier HQ (car shuttle to White Rock). About 9 miles, some rough trail. Meet 8 AM SF office or leader 9 AM, White Rock in Smith's parking lot. Call hike leader after March 12 for details.
- 25 David Bryant (1-505-757-3477) Easy Hike to Glorieta Ghost Hotel. 6.5 miles, 850' gain. Leave Club office at 9 AM or meet leader at north end of Glorieta overpass on I-25 at 9:30 AM.
- 31 Lionel Soracco (983-6715) Intermediate XC Ski Trip to wherever the snow is good. Leave 8 AM. Call for reservation.

Sat Sun May

- 5 Stephen Markowitz (983-2829) Strenuous Hike on La Luz Trail as far as trail conditions permit. Call leader for details and reservation.
- 6 Jeff Jones (466-2389) Easy Hike on Chamisa Trail. 5 miles RT, 1240' elevation gain. Leave 8:30 AM.
- Saturday, May 12, thru Sunday, May 20
A Week in Escalante Country Norma McCallan (471-0005)
Two moderate, exploratory 3-day backpacks in the little visited north end of the Escalante drainage, off the Burr Trail: Horse/Wolverine Canyons and Upper Gulch. Also several day hikes, depending on time available. Dogs okay.
- 12 Ned Sudborough (474-4055) Strenuous Hike to Sierra Pelada. Leave 8 AM. Call leader for reservation.
- 13 John Jasper (986-4613, 263-5466-cell) Moderate Hike in high country. Call leader for details and reservation.
- 19 Lionel Soracco (983-6715) Moderate Hike Call leader.
- 20 David Bryant (1-505-757-3477) Moderate Hike on Dockweller Trail. 8 miles RT, 1700' elevation gain. Carpool from Santa Fe at 9 AM, or meet leader at north end of Glorieta overpass on I-25 at 9:30 AM. Call for reservation.
- 26 Ron Duffy (982-2890) Easy Birding Walk in or near Santa Fe. Beginners, non-birders, and experienced birders all welcome. Bring binoculars. Leave 8:30 AM.
- 27 Norbert Sperlich (983-1962) Moderate/Strenuous Hike in Deer Creek area. Rough terrain, mostly off trail, some rock scrambling. Call for reservation. Leave 8 AM.

GROUP COMMITTEE MEETING DATES

Group Executive Committee:	Group Conservation Committee:
Tuesday, April 3, 6:30 PM	Tuesday, March 27, 7 PM
Tuesday, May 8, 6:30 PM	Tuesday, April 24, 7 PM
Water Pot-Luck (John Buchser's house):	
Monday, March 12, 6:30 PM	
Monday, April 9, 6:30 PM	

Sat Sun April

SPRING FORWARD MARCH 31 DONT FORGET TO CHANGE YOUR CLOCKS !

- 1 Norma McCallan (471-0005) Moderate Hike Rim Vista/Salazar Trail (near Ghost Ranch). 7.5 miles total, 1700' elevation gain. If trail conditions bad, hike will be changed. Optional supper in Española at end of trip. Dogs OK. Lve 9 AM.
- 7 Lionel Soracco (983-6715) Intermediate X-C Ski Trip, snow conditions permitting. Call for details, reservation.
- 8 Bob McKee (672-3426) Strenuous Loop Hike in Bandelier. 10-12 miles RT, 1500' elevation gain. Some off-trail, some exploratory. Moderate Pace, 8 hours or more hiking time.
- 14 Ned Sudborough (474-4055) Moderate Hike in Mortandad Canyon. Leave 9 AM. Call for reservation.
- 15 David Bryant (1-505-757-3477) Moderate Hike up Atalaya. Steep climb. Leave 9 AM. Call for reservation.
- 15 Stephen Markowitz (983-2829) Moderate/Strenuous Cabezon Peak. Short but steep. 1300' elevation gain, rock scrambling. Must call leader for reservation. Limited to 10 participants.
- 21 John Buchser (820-0201) Service Project. Work with the Partners Land Trust and the Pecos River Watershed Alliance to create wildlife habitat, improve range conditions and water quality on the mesa above the Pecos River near town of Sena. Bring lunch, water, work gloves. Leave 8 AM, return by 5:30 PM. Call leader to confirm.
- 22 John Jasper (986-4613, 263-5466-cell) Moderate Hike in Pecos Wilderness. Call for time and reservation.
- 28 Ron Duffy (982-2890) Easy Birding Walk in or near Santa Fe. Beginners, non-birders, and experienced birders all welcome. Bring binoculars. Leave 8:30 AM.
- 28 Michael DiRosa (663-0648) Strenuous Hike to Cerro Pedernal. 9 miles RT, 1900' elevation gain. Some rock scrambling, some off-trail hiking. Call leader for details.
- 29 Victor Atyas (438-9434) Easy Hike Cerrillos Hills. Leave 9 AM. Meet in parking lot in front of Walgreens at Villa Linda Mall.

**PLEASE ALWAYS CALL THE OUTINGS LEADER
PRIOR TO A HIKE
FOR CONFIRMATION AND DETAILS.**

Most especially call the leader for X-country ski or snowshoe outings, not only to find out about snow conditions, but to be sure that you have the proper equipment and conditioning.



WILDERNESS FIRST AID COURSE COMPLETED!

18 SIERRA members, including 12 of our hike leaders, turned out for our 16-hour Wilderness First Aid class on February 10 and 17. Our thanks to our instructor Don Mason, of Wilderness Medicine Associates, who did a great job of clarifying and explaining the concepts and techniques of a very complex subject. Participants included Victor Atyas, Dave Bryant, John and Linda Buchser, Michael Di Rosa, Ron Duffy, Anna Gray, Ronald Klein, Norma McCallan, Robert McKee, Charlotte Meares, Tobin Oruch, Doris Rosen, Phil Somervell, Lionel Soracco, Norbert Sperlich, Ned Sudborough, and Gene Turner. Anna Gray won the prize for the longest distance travelled - she came all the way from Lake Valley, New Mexico (near Hillsboro)!

Outings Notes - Unless otherwise noted, all outings leave from the Sierra office, 621 Old Santa Fe Trail, "Plaza Desira," just south of Kaune's Grocery at the corner of Old SF Trail and Paseo de Peralta. Carpooling will be arranged. Each hiker should come prepared to pay \$c a mile to the driver of the car in which s/he rides. Bring a lunch, water, sturdy hiking boots or shoes, and clothing suitable for the weather - leader reserves the right to turn away anyone whose equipment or experience appears unsuitable. Leader has right to alter destination of hike or cancel trip due to weather, unfavorable conditions, or insufficient numbers of participants. Unaccompanied minors must have written permission from parents or guardians to participate; permission forms are available at the Sierra Club office. Dogs not permitted on hikes unless noted otherwise. Telephone leader for details of the individual hike.



A Note from the Chair

Water, water...

by Laurence Gibson

Not a day passes now without some front-page news about Water.

At our Feb 7 Ex Com meeting, we brainstormed our upcoming initiatives and concluded our "bottom line" goal will be no net increase in water consumption! We already have a conservation project in progress which will help people test their toilets for leakage. The El Paso Group of the Sierra Club needs to find a way to reach the majority of El Pasoans who do not read the newspaper.

In the political realm, we hope the mayoral race will generate commitments to control builders, developers, and the Public Service Board from squandering the fruits of our citizens' conservation.

In particular, it is unconscionable for our area's water provider to be fueling growth with land sales. We need to execute our plans now. Attend a PSB meeting or a City Council meeting, or call your area representative with your concerns!

Outings Report: Big Bend Hiking Trip

By Ed Storey

The El Paso Group sponsored a four-day trip to Big Bend National Park in the middle of January. The purpose was to explore some backcountry areas not commonly seen by visitors to the park. Wesley Leonard planned and led the trip, ably assisted by Rollin Wickenden. Cars were left at the Mule Ear Overlook, so there was no need to retrace. The route was U-shaped, going east, then south, before returning west. The route revealed several interesting and man-made artifacts. Along Smoky Creek, the water would appear, coming off a layer of impervious limestone, bubbling and cascading. It would shortly disappear, however, as the underlying rock became more porous. There were dams or weirs to cross and wonder about as well. The gravel filling the upstream sides spoke to the occasional force of the water. Most likely, they had been built by long-ago ranchers or herders.

Outings (Area Code 915)

Mar 10: South Franklin Service Trip

Place: Franklin Mountains State Park
 Class: Easy to Moderate
 Length: 2-4 miles
 Elevation gain: 500-1,000 feet
 Leader: Gary Williams: 593-3624 (H)

Help place new signs at critical trail junctions while enjoying the splendors of our nation's largest urban park. Franklin Mountains State Park is a work in progress. Our state legislature has yet to fund the park at the recommended level, so volunteers are needed.

Mar 11: Ron Coleman Trail

Place: Franklin Mountain State Park
 Class: Moderate
 Length: 4 miles
 Elevation gain: 1,200 feet
 Leader: Carolina Greenfield: 594-7342 (H)

The most exciting hike in the Franklins is again being offered. This trail, named for our influential ex-Congressman, begins at McKelligon Canyon on the east side and climbs across the spine of the range, descending to the parking lot on Trans Mountain Road. At the mid point, there is a strenuous scramble (bring gloves) up to a window providing exciting views and some exposure. Agoraphobes beware!

Mar 24-25: Dog Canyon Car Camp/Day Hike

Place: Guadalupe Mountains National Park
 Class: Easy
 Length: 0-4 miles
 Elevation gain: 0-500 feet
 Leader: Carl Horkowitz: 755-3968 (H)

There are two Dog Canyons in our area, one close to Alamogordo and this one in the Guads. The drive in is somewhat circuitous, and the solitude gained is amazing for a car campground. One can take any of several excellent trails leading gently up into the hills, or one can simply lounge around the camp.

Sierra Club - El Paso Regional Group Directory (Area Code 915)

Executive Committee

Chair

Laurence Gibson: 594-7342
 lgibson@utep.edu

Vice Chair

Jamie Newlin: 584-1471
 chaectura@juno.com

Secretary

Ann Falknor: 833-9162
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LORAX Editor

Sally S. Savage: 833-6899
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 Liz Walsh: 584-1471
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Administration

Treasurer

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Chapter Delegate

Ted Mertig: 852-3011
 tmertig@earthlink.net

Chap Del - Alternate

Jamie Newlin: 584-1471
 chaectura@juno.com

Project Chairs

Air Quality

Ed Storey: 587-8720
 cnstorey@elpasonet.net

**Endangered Species/
 Habitat**

Liz Walsh: 584-1471
 ewalsh@utep.edu

Energy

Sally S. Savage: 833-6899
 mountain_spirit@hotmail.com

Forest Issues

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Franklin Mountains

John Sproul: 545-5157
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Grazing

Ted Mertig: 852-3011
 tmertig@earthlink.net

Inner City Outings

Ted Mertig: 852-3011
 tmertig@earthlink.net

Lands Management

Ted Mertig: 852-3011
 tmertig@earthlink.net

Membership

Ted Mertig: 852-3011
 tmertig@earthlink.net

MUIR Mailing List

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 lgibson@utep.edu

Ted Mertig: 852-3011

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Outings

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 lgibson@utep.edu

Rollin Wickenden: 532-

9645
 (leave message)

Population/Growth

Jamie Newlin: 584-1471
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Programs

Open

Transportation

Terry Sunday: 584-9301
 sundayt@zianet.com

Web Master

Terry Sunday: 584-9301
 sundayt@zianet.com

Wetlands

John Sproul: 545-5157
 jsproul@utep.edu

Wilderness/Parks/Refuges

Ted Mertig: 852-3011
 tmertig@earthlink.net

**Group Directory
Pajarito Group of the Sierran Club**

Executive Committee		
Abe Jacobson, Chair	672-9579	Carole Jacobson, Adopt-A-Highway 672-9579
Bev Hartline, Vice-Chair	661-9031	Jennifer Johnson, Jemez Mountains Issues 289-9183
Carole Jacobson, Secretary/Treasurer	672-9579	Chuck Pergler, Grazing 661-6169
Fred Hartline	661-9031	Michael Smith/ Gordon Spingler, DOE Land Transfer 662-2380/ 662-9481
Miriam Oudejans	672-0414	Michael Smith Forests 662-2380
Michael Smith	662-2380	Wildlife OPEN Administration
Gordon Spingler	662-9481	David Bouquin, Chapter Rep. 662-3741
Conservation Committee		
Michael Smith, Chair	662-2380	Fred Hartline, Publicity Rep. 661-9031
Janet Gerwin, Co-Chair	662-9568	Miriam Oudejans, Newsletter 672-0414
Jody Benson, Sprawl	662-4782	Guthrie Miller, Membership 662-5545
Janet Gerwin, Water	662-9568	Warren Steckle, Outings 672-0414
Abe Jacobson, Mining	672-9579	

General Meetings

All general meetings are held on the first Wednesday of every month at Mesa Public Library, at 7 PM and are open to the public.

Other Meetings:

Wednesday, March 7, 2001
Mesa Public Library, second floor.
The Mexican Gray Wolf: Presented by Michael Robinson, Center for Biological Diversity. (michaelr@biologicaldiversity.org)
Wolves were extirpated from the southwest, and are now endangered not because of habitat loss - but because of a federal, state, and private campaign to exterminate them. The reason: cattle ranchers wanted them gone.

Wednesday, April 4, 2001, 7:00 p.m.
Mesa Public Library
River Health and Trout Habitat: Presented by Jan Crawford, owner, High Desert Angler (Santa Fe) & Jim Loud, Trout Unlimited. Jan and Jim will describe the ecological requirements for trout habitat and how a good trout fishery is an indicator of a healthy environment. They will also talk about the reborn Trout Unlimited chapter in this state and its environmental agenda.

**KEEPING INFORMED WITH
E-MAIL ALERTS**

by David Farrell

With a new administration in the White House and an almost evenly divided 107th Congress in office, the environmental community is left trying to piece together the new challenges it faces in the upcoming year. President Bush has proposed oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, so-called regulatory reform for small businesses, and a renewed push for "takings" legislation. This combined with influential members of congress's continued attacks on environmental protection, give conservationists great cause for concern.

In New Mexico, little has changed on the political landscape after the recent election. Many of the same anti-environmental forces are again attempting to block and roll - back important environmental protections. On the national, state, and local levels it is more important than ever that every vote count and every environmental voice be heard. The Southern New Mexico Group of the Sierra Club understands how important our voice and the voices of individuals in the environmental community are when there is debate on crucial issues. Through an e-mail alert system, the Southern Group can initiate a resource and information program to educate and encourage members to respond to important environmental issues. As all levels of government discuss and more importantly, vote on issues of crucial environmental interest, our response to our local, state, and national legislators can be an impact. Agencies responsible for the welfare of our public lands, our air, water, and our wildlife, have an obligation to hear our concerns and our viewpoints. The Sierra Club believes its members can contribute to the democratic process by being informed and providing the proper venue to respond and act on developing issues. By receiving and responding to our e-mail alerts, local Sierra Club members as a unified voice, will be empowered and have significant impact as a part of a network that can muster hundreds of responses from the Souther New Mexico area.

However, in order to make this happen, the Southern New Mexico Group is in need of someone who will receive the e-mail alerts, filter them according to the highest priorities for the Group, and send them out to those wishing to receive them in the Group. Additional aspects may include providing additional information for member's consideration, notification of relevant meetings or hearings, etc. If you are interested in doing this important work, please contact anyone on the ExComm. Thanks!

Special Program

Tuesday, April 24, 7:00 p.m. at Science Hall, Rm. 107, NMSU.
"Richest Desert in America; The World Wildlife Funds Conservation Priorities for the Chihuahuan Desert".
Jennifer Atchley of the World Wildlife Fund will talk and present slides about this important region that includes southern New Mexico. Everyone welcome!
For more information call 522-3035.

**Group Directory
Southern N.M. Group
Executive Committee
P.O. Box 3705 UPB
Las Cruces, New Mexico 88003**

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Margot Wilson Vice Chair & Chapter Rep.	(505) 744-5860 margotwilson40@hotmail.com
David Farrell Political Chair	(505) 895-3352 dafarrelli@hotmail.com
Cheryll Blevins	524-4861
Membership and Publicity	spotblev@earthlink.net
Marianne Theaclar Treasurer	522-3421 marianne.theaclar@sierraclub.org
Annie Gordon Outings Leader	522-4527

Executive Committee Meetings are typically the first Wednesday of the month--all members are welcome to attend.

We hope to have more officers in the next few weeks. Our immediate plans are to become a more active and effective group. The next ExComm meeting will be held Tuesday, March 8, at 5:00 p.m. at the Cattle Baron Restaurant on Telshor, in Las Cruces. If you are willing to share your ideas and energy in the spirit of making a difference in conservation issues, we want you and we need you at this meeting! Please come and join us -- there will be times of hard work, and of great fun, and we do indeed hope to make a difference.

Outings

March 10

Robledo Peak:

Just north of Las Cruces, Meet at the north end of the Pan Am Center at 8:00 a.m. This is a moderate hike over somewhat difficult terrain. The summit provides a beautiful vista of the Mesilla Valley. Bring lunch and water. Call 526-7811 to reserve space and more information.

May 5

Achenbach Canyon in the Organ Mountains:
Moderate dayhike with nice views and terrain. Call 522-4527 for meeting place and more information.



CENTRAL NEW MEXICO GROUP NEWS

Central Group Launches 'Adopt a Wilderness' Campaign

The Central Group is embarking on an effort to secure protection for areas near Albuquerque that are deserving of wilderness protection. Wilderness status is conferred by Congress onto publicly owned federal lands that are largely undeveloped in nature. Wilderness is the strongest level of federal protection, protecting land from off-road vehicles, logging, mining, and oil and gas exploration. There are a number of areas popular among Central New Mexico hikers, photographers, and wildlife viewers, which have been proposed for wilderness status for many years, but which have not yet received that protection.

The goal of the Central New Mexico 'Adopt a Wilderness' campaign will be to connect people like you with proposed wilderness near Albuquerque. Places like Ojito, with its dinosaur bones and petroglyphs, and Cabezon Peak, a volcanic dome rising up from a sea of grassland mesas. We will be leading hikes to help people get to know these areas and we will be giving workshops that empower our members to protect those areas they love the most. By building a network of advocates for these majestic lands, we hope to eventually give them the protection they deserve.

Our first outings will be...

March 18th to the Ojito Wilderness Study Area

April 8th to Cabezon Peak.

Anyone who is interested in learning more about these areas or who is interested in eventually adopting a proposed wilderness is welcome to attend. Please call Steve Capra at 232-3721 or Martin Heinrich at 232-7151 for more information.

The April General Meeting of the Central Group of the Sierra Club will be a workshop and slide show on adopting a wilderness. Please join us on April 16 at 7:30 pm at the Unitarian Church, (Carlisle and Comanche) to learn more.

Central New Mexico Group News

Programs

Monday, March 19th at 7:30PM

JAGUAR SLIDE PRESENTATION

Come hear Michael Robinson of the Center for Biological Diversity speak on the importance of New Mexico's endangered native predators. Mr. Robinson will be giving a slide show and discussing how you can support the recovery of wolves and jaguars in the Southwest. Don't miss this one!

When: March 19 at 7:30 pm

Where: The Unitarian Church at 3701 Carlisle NE, at the corner of Comanche in Albuquerque.

Monday, April 19th at 7:30PM

ADOPT A WILDERNESS

Join us for slide show and workshop on adopting a wilderness.

When: Monday, April 16 at 7:30 PM

Where: The Unitarian Church at 3701 Carlisle NE, at the corner of Comanche. (see related article above).

Check our website www.sierra.nm.org for the latest info.

'Town Hall' Meeting on the City of Albuquerque's Drinking Water Project

In the January/February Sierran, the article 'Drink the Rio Grande...?' described the City's plan to divert water from the Rio Grande, treat it at the water purification plant, and deliver it to water customers.

This Town Hall is the next step in the public participation process leading to the Environmental Impact Statement. All members are urged to attend, learn what is being proposed and urge City officials to take appropriate measures to protect the river and the bosque

When: Friday, April 20th from 8:30AM to 4PM

Where: Albuquerque Convention Center

Central New Mexico Group

PO Box 25342

Albuquerque, New Mexico, 87125-5342

Phone: 505-260-9857 (new number)

Executive Committee (area code 505)

Blair Brown	259-7190	bblairb2@aol.com
Steve Capra	843-8696	scapra@nmwild.org
Kellie Goudreau	232-3721	kellie@unm.edu
Martin Heinrich	232-7151	mtheinrich@aol.com
Jay Morrow	345-3693	jmorrow@mercury.bernco.gov
Edward Sullivan	259-5966	sully@nmwild.org
Cecily Vix	855-9140	cecvix@aol.com

The Executive Committee normally meets on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7PM at the Club Office at 202 Central SE in Albuquerque. The meetings are free and open to all members. Contact any of us if you have issues to discuss.

Project Leaders

Conservation Chair		
Steve Capra	843-8696	scapra@nmwild.org
Membership		
Jay Morrow	345-3693	jmorrow@mercury.bernco.gov
River Issues		
Richard Barish	232-3013	rdbarish@aol.com
Outings	Open	
Programs	Open	
Water	Open	

*The Central New Mexico Group of the Sierra Club
depends on the efforts of volunteers.*

To join us, give any of us a call.



Land Swaps to Benefit Proposed Wilderness

By Martin Heinrich

If you have ever looked at a land ownership map of New Mexico you may have wondered what all those different colors mean. Most people know that green is for national forests. A few realize that red signifies the Indian Nations and that yellow is land administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the largest manager of public land in the United States. Very few know what all that blue land scattered around the map is. All those blue squares and blobs, which create a virtual checkerboard of the New Mexico map, are state lands. State lands were given to New Mexico at the onset of statehood as a way to raise money for our public school system.

Today New Mexico has one of the largest endowments in the world specifically dedicated to public education. The endowment, termed the Permanent Fund, receives all the proceeds from commercial uses on state lands. Unfortunately, state lands were not given in large contiguous tracts with logical geographical borders. Instead the state received many isolated sections (a section is a one mile square of land or 640 acres) of land spread across the whole state. Many isolated pieces of land can be difficult and expensive to manage compared to larger contiguous tracts of land of the same acreage.

A related problem with the distribution of state lands is that isolated sections appear within contiguous blocks of federally protected land. That can cause serious conflicts when, for example, the state owns land inside a National Park or Wilderness Area. New Mexico is required to manage state lands for revenue, which often means uses like radio tower leases or oil and gas drilling. Until a few years ago the state owned a

section of land near the crest of the Sierra Ladrones, a spectacular mountain range on Albuquerque's southern skyline. Most of the Sierra Ladrones area is managed by the BLM and the Fish and Wildlife Service, who manage it for wilderness and wildlife values. Had the state decided to put up a radio tower here a major conflict could have ensued. A land trade was the eventual solution and today the BLM owns that section of land high in the Sierra Ladrones.

A similar trade is now under way between the BLM and the State Land Office. The trade will benefit a number of wilderness and proposed wilderness areas in New Mexico. Thanks to the leadership of Ray Powell, the Commissioner of Public Lands, and the staff of the New Mexico BLM, we are likely to see several thousand acres of "at risk" state land transferred to the BLM. Not only will this protect places like the Bisti Wilderness Area from fragmentation, but it also means that proposed wilderness areas like Ojito and Cabezon Peak are far more likely to gain permanent federal protection. In return, the state will receive lands that are easier to access and are not inside wilderness or wilderness study areas.

While land trades have gotten a bad reputation in the Pacific Northwest, where the public has at times lost critical old growth in exchange for cutover corporate timberland, in New Mexico they have often worked to help protect our parks and wilderness. The Sierra Club will continue to keep a close eye on any proposed land trades. In this way we hope to ensure that future trades continue the trend of protecting our public lands. Anything less will meet fierce opposition from the many dedicated Sierra Club members across New Mexico.

Central New Mexico Group News

Outings

Saturdays, March 17th and 31st, April 7th and 28th
Sundays, March 25th and April 22nd

Desert Exploratory Hikes

Visit some of New Mexico's most incredible and beautiful landscapes hidden in its desert places. Strangely eroded and colorful rocks, badlands, precipitous cliffs, outstanding vistas, mysterious narrow and winding canyons, archeological sites, petrified forests and other fossils, historic inscriptions, stone tools, pottery, pictographs and petroglyphs are some of the discoveries we have made on the Desert Exploratory Hikes in the past.

These hikes are not physically difficult, but will require a sense of adventure on the part of participants. There will rarely be a trail and the route will be very rocky and uneven at times. Sometimes we scramble over rock surfaces (non-technical climbing) and walk narrow ledges, but this is quite often optional. Typical distance traveled is between 4 and 8 miles and we usually gain less than 1000 ft. of elevation.

Contact leader as early as previous Wednesday for info on specific hike location and meeting time. Meeting time will vary from 8:30AM to 10AM.

Meeting place will always be Smith's at Carlisle and Menaul, nearest to Carlisle.

Contact Tom Petencin 255-1497 tompetcin@juno.com

Wednesday, March 14th - Outings Leader Meeting

Meet with Norma McCallan, Chapter Outings Chair on how to become an outings leader. Meet at 6:00 PM at the Unitarian Church at 3701 Carlisle NE, at the corner of Comanche. See related notice at the right.

Sunday, March 18th - Socorro Hike

We'll hike in the area near San Antonio, NM before it gets too hot. Hike: 8 miles maximum, all off trail. Some minor scrambling or brushy walking. Elevation: 1000' at most. Drive: 130 miles RT. Dress for weather. Bring sturdy boots, water, lunch, wind breaker. Contact Rick Hurley (299-8401, RickHurley@aol.com).

Sunday, March 18th - 'Adopt a Wilderness' Hike to Ojito WSA

See 'Adopt a Wilderness' article on previous page for more information.

Wednesday, April 4th - Full Moon Hike

Meet at 5:45 PM, Franklin Plaza (Juan Tabo & Central). We'll hike an east-side trail in the Sandias, partially by the light of the moonlight. Return 9-10 PM. Possible snack afterward. Hike: 4-6 miles, on trail. Elevation: Up to 2000', but probably much less. Drive: 50 miles RT. Dress for weather, bring boots, snack, flashlight. Contact: Rick Hurley (299-8401, RickHurley@aol.com).

Saturday, April 8th - 'Adopt a Wilderness' Hike to Cabezon Peak
See 'Adopt a Wilderness' article on previous page for more information.

Outings E-mail List:

Each list member receives notification of "impromptu" hikes that did not make the newsletter. A great way for members to stay in touch. Be advised that events not published in the newsletter will, by chapter policy, be considered non-sanctioned events (ie. an informal "meeting of friends"). Contact: RickHurley@aol.com or 299-8401 to be added.

Hikers Wanted on March 14!

Are you interested in hiking and would like to be part of the Central New Mexico Group's Outings program? But you're not sure what it would involve? Do you need to be trained in first aid? Is there a limit on how many people can come on hikes? Are you expected to know about plants and animals?

The Central NM Group will be gathering on Wednesday, March 14, at 6:00pm in the Wesson Room at the Unitarian Church on Carlisle and Comanche to talk about the outings program and talk about hikes in the Albuquerque area. Norma McCallan will talk about some of the basics involved in Sierra outings. Norma is the Outings Chair for the Rio Grande Chapter and is on the Outings Committee for the National Sierra Club. She has been leading and taking hikes for the Sierra Club for many years. Refreshment will be served.

Please join us! For more information call Jennifer de Garmo at 243-7767

Outing Outlook

by Norma McCallan

Winter is slowly passing, the days are getting longer, and in between our numerous snowstorms, the sun is bright and cheerful. March and April are good times to get out, try a new destination, and meet some great people. Below are listed a few of our Group hikes to whet your appetite. Be sure and call leader for time and meeting place. All phone numbers are 505, except as noted.

Sun Mar 4 MT. RILEY AREA, northwest of Sunland Park. Liz Walsh 915-584-1471. Easy, 3-4 mile hike.

Sat Mar 10 ROBLEDO PEAK. 526-7811. Moderate hike, rough terrain, in a WSA with a beautiful vista of the Mesilla Valley from the summit.

Sat Mar 10 CERRILLOS HILLS. Norma McCallan 471-0005. Easy ramble around the Cerrillos Hills, south of Santa Fe, including a visit to the ancient Indian turquoise mine at Mt. Chalchihuitl.

Sun Mar 18 SAN ANTONIO AREA, near Socorro. Rick Hurley 299-8401, RickHurley@aol.com. Moderate hike, all off trail, minor scrambling or brushy walking.

Sun Mar 18 and Sat 4/28 BIRDING WALK, near Santa Fe. Ron Duffy 982-2890. Beginners welcome.

Sat/Sun Mar 24-25 DOG CANYON CAR CAMP. CARL HORKOWITZ 915-755-3968. Easy hike in this remote canyon in the Guadalupe Mtns National Park.

Sat/Sun April 7-8 OUTINGS LEADERS WORKSHOP, SEVEILLETA WILDLIFE REFUGE. Norma McCallan 471-0005. A get together for outing chairs. Outing leaders and potential leaders welcome.

Sun April 16 CABEZON PEAK. Steve Markowitz 983-2829. Short but steep ascent, with some scrambling, up the prominent volcanic plug on the way to Cuba. Limit 10.

Sat April 21 COMMUNITY BASED RESTORATION PROJECT, near Las Vegas. John Buchser 820-0201. Work with the Partners Land Trust and Pecos River Watershed Alliance on a mesa above the Pecos River near Sena to create wildlife habitat and improve range condition and water quality by seed and shrub planting, arroyo restoration, and creating protected areas around stock tanks.

Sat May 5 LA LUZ TRAIL, SANDIA MTNS. Steve Markowitz 983-2829. Will go up this popular trail as far as snow level permits.

Sat May 5 ACHENBACK CANYON, near Las Cruces. Ron & Annie Gordon 522-4527. Moderate hike in a high canyon with beautiful views.

Sat May 12 CERRO PELADO, near Santa Fe. Ned Sudborough 474-4055. Ascent of this interesting and little known peak close to Atalaya.

Sat May 12 - Sun May 20 ESCALANTE COUNTRY WEEK, Utah. Norma McCallan 471-0005. Explore this little visited north side of the Escalante drainage via 2 three-day backpacks (Horse and Wolverine Canyons, then Upper Gulch) and several day hikes. Dogs ok.

Upcoming in late summer will be tours by the Forest Service of the recently purchased VALLES CALDERA National Preserve, otherwise known as the Baca Ranch. A lot of Sierrans worked hard to get this remarkable property into public ownership. Stay tuned for details.

Non Sierra Club activities of Interest:

Fri-Sun Mar 9-11 BIG HATCHET MOUNTAINS, in the boot heel of N.M. Fri-Sun May 4-6 AH-SHI-SLE-PAH, near Farmington Both of these will be inventory outings, with car camping, conducted by the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance, to document roads and impacts that will define the boundaries of potential wilderness areas. Michael Scialdone 843-8696.

Alert - at the recent meeting of the Group & Chapter Outings Committee that I attended in Tampa, it was announced that the national Sierra Club will soon be requiring liability waivers on all Sierra outings. Use of waivers was a key recommendation from a recently conducted program-wide risk review of Sierra outdoors activities. The recommendation was approved by the Outdoor Activity Governance Committee at its October 2000 meeting. In the Club hierarchy, the OAGC is the parent group of the GCOC, and has overall authority over any kind of Sierra outings. They feel that a participant waiver is of real value in protecting both individual outing leaders and the Club from frivolous lawsuits. The exact wording is still being worked on, but it will be the same for Group, Chapter, National and Inner City Outings.

Page 16—Rio Grande Sierran

Stay Informed --

Get E-mail on the Latest Happenings

Stay up to date on environmental issues of interest within the Rio Grande Chapter. This list is open to anyone interested in protecting our environment. (You can get off any time without human intervention!) Send a message to:

Listguard@sierraclub.org

With the contents:

SUB RIO-ISSUES YourFirstName YourLastName

If you would like to get alerts only on issues that have been determined by your group or chapter's leadership to be especially important (which is a much lower volume of email):

Send a message to:

Listguard@sierraclub.org

With the subject line:

Your 8 digit member number (on any Club mailing label)

With the contents, depending on which group you are in:

SUB RIO-NORTH-ALERTS YourFirstName YourLastName

SUB RIO-CENTRAL-ALERTS YourFirstName YourLastName

SUB RIO-SOUTH-ALERTS YourFirstName YourLastName

SUB RIO-ELPASO-ALERTS YourFirstName YourLastName

SUB RIO-PAJARITO-ALERTS YourFirstName YourLastName

YOUR MEMBERSHIP DOLLARS AT WORK

81c*

OF EVERY
DOLLAR
YOU GIVE TO
THE SIERRA CLUB

goes to the
implementation
of conservation
programs.

*Programs: 56.7%

Public Education:	11.9%
Influencing Public Policy:	32.3%
Outdoor Activities:	7.2%
Chapter Programs:	5.3%

*Member Services: 25%

Fundraising: 6.2%

General and Administrative: 3.7%

Surplus: 8.4%

