

The Back Page

The real deficit

by Stephan Verchinski

Economic deficits are today's headline. Will ecological deficits be the future?

In 1987, a national coalition of environmental groups including the Sierra Club proposed to the administration and Congress "The Environmental Solution to the Budget Deficit."

The concern was that economic deficits, if not addressed promptly, would devastate environmental protection efforts. They would do so by raising the price to be paid for putting off pollution problems such as toxic wastes, acid rain and water pollution. They also would leave lower levels of protection for endangered species and irreplaceable wild areas.

Our solution proposed in 1987 would have raised up to \$80 billion in revenues—more than twice the money needed to meet the deficit targets at that time. Many of the sources for these monies still exist and should be considered by Congress prior to new taxation.

For example, it has been estimated that \$55 billion a year is spent directly and indirectly subsidizing the nation's energy industry. This misdirects the public into believing energy costs are cheaper than in reality.

Paying your heating, electric, or transportation bills again at tax time is counterproductive to stimulating public demand for auto efficiency, transit solutions and ultra-efficient appliances and motors.

It takes away individual incentives for demanding passive solar or superinsulated homes and day-lighted commercial structures. It also makes this country's economy vulnerable to the whims of dictators and threatens our long-term security.

Worse yet, it destroys the incentives for the inventors among us to pursue reasoned goals, because they can depend upon legislation interfering with marketplace costs.

I encourage the public to become more informed, to examine and think if the subsidies not only for our fuel but for our food, clothing and shelter are worth the economic deficit. Then act, please. The ecological deficits threaten. □

BALLOT

Rio Grande Chapter
Executive Committee
Fall, 1990

- Please vote for 3 candidates only.
- See page 11 for candidates' statements.
- Each member of a joint membership may vote with this ballot.

	Member 1	Member 2
Gwen Wardwell	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Norma McCallan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leslie King, III	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tom Brasfield	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kevin Bixby	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

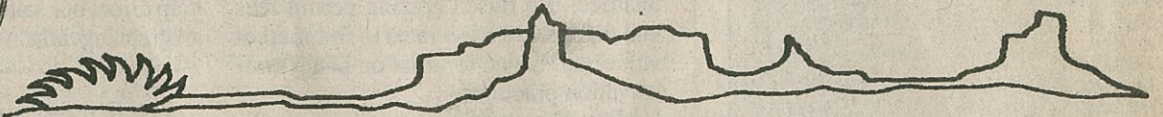
Please enclose ballot WITH YOUR MAILING LABEL in an envelope and mail by November 31, 1990 to the address listed below. Be sure to include your mailing label – it will be used to validate your vote, but will be discarded before tabulating results.

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THE SIERRAN



NEWS OF THE RIO GRANDE CHAPTER OF THE SIERRA CLUB • NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1990

Baca endorsed for State Land Commissioner

Election seen as critical to BLM Wilderness protection

by Pat Penfield, Chair, So. New Mexico Group

Last January, the members of our Rio Grande Chapter Executive Committee took an unusual step: they voted overwhelmingly to give Jim Baca an early endorsement for Land Commissioner. Normally, such an endorsement would have awaited the outcome of the primary. But the members felt that Baca's record of strong environmental commitment and accomplishment was so clear, and the office so important, that it warranted our early support. As Land Commissioner from 1983 to 1986, Baca showed us that he would act on his commitment to protect New Mexico's State Trust lands. And as a candidate this year for the same office, Baca has a strong environmental agenda any of us ought to be pleased to endorse.

- Introduced auditing procedures and computers to help make the office more efficient and manageable. These procedures revealed that land users owed the state millions of dollars;
- Broke with the Land Office's historical role as captive of

continued on next page

Land Commissioner post key to environment

You may wonder why we should care about such a seemingly obscure office as Land Commissioner. Among the reasons are these:

- 1) The Land Commissioner is charged with raising funds for New Mexico's schools by collecting users' fees on over 13 million acres of State Trust lands. The Commissioner can—and Jim Baca will—play a large role in protecting these lands against abuse. He will require land users to practice good stewardship.
- 2) The Commissioner can either promote or hinder state land exchanges to facilitate Congressional wilderness designation. The current Commissioner has stymied these exchanges. Baca's commitment to resume these exchanges is crucial to our work for an adequate BLM Wilderness Bill for New Mexico.

Baca's record impressive

During his previous tenure as Land Commissioner, Baca:

THE GREEN VOTE

*Chapter endorses King,
Baca, Udall in state races*

The Executive Committee of the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club has made the following endorsements in New Mexico electoral races:

Bruce King	Governor
Jim Baca	State Land Commissioner
Tom Udall	State Attorney General
Bill Richardson	U.S. Rep., 3rd District

The Santa Fe Group has endorsed Max Coll for state representative, District 47. More details inside.

Remember to vote on November 6!

Inside: Goshawks • Gila Ski Area • Ex-Comm. Election • Forests Report

RIO GRANDE CHAPTER DIRECTORY

Sloven Flint, Chair (505) 989-7334
Storm Sermay, Vice-Chair (505) 521-3348
Jana Oylar, Sec./Treas (505) 988-1858

Executive Committee
Tom Brasfield (915) 533-2662
Sloven Flint (505) 989-7334
Dan Jones (505) 835-2677
Wes Leonard (915) 747-5450
Norma McCallan (505) 471-0005
Jana Oylar (505) 988-1858
Roger Peterson (505) 983-7559
Storm Sermay (505) 521-3348
Jay Sorenson (505) 884-4314
Stefan Verchinski (505) 888-1370
Gwen Wardwell (505) 473-9864
Gary Williams (915) 544-8484
Dan Zarbey (505) 526-6207

Administrative Chairs
Membership: Gwen Wardwell (505) 473-9864
Outings: Norma McCallan (505) 471-0005
Jana Oylar, Council Delegate (505) 988-1858

Conservation Chairs
BLM Issues: Judy Bishop (505) 471-4438
West Mesa: Ike Eastvold (505) 255-7879
Conservation:
Env. Quality: Tom Brasfield (915) 533-2662
Conservation:
Pub. Lands: George Grossman (505) 982-1024
Env. Education: John Hamilton (915) 532-0374
Wildlife: Jana Oylar (505) 988-1858
SCOPE: Jay Sorenson (505) 884-4314
SWROC: Steven Flint (505) 989-7334

Group Chairs
Santa Fe: Norma McCallan (505) 471-0005
Albuquerque: Stefan Verchinski (505) 884-4314
So. New Mexico: Pat Penfield (505) 525-8286
El Paso: Wes Leonard (915) 747-5450

Group Newsletter Editors
Santa Fe: Kay Carlson (505) 982-3926
Albuquerque: Marc Bedner (505) 299-2004
So. New Mexico: Storm Sermay (505) 521-3348
El Paso: Ron Leiman (915) 860-0221

Sierran
Editor: Kevin Bixby (505) 525-1532

Hello,

I am the new editor of the *Sierran*. This newsletter has tremendous potential for helping the Rio Grande Chapter achieve its goals, but whether it reaches that potential depends on you. If you have anything to report on conservation or other matters that might interest our readers, please send it in. Submissions on computer floppy disks (3.5") are much preferred, but neatly typed will do. (It will make my life much easier if handwritten submissions are limited to very short notices.) This issue was published on a Mac, but I may switch to an IBM for the next one. (I may also soon be hooked up to E-mail.) Deadline for the Dec./Jan. issue is Nov. 16. Send to: Sierran, Star Route Box 26, Mesilla Park, NM 88047. Thanks, and a special thanks to Valerie Horton for helping me to get started..

-Kevin Bixby

Baca endorsed

(cont. from page 1)

grazing interests and the extractive industries. He raised grazing permit fees and oil and gas lease rates to fair market value, and began to insist on better conservation practices;

- Undertook state land exchanges to facilitate wilderness designation;
- Opposed the James Watt effort to open New Mexico's federal lands to coal leasing;
- Closed more than 20 illegal and unsupervised landfills on State land; and
- Sponsored a program of public education to help protect pifion trees.

Baca's agenda

Baca's agenda for the 1990s includes a commitment to:

- Promote conversion of the state's vehicle fleet to clean natural gas;
- Support the ongoing efforts of teachers and schools by sponsoring a program of additional environmental education;
- Oppose the 1872 Mining Law and its detrimental effects on New Mexico's lands;
- Reform harmful grazing practices and institute incentives for good land stewardship;
- Resume state land exchanges to facilitate wilderness designation;
- Lobby for a strong bottle bill for New Mexico;
- Appoint an Assistant Commissioner for the environment

Support needed

Although some of us find participating in the political arena distasteful, I strongly encourage you to get involved in this elec-

tion. We have a genuine opportunity to help direct our state more strongly toward a "green agenda".

Baca took an office that had once served the users of state lands and made it serve the owners [the people of New Mexico].

—Albuquerque Journal

How to help

We need your help to walk precincts, put up signs, make phone calls, raise money or contribute it through neighborhood gatherings, and put energy into the myriad of other activities that go into a successful campaign. Any amount of help, small or large, will be appreciated. To make yourself an integral part of this effort, please call or write:

Albuquerque
Geoff Webb
Baca Campaign HQ - 823-2120
P.O. Box 7837
Albuquerque, NM 87194

Santa Fe
George Grossman- 982-1024

Las Cruces
Kevin Bixby - 525-1532
Perry Plummer - 521-3348
Pat Penfield - 525-8286 □

...I don't want Earth Day to be forgotten. Here in New Mexico, we have the richness of many cultures. My family has been here for more than 400 years. I learned to hunt and fish and to respect the great outdoors...Native Americans who have been here far longer have a cultural and religious tradition of respect for Mother Earth. Many of those who have come to New Mexico have done so out of their love for the land, of the blue skies and open spaces.

Together, we share a deep love and concern for the land we live in and a commitment to leave for our children what our forefathers left us. Together, what we have in common is greater than what divides us. We must remember that, lest we lose sight of our true adversaries—those who would despoil the land and our future for short term gain.

—Jim Baca
(from a speech delivered on Earth Day, 1990)

Chapter goes with King for Governor

Decision based on record, questionnaire, interview

The Executive Committee of the Rio Grande Chapter has voted to endorse Bruce King, Democrat, for governor of New Mexico. The press release announcing and explaining the endorsement is printed here in its entirety.

The Executive Committee urges you to vote for Bruce King. Volunteers to help him win the election are eagerly sought. We'd like to make a strong impact on this election, now that we have made

the environment one of the top issues. Contributions citing the Sierra Club are welcome as well. For more information or to participate actively in the King campaign, call Jay Sorenson (505-884-4314) or Steve Verchinski (505-888-1370) or your conservation chair. Remember to vote on election day, Tuesday, November 6. It is for the environment.

—Jay Sorenson

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

The Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club today announced its endorsement of Bruce King for Governor. Chapter Executive Committee spokespersons Jay Sorenson and Stephan Verchinski stressed that "the decision was based on a carefully followed process of a review of the record, a questionnaire and interviews, and an examination of public commitments and actions." There was unanimous agreement on the choice of Bruce King. (A federal and a state employee were exempt from the endorsement process.)

The Chapter's Executive Committee, representing over 5,000 Sierra Club members in New Mexico and El Paso, believes a strong commitment to environmental protection is necessary if the quality of New Mexico's environment in the 1990s is to be the same or better, but not worse, than today's. It notes a disturbing business think-tank study and a Conservation Foundation study (an environmental organization), each conducted independently of the other, that find New Mexico is below the national average in its protection of the environment. "The Rio Grande Chapter of the SC believes this record of substandard protection must be reversed," they said.

Question of priorities

The Chapter Executive Committee was impressed by King's commitment to protect the environment as one of his three campaign issues. It contrasts sharply with Bond's three issues that "Define Elements of the Agenda for the 1990s:" economic growth, education, and leadership. In interviews, it found King more specific and committed to

improving protection than Bond. "This demonstrates to us King has a better grasp of the problems facing New Mexico and of the need to integrate economic growth with environmental protection," they said.

King's record stronger

King's record of accomplishments proved to be stronger than Bond's. Bond's early history of leading efforts to protect the pere-

graphical statement attached to his questionnaire, cites his peregrine falcon protection efforts, membership on the Water Quality Control Commission, and efforts in new range management approaches, "but never mentions the fact that he was a former member of the Sierra Club and an officer of the Rio Grande Chapter," they reported.

King's growing commitment

King, in contrast, was a principal architect in the creation of the state's environmental protection system, and a sponsor of its key air and water laws and endangered species protection. In recent years, he has had a growing commitment to environmental protection, as illustrated by his public insistence on the resolution of safety and environmental concerns at WIPP before it opens; and by a strong stand on landfills, opposing New Mexico becoming "a dumping spot for buried wastes that threaten to pollute our air and surface and groundwater." They noted that, "King's growing sensitivity to a better protected environment demonstrates the capacity of the man to continue to grow and to be the kind of Governor we are looking for."

Major disagreement over EID

Both candidates earned high marks on a number of critical issues, including a willingness to reintroduce the Mexican wolf into the White Sands Missile Range, a commitment to strengthen the state's clean air act, and support for instream flow legislation. But King stood out on a number of commitments. A major difference is in King's desire to strengthen the Environmental

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King was willing to spend time and effort in constant dialogue with the environmental community on specific issues. In contrast, Bond never initiated meetings or returned phone calls.

grine falcon was viewed positively, but his recent history indicates a diminished environmental commitment. According to his own statements, he introduced only one environmental bill while in the state legislature — an instream flow bill — and it was at our request; he also supported strengthening the state's clean air act. An examination of the minutes of the Water Quality Control Commission, of which he was a member, indicates he attended only three of 13 meetings. More recently on WIPP, Bond has favored opening the repository for experiments before environment, safety, and health standards are in place. "All in all, it is not a very strong record," they noted.

Bond downplays ties to Sierra Club

Also indicative of a questionable commitment is the fact that Bond, in his autobio-

Ski area proposed in Gila Wilderness

by Dan Jones

Outrage! That was my initial reaction upon learning about a proposal for a ski area in the Gila Wilderness, on the north slope of Whitewater Baldy and adjacent to Hummingbird Saddle. Yes, it is being proposed that one of the choicest parts of the Gila Wilderness, indeed, of the entire National Wilderness Preservation System, be turned into a private cash register.

In its second paragraph, the slick document entitled "A Proposal for the Hummingbird Ski Area" hypes jobs and more jobs, and claims the project would generate some 75 full-time positions plus about 100 weekend jobs (which it admits would be seasonal in nature.)

The ski area proponents make much of the fact that Whitewater

Baldy and Peak 10,540 sit on the north edge of the Gila Wilderness less than 2.5 miles from the wilderness boundary, and that prior to 1980 the summit of Whitewater Baldy was less than 1.5 miles from the wilderness boundary. The implication is that this makes it okay to steal this choice area since it is almost outside of the wilderness area and part of it is so newly designated that it can't really be wilderness anyway.

They say all they want is 1360 acres, only one quarter of one percent of the 558,065 acres of the Gila Wilderness. Actually, they want 1790 acres after adding 430 acres for an access and drainage area. Readers of the proposal are assured that the promoters are planning a ski area for the next century which "...will be good for

continued on next page

King endorsement

continued from page 3

Improvement Division (EID) by separating it from the Health Division and to create a new environmental cabinet position. Linked to the major health department of the state, EID gets lost in legislative decisions related to departmental budgets and personnel positions. "Bond's willingness to increase funding for EID and to stress enforcement does not provide the remedy necessary for a significant strengthening of the agency or environmental protection. Bond's emphasis on cost considerations over agency effectiveness and his relentless criticism of King for proposing to strengthen this agency shows either a lack of understanding of the real problem or the wrong priorities," they said.

Difference in attitudes

They also noted the difference between King's effort to reach out to environmental organizations in contrast with Bond's remarks about "environmental extremists" and his lack of initiative to involve environmental organizations in his campaign. King was willing to spend time and effort in constant dialogue with the environmental community on specific issues. In contrast, Bond never initiated meetings or returned phone calls. With his "environmental extremists" remarks, he attempted to use the environment in a negative and divisive way in the campaign. "Instead of building a consensus on environmental issues, he wanted to create a political split on environmental issues. It is not the kind of leadership we believe is in the best interest of the public. We need someone who can build a consensus and represent all views, and that is what King is campaigning on," they said. □

More Sierra Club endorsements

Udall endorsed for top law spot

The Chapter Executive Committee has endorsed Tom Udall, Democrat, for the position of New Mexico State Attorney General.

Udall is an environmentalist of long-standing who would bring excellent credentials, environmental and otherwise, to the Attorney General's office. He is the son of former Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall. He has worked at the New Mexico Environmental Improvement Division and has a working knowledge of that important agency. Udall has also been a prosecutor with the U.S. Attorney's office. He is an active

climber and river runner, and was instrumental as a private citizen in obtaining Wild and Scenic River Status for the Rio Chama.

Udall has pledged to take an aggressive stance in prosecuting environmental crimes. Because of this, his opponent - a staunch foe of the recently enacted NM Solid Waste Act - has labeled him an "environmental extremist", which apparently puts him in the same camp as other candidates, such as Bruce King and Jim Baca, who have pledged to bring environmental responsibility to state government. □

Chapter supports Richardson

Incumbent Bill Richardson (D) has been endorsed by the Chapter Executive Committee for reelection to the U.S. House of Representatives, District 3. Throughout his eight year tenure in Congress, Richardson has consistently received high ratings by the League of Conservation Voters for his votes on key environmental legislation. He played a leading role in creating El Pais National Monument and obtaining Wild and Scenic Status for the Rio Chama. Most recently, he initiated legislative efforts to acquire the Forked Lightning Ranch in order to protect the nearby Pecos National Monument.

His opponent has engaged in particularly strident "environmental bashing" against Richardson. It is vital that District 3 voters (which includes Santa Fe) show their support for Richardson at the polls. □

Santa Fe Group endorses Max Coll

Incumbent Max Coll has been endorsed by the Santa Fe Group in the race for New Mexico House Representative, District 47, which includes the city of Santa Fe. Coll has the longest and most consistent record of environmental advocacy in the State Legislature. As Chair of the Legislative Finance Committee and a member of the House Appropriations Committee, Coll occupies one of the most important positions in the legislature. He is a supporter of instream flow legislation, a state bottle bill, strengthening the state Environmental Improvement Division, and protection for public and private sector whistle-blowers. □

Ski area

(continued from previous page)

the economy, good for the area, and good for the skier."

As is well known, the Gila Wilderness was set aside in 1924 as the nation's first designated wilderness. It became a "Wilderness Area" in 1964 with the passage of the Wilderness Act. To attack the Gila Wilderness is to attack the ENTIRE Wilderness System! Excising a piece out of the Gila is out of the question. And that a part of the area proposed for excision was added as recently as 1980 does not make it any less a part of the wilderness.

According to one source, the ski area promoters are generating an alarming amount of local support and may already have an Arizona congressman and senator leaning their way. It is important that the New Mexico delegation, particularly Pete Domenici and Joe Skeen, not support this proposal.

The thing to do is to let the five gentlemen who represent New Mexico in Washington know that taking a piece out of the Gila Wilderness is totally unacceptable and that we will make the proposal a national issue if it is not quashed promptly. Let them know that we do not want a ski area in the Gila, not even one which the promoters claim would be "...very clean, environmentally and aesthetically" (whatever that means) with a ski trail that "...looks like God made it instead of a bulldozer." □

From the Chair

Waiting for You

by Stephen Flint, Chapter Chair

We are sliding now into high political season. Have you ever wished you could wield a thousand votes for environmental quality? Does it seem to you that a voice for clean air, pure water, and creatures free and wild is perhaps too little heard in what some call the "corridors of power"?

Power is a slippery idea, a diffuse entity that can come from many sources. It dwells in the chambers of our political conclaves, to be sure. More than anywhere else, though, genuine power resides in you. Do you realize that a few hours a month invested in discussion and planning with the others who feel as you do about our lovely green and brown world can bring to you amazing power to halt the damage we are all doing to it? The earth is suffering grievously now from our society's distorted priorities. Everything is waiting for you, waiting for the changes we need.

The Sierra Club's Rio Grande Chapter is an all-volunteer organization. We have no paid staff at all. The extraordinary achievements that Sierra Club activists and our allies have brought forth in recent years - the Bisti Wilderness designation, El Malpais National Monument, Petroglyph National Monument - all have come from the devo-

tion of a relative few of our members, backed by the respect our name has won, the wee bit of money the Sierra Club can muster, and the sheer worthiness of our cause. A member who is ready to change some part of our world that s/he dislikes can summon enormous power to beneficial ends by using the avenues of influence that Sierra Club already holds open.

It is easy to be an environmentalist. You need not lead an ascetic's life, you need not be a Peace Corps type, you do not need any degree in law, forestry, political science, or anything else. Great changes require great efforts, surely, sometimes. But the few among our Chapter's 5500 members who are centrally involved in the club's conservation work sometimes have to laugh in horror at how easily we could do better with the opportunities we miss. For want of one activist to sit in on one hearing, very often an issue is lost. It is comical how easy some bits of real progress can be won; it is tragic how painful are some of our choices when our overextended contingent of activists must drop one urgent need to work on another competing one. Environmental problems linger, awaiting for you to act.

Pick up the newsletter for your Sierra Club group. Look for the list of committee chairs. Look for the schedule of committee meetings. Pick a committee. Call the chair. Attend the meeting. You will meet some good people. You will learn all sorts of

Ski areas: jobs or snow jobs?

From The NM Wilderness Study Committee Sept. Newsletter:

"...Indeed, the developers neglect to mention much of the "down side of a ski area", namely, the negative impacts on wildlife and on the watershed. Also, the much promised boost to the local economy is more fantasy than fact as most certainly a small few will get their pockets lined at the expense of the environment and the local community.

A recent story in the Albuquerque Journal exposed the bankruptcy of the Rio Costilla Ski Area in northern New Mexico. Under promises of jobs and development for this depressed community, a now bankrupt savings and loan dumped over \$16 million into the ski area. Recently Taiwanese investors paid less than \$5 million for the ski area; taxpayers and the local community lost the rest."

[Editor's note: The investors mentioned ended up not buying the Rio Costilla Ski Area. The federal government operated the ski area for the past two years, but have decided not to open it again this year.]

MEMBERSHIP FORM

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The Northern Goshawk

As least as threatened as spotted owl

by Jana Oyler, Wildlife Issues Chair

When the spotted owl makes the cover of national magazines and is in the headlines of all the newspapers, it is sometimes difficult to keep a focus on the entire issue of old-growth forests and to remember that owls are but one of the species whose existence is threatened by loss of habitat through logging and commercial or residential exploitation of our forests.

There is another bird whose existence is at least as threatened as that of the spotted owl: the northern goshawk. This "bird hawk" (it preys largely on other birds and on rabbits) is a fierce, robust bird with a long tail and rounded wings. It resembles a Cooper's hawk (especially in the immature phase) and a sharp-shinned hawk but is larger and lacks the reddish coloration. Like all accipiters, it is adapted to hunting among trees. It has suffered in the past from egg-thinning as a result of DDT poisoning,

and there is fear that the United States' exporting of pesticides banned in this country into tropical Latin America is causing a rise in DDT poisoning here again.

We know far too little about this magnificent bird, but we do know enough to realize that its habitat in New Mexico is gravely threatened by proposed timber sales and by the management practices of the Forest Service. For example:

- Current research indicates each goshawk nest site should ideally have a buffer zone of nearly 5,000 acres; the Forest Service typically leaves only 20 acres.
- Studies in Arizona reveal that even when larger acreage is allotted as a buffer around a nest site, occupancy of nests drops by 80 percent and nestling production drops by 94 percent after any logging in the area.
- Goshawk nests and roost sites are sometimes difficult to spot, especially by untrained observers, yet the Forest Service often allows cutting units to be chosen and marked only by loggers. No one else enters the area.
- Like most species that inhabit forests, the

goshawk needs diversity of habitat – snags and downed logs, large and small trees, varying ages of vegetation. However, the Forest Service plans to increase logging in the Southwest by 50 percent in the next ten years and 75 percent in the next fifty years, and is managing our forests to produce even-aged stand conditions.

The Jemez Mountains are particularly threatened by the Forest Service's timber sales and management practices, and the northern goshawk population in the Jemez is jeopardized as well. Threats to its ability to maintain a marginal clawhold in the Gila National Forest are occurring now with the proposed Sheep and Dutchman timber sales in the Lost Lake area of the Reserve Ranger District.

Even if efforts to have the goshawk placed on the threatened species list prevail, the

current attacks being mounted on the Endangered Species Act do not bode well for the future of this magnificent raptor. In New Mexico, only \$250,000 – less than two percent of the

total budget for the New Mexico Game and Fish Department – goes toward managing threatened and endangered species.

What can you do? First, write or call your congressional representatives and senators immediately urging their opposition to S. 2762/H.R. 5094 (National Forest Implementation Act of 1990.) This outrageous bill would subordinate all forest purposes to "commodity production"; i.e., forests would be managed first and foremost to produce timber "to the maximum extent feasible." If court orders or an endangered species reduce the amount of planned logging, this bill would allow previously protected lands, including wilderness areas, to be opened to logging to compensate.

Second, support the Rio Grande Chapter's and your group's involvement in monitoring the National Forests. We need every warm body we can get.

"Where the people lead, the leaders will follow." □

Council Report

by Jana Oyler

The Sierra Club Council acts in an advisory capacity to the Sierra Club's Board of Directors and serves as a liaison between groups, chapters, and national. Each chapter has one council delegate. The Council meets in San Francisco in May and November.

I have been the Rio Grande Chapter's Council Delegate since 1989. At the national level I work with the Chapters and Groups Committee, which focuses on how to maintain healthy chapters and groups. This committee is planning to develop SWAT teams to go all over the country visiting groups or chapters that need encouragement or just a little advice.

After too many years of focusing almost exclusively on conservation issues of national concern, the Club's Board of Directors is beginning to see that many of the true advances in real conservation are being made at state and local levels. Beginning in fiscal year 1991, the Board of Directors will give money to chapters to help them lobby state legislatures and maintain an active presence in state and local regulatory agencies. I'm excited about the possibilities this state-level funding offers; if you have any thoughts about where you would spend some extra Club money in New Mexico, please contact your group or chapter conservation chairs.

The next Council meeting will be in early November in San Francisco. If you have concerns or questions you would like me to carry to national, please give me a call at (505) 988-1858 weekdays. □

News Briefs

(continued from page 8)

Biodiversity bill extinct...for now

H.R. 1268, the National Biological Diversity Conservation and Environmental Protection Act, appears dead for this session of Congress. The bill, introduced last year by Rep. James H. Scheuer (D-NY) was reported by the House Science Committee, but opposition from the White House makes it unlikely that it will advance further.

Scheuer's bill calls for a national policy for the protection of biological diversity. Specifically, it would make conservation of biological diversity a national goal, require guidelines for the consideration of biological diversity in environmental impact statements, create a national center for biological diversity research, and establish a coordinated federal biodiversity strategy.

Carson National Forest

The Chapter has sent a letter to the Forest Supervisor requesting that an EIS rather than an Environmental Assessment be done for proposed development in the Angostura Diversity Unit in the El Camino Real Ranger District. Angostura, located on the northern boundary of the Pecos Wilderness, is unroaded and contains much old growth. It has been recommended for wilderness by conservationists. In its letter, the Chapter argued that the pristine nature of the area, the likely controversy that would accompany any development, and the cumulative impacts on Angostura of nearby timber harvesting all point to the need for an EIS.

The Chapter is also requesting that an EIS be completed for the proposed expansion of the Sipapu Ski Area in Tres Ritos. The Chapter contends that an EIS is needed to study potential risks to old growth forest and the cumulative impacts of development in the area.

Cibola National Forest

The Chapter is considering joining a lawsuit against Cibola National Forest to prevent it from going ahead with plans to improve access to Las Huertas Canyon in the Sandia Mountains near Albuquerque. A coalition of environmental groups that included the Chapter and Albuquerque Group had appealed the final EIS for Las Huertas on the grounds that it was deficient in scope and information, contradicted the forest plan, contravened American Indian religious rights, provided for inadequate water quality protection, and ignored the majority of public comments which were in opposition to the project. The appeal was rejected by the Regional Forester.

An environmental assessment was completed in August for the Basgal Timber Sale in the Mt. Taylor Ranger District, Cibola County, New Mexico.

Coronado National Forest

No report received.

Gila/Apache National Forests

A ski area has been proposed within the Gila Wilderness Area near Whitewater Baldy. According to a promotional brochure, the proposed site would provide 75 full-time jobs and bring in \$10-20 million into the local economy. The flier also

asserts that a precedent exists for establishing a ski area in a wilderness area: the White Pass Ski Area was expanded into the Goat Rocks Wilderness Area in Washington in 1984. See article elsewhere in this issue.

The Forest Service has recommended "no action" on the Ward Timber Sale at this time.

Proposed road construction in association with the Eagle Peak and Buzzard Timber Sales has been reduced from 40 to 3 miles. The record of decision shows that letters from environmentally concerned citizens and groups were a factor in bringing about this change.

Arrangements have been made with the Forest Service to view the controversial areas of the proposed Ward, Eagle Peak and Buzzard Timber Sales on October 20-21. For more information, contact Ted Mertig of the El Paso Group, (915) 852-3011.

The Forest Service is going ahead with plans for the El Caso Timber Sale in the Quemado Ranger District near Quemado Lake. A public meeting was held September 20 to identify potential issues. The deadline for written comments is October 20. Call the district office for more information: (505) 773-4678.

There is a new supervisor in the Gila National Forest.

Lincoln National Forest

Announced that appeals of the proposed Baca Timber Sale had been rejected. This had been appealed by environmentalists and the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (DGF), based in part on concerns about impacts on wildlife. DGF's appeal was later rescinded in a controversial move by the New Mexico Game and Fish Commission.

Santa Fe National Forest

The Forest Service has released its draft EIS for Creek Diversity Unit Timber Sale, better known as the Elk Mountain Timber Sale. This controversial sale adjoins the Pecos Wilderness Area and includes old-growth timber. Shortly after the EIS was released, a pine marten was sighted in the area, reinforcing arguments that this is criti-

cal wildlife habitat. The Elk Mountain Action Group says letters are needed to the Forest Service requesting a 45-day extension period for commenting on the DEIS, and asking for a public hearing rather than an open house be held in Pecos. Write to: Steve Kelly, Acting Forest Supervisor, Santa Fe Nat. Forest (address below) or call 988-6940.

WATCHDOGS NEEDED!

There are seven national forests and one national grassland located within the boundaries of the Rio Grande Chapter. These areas are listed below, with acreage in New Mexico and addresses. Readers are urged to get on the mailing lists for these areas and keep abreast of important developments. Please forward information to the *Sierran* for publication in this column.

- Apache National Forest (614,000 acres in NM) (NM portion administered by Gila National Forest.)
- Carson National Forest (1,391,000 acres) P.O. Box 558, Taos, NM 87571
- Cibola National Forest (1,635,000 acres) 10308 Candelaria, NE, Albuquerque, NM 87112
- Coronado National Forest (69,000 acres) 300 W. Congress, Tucson, AZ 85701
- Gila National Forest (2,705,000 acres) 2610 N. Silver Street, Silver City, NM 88061
- Lincoln National Forest (1,103,000 acres) Federal Building, Alamogordo, NM 88310
- Santa Fe National Forest (1,569,000 acres) P.O. Box 1689, Santa Fe, NM 87504
- Kiowa National Grassland (136,000 acres) (Administered by Cibola National Forest.)

USFS seeking input from environmentalists

by Ted Mertig

The Forest Service has made it known recently that their "number one priority" is to build public trust. This offers us in the Sierra Club an excellent opportunity to develop a better working relationship with them.

One way to do this is to work on I.D. teams. The Forest Service is looking for input from environmentalists from the very start of their proposed projects. Our concerns and suggestions have a better chance of being addressed if they are recognized early in the planning process. Training in the various aspects, and on site inspections of issue areas will be made available to persons willing to make the commitment. □

Looking for oil in all the wrong places

The Middle-East crisis has predictably revived efforts to open up the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) and other protected areas for oil drilling. One example is the Murkowski amendment, a last minute addition by Senator Frank Murkowski (R-Alaska) to a Defense Authorization Bill recently passed by the Senate.

The Murkowski amendment calls on the president to develop an "Energy Action Plan" when oil imports exceed 50 percent of domestic demand. The plan would open up protected areas for drilling in order of their oil and gas potential. ANWR would top the list, but other areas could include the Bob Marshall Wilderness, Forest Service lands near Yellowstone, marine sanctuaries, and outer continental shelf areas currently off-limits to oil and gas leasing.

The Murkowski plan ignores the fact that oil from these areas would make little difference in solving our energy problems. The Interior Department estimates that there is only a one-in-ten chance of finding eco-

nomically recoverable oil in ANWR. If oil is found, it would take at least ten years to bring it to market, and it would only supply about 180 days worth of current domestic demand.

The House has passed its version of the Defense Authorization Bill without equivalent language. The fate of the Murkowski plan will be decided soon in conference committee. Readers are urged to contact Senator Jeff Bingaman, a member of the Armed Services Committee, to voice their opposition to the Murkowski measure.

Forests bills sprout in Congress

Several initiatives to protect old-growth forests on federal lands are under consideration in the House. The best of the lot, Representative Jim Jontz' Ancient Forest Protection Act (H.R. 4492), now has more than 125 sponsors but more are needed for passage.

On the negative side, consideration is being given in the House Agriculture Committee

to a move by Representative Harold Volkmer that would restrict citizens' ability to force the Forest Service and other agencies to comply with environmental laws. Volkmer is chair of the Subcommittee on Forest, Family Farms and Energy.

Bryan bill runs out of gas

The Senate voted 57-42 against cloture, effectively killing the Motor Vehicle Fuel Efficiency Act. (Cloture was needed to prevent filibustering in opposition to the bill.) The bill, introduced by Senator Richard Bryan (D-NV), would have raised the fuel efficiency of new cars to about 40 miles per gallon by 2000. This would have been a tremendous step towards addressing global warming and cutting oil consumption.

Opponents of the bill, including the Bush administration and the automobile industry, argued that it would result in less safe vehicles. Senator Jeff Bingaman (D-NM) voted in favor of the measure (for cloture); Senator Pete Domenici (R-NM) voted against it (against cloture.)

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New Issue

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New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee to hold fall meeting

The fall meeting of the New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee will be held on October 20 at the University of New Mexico Law School, Room 2405. The meeting is open to the public. The agenda is as follows:

- 10 am Introductions
- 10:15 Jim Norton, SW representative of the Wilderness Society. "Threats to existing Wilderness in New Mexico."
- 10:45 Bruce Bailey, Colorado lawyer. "Challenging Ski Area proposals in Wilderness and National Forests."
- 11:15 Sam Hitt, Elk Mountain Action Group. "Timber sales in critical old-growth areas and de-facto Wilderness."
- Lunch 11:45 - 1:00
- 1:00 Jim Fish, Public Lands Action Network. "Grazing Issues in Wilderness."
- 1:30 Dutch Salmon and John Sommers. "The Status of the BLM Wilderness Bill."
- 2:00 Small groups: Field work on Forest Service Wilderness; Political Lobbying; Adopting a Wilderness.

For more information, call John Wright at 877-5259.

Workshop for Outing Leaders

A training session and idea and problem-sharing fest for outing leaders and potential leaders will be held from 9 am to 3 pm, Saturday, Nov. 3 at the Santa Fe Airport. For more information, call Norma McCallan at 471-0005.

Chapter to sponsor fundraising seminar

The Chapter is planning a staff position that requires a separate fundraising effort. There is an opportunity to receive fundraising training as to the do's and don'ts of Sierra Club fundraising. This two day seminar will be scheduled if there is enough interest. We have five already but need several more participants. Call Stefan 888-1370 for more information.

Internationalists Sought

Interested in other countries? Want to save another part of the world? Stefan Verchinski would like to use his contacts in Mexico and Central America to help the national Sierra Club International effort. He would like to put together an interested group to have informal transfer of assistance and contacts through the international sister cities program and university international groups in New Mexico. Call Stephan at 888-1370. □

El Paso

• Under the direction of Ted Mertig, the Public Lands Committee has been restructured. Priorities include Gila National Forest timber sales and BLM wilderness study areas. In an effort to generate greater interest by other volunteers, at least one outing per month has been scheduled to areas to be affected by public policy. Upcoming outings will include Cookes Range WSA. Chapter members are invited and may call Ted Mertig at (915) 852-3011 for additional information.

• The group is working with the El Paso City Council to develop a municipal recycling program to work as a complement to the Group's community based program.

• Our outings program continues stronger than ever - with recent visits to the highest points in the continental U.S. (Mt. Whitney), New Mexico (Wheeler Peak), and Texas (Guadalupe Peak.)

• Group membership continues to increase and is currently at an all time high of 650 members.

• In July, the El Paso Regional Group became only the second group in the Sierra Club to have an employee.

Albuquerque

The group is actively involved in a number of issues, including:

• Vehicle fuel efficiency. Heidi Fleischmann orchestrated group support for the Bryan bill that would have required new cars to get an average of 40 miles per gallon.

• Interstate 40. Stefan Verchinski pressed federal highway administrators to develop an EIS for widening Interstate 40.

• Recycling. Several members are pushing the city to adopt strong waste reduction and recycling policies.

• West Mesa/National Petroglyphs Monument. Ike Eastvold is continuing to pursue parkway standards for the construction of Unser Blvd.

• WIPP wastes. Jay Sorenson wrote comments in support of a city council effort to prohibit the transit of WIPP-bound wastes through Albuquerque.

Santa Fe

No report submitted.

Southern New Mexico

• An ad hoc group of members has been meeting to help develop new Club policy on public lands grazing.

• The group helped support a very successful Humane Society program that brought gray wolves from Colorado to Las Cruces schools. A public meeting was also held at NMSU, at which a lively debate on reintroducing Mexican wolves erupted.

• The September general meeting focused on Representative Skeen's proposed Organ Mountain National Conservation Area, highlighting the dubious protection offered under this plan. Jim Graham and other local activists have been working with Senator Bingaman to draft a better bill. The latest word is that, rather than compromise, Skeen has dropped the idea of an NCA for the time being.

• In an effort to promote greater interaction between the group Executive Committee and rank-and-file members, a potluck was held instead of the normal August general meeting. Members met the Executive Committee members, and vice-versa, played volleyball and watched videos on the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and public land grazing.

• Summer outings included hikes to the Black Range, Lake Roberts, Emory Pass, Bandelier Nat. Mon., the Catwalk, and a full moon trip to White Sands National Monument.

• Marianne Thaeler has initiated a monthly "Ideas Discussion and Development" session in order to provide a forum for group members to meet and discuss conservation issues. □

CHAPTER OUTINGS

Listed below is a compilation of the four groups' outings for October and November in the hopes that it will provide the opportunity for all our members to find more outings of interest.

It is strongly recommended (and in many cases required) that the individual leader be called to confirm details of meeting place and time of departure. Dogs are allowed only when noted.

For everyone's well-being, leaders reserve the right to turn away anyone whose clothing or equipment or experience appears unsuitable for the particular trip. Carpooling is usually arranged at the meeting place. Happy hiking!

—Norma McCallan
Chapter Outings Chair

Manzano Mountains
Friday, Oct. 12 - Sunday, Oct. 14
Beginners backpack and car-camp to watch the fall raptor migration. Stefan Verchinsky, 888-1370 (Albuquerque).

Gila National Forest
Friday, Oct. 12 - Sunday, Oct. 14
Key exchange backpack: Deloache Canyon to Catwalk along Whitewater Creek. Leave Friday evening. Kathy Sunday, (915) 778-8030(w) and Joe Rodriguez, (915) 833-9655 (El Paso).

San Mateo Mountains
Friday, Oct. 12 - Sunday, Oct. 14
Car-camp and easy to moderate day hikes Saturday and Sunday. Dogs allowed. Leave Friday evening. Margo Wilson, 744-5860 (T or C.)

Pecos Wilderness
Saturday, Oct. 13
Moderate/strenuous hike to Spirit Lake. Leave 8 am, PERA parking lot, Santa Fe. Art Judd, 982-3212.

Guadalupe Mountains National Park
Saturday, Oct. 13
Day hike to the Bowl, 8.3 miles round trip. Gary Williams, (915) 562-3540, 544-8484(w) (El Paso.)

Santa Fe Area
Sunday, Oct. 14
Easy, slow hike for small children, dogs and reluctant hikers. Leave PERA lot at 9 am. Elizabeth Altman, 471-8490 (Santa Fe.)

Cochiti Area
Sunday, Oct. 14
Strenuous hike to Cerro Picacho near St. Peter's Dome. Rough trail. Leave PERA lot, 8 am. Norbert Sperlich, 983-1962 (Santa Fe.)

Gila National Forest
Fri., Oct. 19 - Sun., Oct. 21
Car-camp and day hikes to tour the proposed controversial Eagle Peak and Ward Timber Sales, guided by the Forest Service. Leave Friday evening. Ted Merrig, (915) 852-3011 (El Paso.)

Albuquerque Area
Friday, Oct. 19
"Dead or Alive" Naturalist Society reading. Short evening hike with readings. Bring a passage from Muir, Abbey, etc., sturdy boots and flashlight. David Morrison, 344-8693 (Albuquerque.)

El Rito Area
Saturday, Oct. 20
Moderate hike, stopping for dinner on way home. Leave PERA lot at 8 am. Brian Johnson, 438-2087 (Santa Fe.)

Santa Fe Area
Sunday, Oct. 21
Moderate/strenuous hike along Penstemon Ridge. Leave PERA lot, 8 am. Dan Mitchem, 982-2082 (Santa Fe.)

Petroglyphs National Monument
Sunday, Oct. 21
Easy hike in Geologic Windows section, 9 am - noon. Ike Eastvold, 255-7679 (Albuquerque.)

El Paso Area
Sunday, Oct. 21
Easy dayhike to Hueco Tanks. Marianne Thaeler, 522-3421 (Las Cruces.)

Guadalupe Mts. Nat. Park
Fri., Oct. 26-Sun., Oct. 28
Key exchange backpack trip, McKittrick Canyon - Dog Canyon. One group leaves Friday evening, the other leaves Saturday morning. Betty Fisbeck, (915) 581-0174 and Dale Harris (915) 544-7149 (El Paso.)

Santa Fe Area
Saturday, Oct. 27
Easy hike on Chamisa Trail. Dogs allowed. Leave PERA lot at 9:30 am. Charlie Crooks, 471-0005.

Organ Mountains
Saturday, Oct. 27
Moderate dayhike to Achenbach Canyon. Frank Quirolo, 522-6312 (Las Cruces.)

Guadalupe Mountains National Park
Sunday, Oct. 28
Easy hike in McKittrick Canyon. Don St. Germain, (915) 751-7363 (El Paso.)

Pecos Wilderness
Sunday, Oct. 28
Moderate hike, Windsor Ridge to Stewart Lake, down Windsor Creek. Leave PERA lot at 8 am. Myles Brown, 471-5075 (Santa Fe.)

Guadalupe Mountains National Park
Saturday, Nov. 3
Moderate hike, Williams Ranch/El Capitan, 9.8 miles. Gary Williams, (915) 562-3540, 544-8484(w) (El Paso.)

Outings Headers' Workshop
Saturday, Nov. 3
A training session and idea and problem-sharing fest for outing leaders and potential leaders. 9 am - 3 pm, Santa Fe Airport. Norma McCallan, 471-0005 (Santa Fe.)

Cochiti Area
Sunday, Nov. 4
Easy hike in Tent Rocks. Leave PERA lot at 8:30 am. Margo Murray, 473-1916 (Santa Fe.)

La Bajada Hill
Sunday, Nov. 4
Moderate hike for dogs, their owners and friends. Leave PERA lot at 8 am. Louise Leopold, 988-4592 (Santa Fe.)

Guadalupe Mts. NP
Sat., Nov. 10 - Sun., Nov. 11
Car-camp and hike in Dog Canyon. Carl Horkowitz, (915) 755-3968 (El Paso.)

Organ Mountains
Saturday, Nov. 10
Moderate off-trail hike in Fillmore Canyon. Marianne Thaeler, 522-3421 and Ed Macbeth, 526-8060 (Las Cruces.)

Bandelier National Monument
Saturday, Nov. 10
Moderate/strenuous hike. Leave PERA lot at 8 am. John McClure, 473-1916 (Santa Fe.)

Santa Fe Area
Saturday, Nov. 10
Easy hike, Diablo Canyon. Dogs allowed. Leave from PERA lot. Charles Crooks, 471-0005 (Santa Fe.)

Bandelier National Monument
Sunday, Nov. 11
Moderate/strenuous hike to Kiva House Ruins. Leave PERA lot at 8 am. Merrill Goodwyn, 471-5442 (Santa Fe.)

Sandia Mountains
Saturday, Nov. 17 - Sunday, Nov. 18
Moderate dayhikes and optional car-camp. Saturday, we'll hike Piedra Lisa Trail, and Sunday, Tunnel Springs Trail. Leave PERA lot at 8 am. Saturday. Dogs allowed. Norma McCallan, 471-0005 (Santa Fe.)

Santa Fe Area
Saturday, Nov. 17
Moderate hike to Atlataya Peak. Leave PERA lot at 9 am. Dan Mitchem, 982-2082 (Santa Fe.)

Bandelier National Monument
Sunday, Nov. 18
Moderate hike in area west of the Monument. Leave PERA lot at 8 am. Brian Johnson, 438-2087 (Santa Fe.)

Santa Fe Area
Saturday, Nov. 24
Easy hike on Penstemon Ridge. Leave PERA lot at 9 am. Arnold Keskulla, 982-9570 (Santa Fe.)

Bandelier National Monument
Sunday, Nov. 25
Strenuous hike to San Miguel ruins. Leave PERA lot at 8 am. Norbert Sperlich, 983-1962 (Santa Fe.)

The Candidates Speak

[Editors note: The Chapter is holding an election for the Chapter Executive Committee. There are five candidates for three available seats. All members in good standing are eligible to vote. Please use the ballot form on the back cover.]

Gwen Wardwell

If elected to a second term on the Executive Committee, I want to continue the work I began in the past year as Membership Chair. My goal as Chair was to keep more of our new members, a high percentage of whom drop out after one year, and to encourage current members in becoming more active. Most of my efforts to do this were in northern New Mexico where I was able to form three telephone trees outside Santa Fe and to meet with members in the Las Vegas area.

I am also interested in helping to raise the money needed to hire a full-time Chapter staff person whose major responsibility would be recruiting and training volunteer activists.

Norma McCallan

I am a long-term Sierra Club member (1968) who has been involved with the Santa Fe group in various capacities. Currently I am acting Group Chair, and Chapter Outings Chair.

I am the Southwest Librarian at the New Mexico State Library, and deal with numerous environmental reference questions. My favorite activity is getting out into our beautiful southwest terrain, and I have led many outings over the years.

I have completed one term on the Chapter Executive Committee and found it a valuable experience to work with all the very concerned and diligent members of the committee.

I would like to see us make more effort to forge coalitions with local groups on local environmental issues when our goals are compatible, and to publicize more widely our concerns with urban issues. We need to more vigorously attack the "elitism" label thrown at us by the opposition.

We also need to be more creative about utilizing the enthusiasm and skills of our 5000-some members in the chapter. In this era of burgeoning environmental crises at the state, national and international levels, we need many more activists to work on and resolve the many critical issues in our area

such as timber sales in the National Forests, spotted owl habitat, acquisition of BLM wilderness, reintroduction of the Mexican wolf, air and water pollution, radioactive wastes, etc.

Leslie C. King, III:

Canoe outings and the proposed damming of the Seventeen Rivers near the University of South Florida campus in Tampa led me to join the Sierra Club in 1977. At the urging of Shirley Taylor, a former member of the National Board of Directors of the Club, I became involved in conservation activities. I soon found myself serving as Tampa Group Chair, as a delegate to the Regional Conservation Committee and a Florida Chapter Executive Committee member, and finally as Florida Chapter Chair.

I kept on with my Club work while I attended the University of Pennsylvania Law School in the early 1980s. I was at first a delegate to the Northeast Regional Conservation Committee (NERCC) and then the Chair of the NERCC and a Regional Vice-President of the Club. Later I was appointed to the Club's national Grassroots Fundraising Committee and helped write the manual on fundraising the Club still uses.

In 1985 I was appointed to the National Development Committee and served on it for several years.

Since moving to New Mexico in 1984, I have served on the Rio Grande Chapter's Executive Committee and as the Chapter's Legal Chair, and I lead occasional outings for the Santa Fe Group when I can persuade a group of members to serve as guinea pigs for my infamous exploratory hikes.

I would like to work with the Rio Grande Chapter Executive Committee again, especially in the area of fundraising. There is a lot we could do with a bigger budget and a larger vision of our influence on public opinion and policy.

When I am not hiking or sailing, I am a partner in Jurgens & King, P.C., a Santa Fe law firm that practices primarily in the areas of bankruptcy, business reorganization, and tax collection defense.

Tom Brasfield

I have been a Sierra Club member since 1976. I am currently the Sierra Club Regional Vice-President for the Southwest Region. I have been a member of the Rio Grande Chapter Executive Committee since 1984 and served as Chair during 1987-1988. Currently I am co-conservation chair for the Chapter.

Public lands issues have been a high priority of the Chapter since its formation in 1964. We must continue to commit our resources to the preservation of the finite

wilderness remaining, the establishment of parks and open spaces, and the protection of wildlife. In addition, issues such as clean air, hazardous waste, clean water, and energy conservation are of crucial importance, not only to us but to future generations.

In order to save our public lands and clean up our environment we must have an impact on elected officials at both the federal and state level. Therefore, I believe that we must increase our involvement in the political process at all levels of government.

If elected to the Executive Committee I will devote my efforts to the accomplishment of the following goals:

- Explore the feasibility of hiring a full or part-time Chapter staff person to support volunteers in their conservation work.
- Strengthen our volunteer lobbying program in Santa Fe.

- Explore new ways to encourage and increase volunteer participation in Chapter and Group activities.

- Improve Chapter finances by developing new and long-term revenue sources.

- Increase our involvement with State governmental agencies where many of the environmental laws that are important to us are implemented.

- Increase our effectiveness in communicating Sierra Club positions to our members, legislators, and the general public.

I would appreciate your vote so that I may work towards these goals during the next three years.

Kevin Bixby

I have been a Sierra Club member for 4 months and a resident of New Mexico for 2 years. I have a master's degree in Natural Resources Policy, and a bachelor's in biology. Currently I am involuntarily unemployed, which affords me time to overcommit myself to various worthwhile causes. I look forward to serving as editor of the *Sierran*, and if elected, on the Chapter Executive Committee. □

