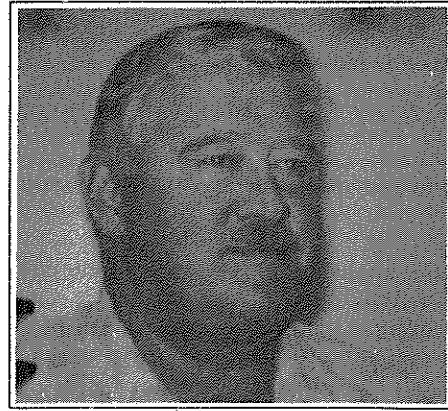


Activist Profile Ted Mertig

In 1981, Ted joined the John Muir Chapter of the Sierra Club in Madison, Wisconsin. He wasn't very active in Wisconsin because he had to drive 80 miles to go to a meeting. He became more active when he moved to the El Paso area in 1984, where he has only 20 miles to drive to meetings. He was elected to the Executive Committee of the El Paso group in 1988 and has served as the group's chairperson since 1992. He was appointed to the Chapter Executive Committee in 1991 and elected to a three-year term in 1993.

Ted is active in the Inner City Outings (ICO) program, leading hikes, backpacks, and fishing trips. As manager of the Injection Molding Department of the Mercury Marine plant in Juarez, he has to speak Spanish, and this skill has been a help in the ICO program. He has forged a cooperative relationship with Las Chulas del Barrio in which Las Chulas organize clean-up activities in the barrios, El Paso Group members participate with Las Chulas members, and the El Paso Group acts as a financial conduit for Las Chulas, a multi-ethnic, mostly Hispanic group.

Under Ted's direction, the El Paso Group organized its First "Earth Day on the Border" in 1993. The event features an environmental fair held at Chamizal National Memorial which is right on the border, with sections in the United States and Mexico. 1994 co-sponsors were other environmental groups, including the Audubon Society, and the Texas National Resources and Conservation Department. Ted is trying to get some business co-sponsors for the 1995 event. A poster contest involves children



and provides material for an Earth Day Calendar.

Ted became active in Diamond Bar Ranch issues in 1990 and brought Susan Schock to a Chapter Executive Committee meeting in 1992. He has been the Chapter's representative on that issue ever since and has insisted that the Chapter fund it. Ted has organized or participated in many of the Diamond Bar field trips and provided many of the photographs of damaged range and riparian areas.

According to Chapter Chair Gwen Wardwell, "Ted seems like an easy-going kind of guy. If you call him on the phone in the summer, the gurgling noises mean that he is floating in his swimming pool. He never gets upset with an inept partner in the pool games at the Black Range Lodge. And he listens a lot during Executive Committee meetings, making occasional, helpful suggestions or motions. But I saw another side to him when the Executive Committee didn't provide extra funding for Diamond Bar work. After a few pointed words from Ted, everyone suddenly changed their minds and the Diamond Bar got all of the discretionary conservation money."

What a guy!

Where Were You?

In the September issue of the *Rio Grande Sierran*, we asked for candidates for the Chapter Executive Committee. None were forthcoming.

We encouraged members to vote in the Chapter Executive Committee and Group Executive Committee elections. A little over 100 out of 5,786 members voted. Where were you?

Membership

☐ Yes, I want to help safeguard our nation's precious natural heritage. My check is enclosed.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ ZIP _____

Phone (Optional) () _____

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

	INDIVIDUAL	JOINT
REGULAR	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35	<input type="checkbox"/> \$43
SUPPORTING	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50	<input type="checkbox"/> \$58
CONTRIBUTING	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100	<input type="checkbox"/> \$108
LIFE	<input type="checkbox"/> \$750	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000
SENIOR	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15	<input type="checkbox"/> \$23
STUDENT	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15	<input type="checkbox"/> \$23
LIMITED INCOME	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15	<input type="checkbox"/> \$23

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RIO GRANDE SIERRAN

News of the Rio Grande Chapter
Sierra Club • January/February 1995

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Legislative session begins January 17

by Doug Fraser

The first session of the 42nd New Mexico State Legislature begins on Tuesday, January 17. We hope to see some positive action in funding for wildlife habitat protection, a bottle bill (see article below), wildlife riparian restoration, subdivision restrictions to eliminate the three unit per year loophole, funding for long-range strategic land and water planning, modification to the state's water code, and expanded funding for the office of Natural Resources Trustee.

With some foreboding, however, we expect an "all-out" attack on the Hard Rock Mining Reclamation Act, either on a repealer or a "gutting" bill. Also, and particularly since the new administration has indicated its support, we expect a "takings" bill (see article on page 6). Both these matters are of grave concern to the Club.

Baca Pushing Bottle Bill This Session

by Doug Fraser

Representative Shirley Baca of Las Cruces, along with Senator Liz Stephanics of Santa Fe, has been working very hard during the past summer on developing the momentum for one more "roll" of the bottle bill through the New Mexico State Legislature. Let us make sure that this is not to become an earthly version of Sisyphus's eternal punishment. Anyone willing to assist during the session, please give me, Kevin Bean (P.I.R.G.) or Rep. Baca a call. Rep. Baca has already obtained the support of a number of municipalities. She feels that Governor Johnson has indicated his support.

Unlike many "bottle bills" in other states, New Mexico grocers would not need to redeem the deposits. Beverage containers could either be redeemed for five cents at state-authorized redemption centers or collected through local curbside or drop-off recycling programs. Rep. Baca urges environmentally

With the Club in the lead, we did defeat "takings" legislation in Arizona through the use of a negative referendum. (The "wise users" there have said that they will try again.) We, however, need to defeat any similar bill here in the Legislature, for even though we have the constitutional right to call for a negative referendum, it is a provision which is extremely hard to utilize.

Please, if anyone out there can help during the upcoming session, give me or Sue McIntosh, the Conservation Chair, a call. We need people to attend committee meetings, write letters to their local papers, and to man our legislative office during the session. I was reminded, once again, through the death of a close friend, that we are not on Planet Earth long, and we must do what little we can.

concerned citizens and community organizations to contact their State Representatives and Senators to ask for their active support for the 1995 Beverage Container Recycling Act.

For more information on the Bottle Bill, see the story on page 15 of the Albuquerque Group News.



Representative Shirley Baca

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 Susan Gorman, Council Del. (505) 265-3231
 Norma McCallan, Santa Fe Rep. (505) 471-0005
 Sue McIntosh (505) 466-2001
 Ted Mertig, Council Alternate (915) 852-3011
 Richard Rheder, El Paso Rep. (915) 544-5659
 Mike Seidensticker, Membership (915) 544-5741
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LETTERS

Dear Editor:

Several years ago, I bought my husband a lifetime membership in the Sierra Club. We are beginning to wonder if that is money wasted.

We are very upset by the news that the ExCom has kicked duly elected members Pat Wolff and Susan Schock off its board.

First, Pat Wolff and Susan Schock are true leaders of the environmental movement. Pat's work uncovering the atrocities of the Animal Damage Control has been featured in the Sierra Club's national magazine. Susan is doing cutting-edge work saving the first wilderness area ever created. Both are courageous, intelligent and inspiring.

Secondly, they were elected by the membership. Their expulsion can be viewed as nothing more than the so-called ExCom thinking that they know better than the rest of us. If there is trouble with people attending meetings due to great distances or political campaigns; we would be satisfied with elected members of the ExCom mailing or faxing their concerns and votes.

We all recently attended a conference that called for us to work together better. This could be attained through more flexibility in our dealings with each other.

Recently, we have been embarrassed by the Sierra Club's endorsement of Governor King, Ray Powell and other Democratic candidates. This is particularly annoying since the Green Party presents such an exciting, viable alternative. Hearing of this latest attempt by the ExCom to silence dissident voices is too much.

Add our name and address to the list of Sierra Club Members for Environmental Ethics.

Sincerely,
 Jeffrey Scott Jones
 Mary Lou Jones

Dear Jeffrey Scott and Mary Lou Jones:

According to the By-Laws of the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club, "Any Executive Committee member absent from more than three meetings per year shall automatically be dropped from the Committee unless reinstated by the unanimous vote of the remaining members

present at the next regular Executive Committee meeting."

Susan Schock and Pat Wolff were absent from meetings on June 4 and 5, July 10, August 13, and September 11. They were "absent from more than three meetings per year" when they did not attend the September 11 meeting. They were "automatically dropped" and informed by registered letter of this about one week after the September 11 meeting. At "the next regular Executive Committee meeting" on December 3 and 4, I informed "the remaining members present" that Susan and Pat could be reinstated by their "unanimous vote." There was no motion to reinstate them.

I agree that Susan and Pat have made significant contributions to the environmental movement, and I appreciate that they were elected by the members. I also believe that the members want their elected representatives to attend the meetings of the body to which they were elected and to follow the By-Laws of the organization.

Many small and effective groups have been formed by persons who found it difficult to work within the Sierra Club framework. Many of these separations have been friendly. The lack of a motion to reinstate Susan and Pat is testimony to the quality of the separation in this case. Both Susan and Pat have been supported in their projects with all the resources of the Rio Grande Chapter, including financial support. In 1994, Susan's project was awarded the same level of funding as every other conservation project. Yet Susan implied at the conference we all attended that she had received no support from the Sierra Club. Both Susan and Pat have chosen to take their differences with the Rio Grande Chapter to the public before trying to resolve them within the Executive Committee.

Please call me or any other Executive Committee member to discuss any of our actions with which you disagree. Or better yet, come to the next Executive Committee meeting to present your views.

Sincerely,
 Gwen Wardwell
 Chairperson

Chapter Executive and Conservation Committees Meet

by Gwen Wardwell

The Executive Committee of the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club met at the Black Range Lodge in Kingston, New Mexico, on December 3rd and 4th to make plans for 1995 and to elect officers.

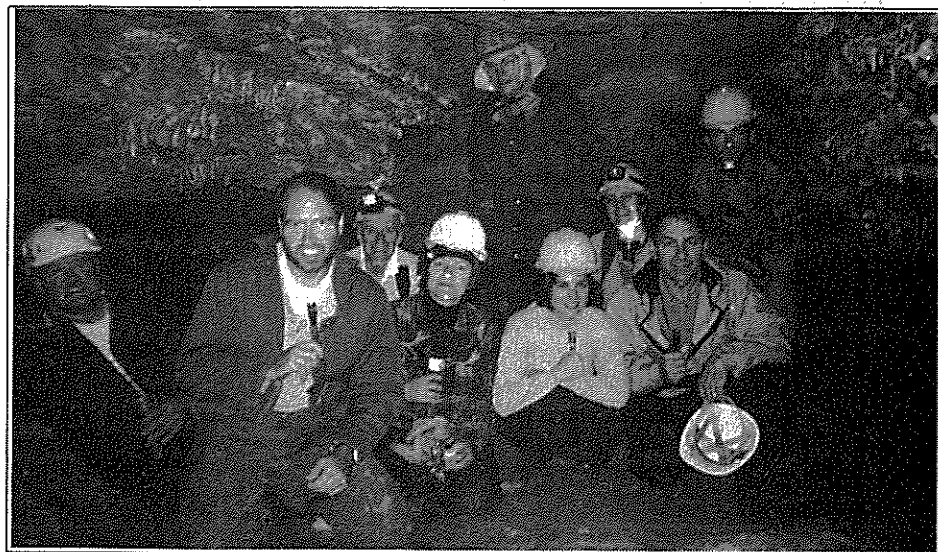
The Chapter conservation campaigns will be Water, Wilderness, and Wildlife.

Water. The Chapter will look at ways to improve existing water law. Chapter members will be encouraged to participate in the regional water planning process and be provided with orientation and training.

Wilderness. As participants in the BLM Wilderness Coalition, Chapter members will be pushing for introduction of an expanded BLM Wilderness Bill. George Grossman and John Wright, Chapter Wilderness Chairs, will be working on legislation to gain wilderness designation for the Angostura area in the Carson National Forest and will support legislation to return the Bottleneck area to Taos Pueblo.

Wildlife. Sue McIntosh, Chapter Wildlife Chair, will begin a long-term project to expand the statutory authority of the Department of Game and Fish to protect wildlife and wildlife habitat. McIntosh and Taos area members are seeking ecological protection for the Ute Mountain Ranch. The Chapter is working with other groups to enact riparian restoration and inventory legislation.

New Members and Officers. New members of the Chapter Executive Committee are Mike Seidensticker of El Paso, Jim Winder of Deming, and Ron Grotbeck and John Wright of Albuquerque. Sue McIntosh will continue to be a member of the Executive Committee and has taken on the added responsibility of Conservation Chair of the Chapter. Gwen Wardwell and George Grossman were re-elected to the positions of Chair and Vice Chair. John Wright was elected Secretary and Blair Brown was elected Treasurer. All elections and appointments were approved unanimously by the 1995 Executive Committee members.



During the Chapter meetings, Ben Zerby of Las Cruces led the participants on a hike to a local cave. From left are Ted Mertig of El Paso, Richard Rheder of El Paso, Ben, trying to hide behind Elizabeth Winter of Taos, Norma McCallan (standing), Ron and Leslie Grotbeck of Albuquerque, Libby Hernandez of Las Cruces (behind the Grotbecks) and Craig O'Hare of Tucson, Arizona

1995 Projected Budget

Income

National dues gross	22,100	
March letter fund appeal gross	8,000	
Lobbying incentive grant	1,500	
Chapter meeting reimbursement from attendees	2,400	
Newsletter ads	400	
Foundation reimbursements from newsletter	4,000	
Balance forward from 1994		41,400
Rio Grande Underwriters pledges	1,080	
Water issues donations	540	

Expenses

National Club insurance/other charges	2,800
Dues subvention to groups	5,000
Fundraising expenses	2,500
Lobbyist salary/expenses	6,800
Newsletter expenses	10,740
Chapter meeting expenses	2,400
Chapter administrative expenses	2,000
Contingency reserve	3,840
Conservation/other issue chair expenses:	
Conservation chair (Sue McIntosh)	300
Diamond Bar (Ted Mertig)	300
Energy/Transportation (Ken Hughes)	300
Federal Facilities/DOD (Marianne Thaler)	300
Federal Facilities/DOE (Jay Sorenson)	300
Fundraising (Ford Robbins)	300
Mining	300
National Parks	300
Oil and Gas (Nick Webster)	300
Outings (Norma McCallan)	300
Petroglyphs (Ike Eastvold)	300
Political (Ron Grotbeck)	300
Rangeland (Roger Peterson)	300
Water (Vickie Gabin/Eric Ames)	300
Wilderness (George Grossman/John Wright)	300
Wildlife (Sue McIntosh)	300
Grazing lawsuit	300

41,180

Santa Fe Mountain Ordinance in the Balance

by Bill Donahue

The next few weeks will be a critical time for our mountains. A strong and fair ordinance amending the Santa Fe Extraterritorial Zoning Ordinance (the Mountain Ordinance) has come under heavy attack by landowners, developers, and members of the real estate community. Opponents of the Mountain Ordinance object to the removal of loopholes that presently permit lots as small as 2 1/2 acres, to restrictions on the portion of a lot that may be disturbed, and to other environmentally based regulations. Public hearings are being held by the Extraterritorial Zoning Commission (EZC) at the Sweeney Convention Center on January 9, 18, 23, and 30 to decide what recommendation they will pass on to the Extraterritorial Zoning Authority (EZA), which will have the final say on the Ordinance.

What would the Mountain Ordinance do?

The Mountain Ordinance would create a Mountain Special Review District within the two-mile Extraterritorial Zone (EZ). As originally conceived, this included the EZ "bubble" to the north of Tesuque, as well as lands in Hondo Hills and Sunlit Hills to the west of I-25, most of which is not mountainous. However, the Save Our Sangres (SOS) coalition (of which the Sierra Club is a member) has proposed a revision which has been well received by all sides. Under this proposal, the Mountain District would be bounded on the north and northwest by the Tesuque Village boundary and the line two miles north of the city limits, and on the south and southwest by the 7,400 foot elevation contour east of I-25 from the city limits to the southern boundary of the EZ.

Establish Regulations. Within these boundaries, the Mountain Ordinance would do basically two things. First, it would establish a set of regulations which, if satisfied, would permit building without further review. Second, it would establish a Mountain Committee, analogous to the city's Historical Board, which would review cases that did not fully satisfy the strict regulations. For example, one well-publicized regulation restricts the cutting of more than three old and non-transplantable trees. This does not mean that more trees cannot be removed; it only means that the developer must present the case for this removal to the Mountain Committee. The Mountain Committee would have the power to grant a limited range of exceptions

to the requirements, keeping in mind the purposes of the Mountain District. There would be some regulations, such as the minimum lot size, to which no exceptions would be permitted. But there are other cases where the Mountain Committee could relax requirements that couldn't be relaxed elsewhere in the EZ. This builds into the review process a degree of flexibility that would allow the design problems for each lot to be considered individually. It's a provision that takes into account both the property owners' rights and those of the community.

Lot Size. The lot size restriction is one of the most controversial, and arguably one of the most important, of the new provisions. The present ordinance uses hydrological data to specify a minimum lot size of 80 acres in the mountains, but contains loopholes that permit much smaller lots. An owner may be allowed a lot as small as 20 acres on an unenforced promise to conserve water. To obtain smaller lots, a hydrological report must be submitted arguing that enough water is present to support the lots. Individuals or groups, including governing bodies, wishing to challenge such a study, must produce their own hydrological reports. Understandably, few such challenges occur.

The Mountain Ordinance would reduce the minimum to 40 acres and would remove the loopholes. While this would not affect the smaller lots already in existence, it would almost entirely prevent the creation of new lots in the mountains. This is probably the one provision of the ordinance that would do the most to preserve the remaining open mountainsides and ridges. Once the lots are there, the houses and road scars can only be stopped by buying the property. Each new lot that can be prevented is in effect a new lot acquired for visual and environmental open space. Predictably, the landowners and developers are fighting this provision with all the resources they can muster.

"Disturbed Area." Also extremely controversial is the limitation on "disturbed area," which is scheduled for the January 9th hearing. The basic idea is that each lot owner should be allowed enough disturbed area to build a driveway out to the middle of the lot, install a septic system, and have about 10,000 square feet left to build their house. If they're careful, and if they don't want to put in tennis courts, they can build a very large house. The house can be even larger if they're willing to

shorten the driveway. But if they want to go way up the hill, they're going to run out of disturbable area.

Like most other Mountain District regulations, there's a way around this one: they can take their plans to the Mountain Committee and make their case for excess disturbance. But they will have to show that they have no alternative, or that their proposal fits the purposes of the Ordinance better than the alternatives. Of course, they would rather be free to develop the lot as they see fit, without such annoying limitations.

Other Provisions. Other provisions of the Mountain Ordinance include designation of landmarks and other sensitive lands that should not be built upon, restrictions upon ridgetop development, control of landscaping, architecture, and lighting, and new submittal requirements for lot splits. Some of these are not yet fully drafted, because the task force drafting the ordinance ran out of time. SOS members are working with County Staff to provide maps and other missing pieces of the ordinance in time for the hearings on those parts of the ordinance. The lot split regulations would require owners to show that new lots have legally acceptable building sites before the split is approved. This covers the whole EZ, and would end the creation of new unbuildable lots.

The response, and what we might end up with

Predictably, there is well organized, well informed, and well funded opposition to many of the provisions of the Mountain Ordinance. Opponents have been repeating, over and over again, the refrain, "This ordinance is unworkable!" Many uninformed people, confused by the complexity of the draft, are beginning to believe that this is true. Opponents are attempting, with considerable success, to arouse unjustified fears that this ordinance would make huge numbers of lots unbuildable. They are proposing, as an alternative, an ordinance that is largely visually based. It aims to place design restrictions and screening and revegetation requirements upon development visible from the city, while leaving owners free to disturb as much land as they wish. Its proponents point to the city's

(con't on page 5)

Mountain Ordinance

(con't from page 4)

Escarpment Ordinance as their model. This is ironic, as city staff have found the strictly visual basis unsatisfactory, and are working on a revision of the city's ordinance that will be more like the draft Mountain Ordinance.

The result of the opponents' ordinance would be to push the most damaging development into places that are less visible from the city, but more visible from the National Forest, and often environmentally more sensitive. It would not control the amount of scarring that could occur, but would require that the scars be patched. It would value private real estate interests above the beauty and fragility of our hills and mountains.

But isn't Atalaya saved already?

The answer to that is twofold. First, Atalaya is not yet saved. There are paper agreements that cover only parts of Atalaya that were arrived at partly because of the pressures of the Moratorium and the impending controls of the new ordinance. If the new ordinance fails, or turns out to be a developers' ordinance, many of those agreements

will fall apart, and the bulldozers will once more be gouging into the flesh of our beloved hills.

Second, there's a lot more to the mountains than just Atalaya. There's the Tesuque Canyon, where the development pressure is tremendous; the Little Tesuque; the Santa Fe River Watershed and the hills to the north; the foothills around Rancho La Barbara; Cerro Juanico and the Monte Luna ridge; and the Cerros Negros south of Arroyo Hondo. Are we willing to accept destruction of all these as long as Atalaya itself is partially protected?

What you can do

Above all, we need to **attend the hearings**. You may feel that one more person won't make a difference. But I know, from speaking at many of these hearings, that having those friendly faces and supportive SOS badges makes a tremendous difference. It shows the EZC the depth of support for new controls, it dampens the spirits of the opponents, and it encourages those who are speaking in support of the new regulations. Even if you can only come for a little while, it's a huge help.

If you are willing to **speak**, that's even better. You may be willing to speak, and may have some idea of what your concern is, but may feel not well enough informed to express it well. If so, please talk to me (983-3675), or Ouida MacGregor, or Kent Williamson, or any of the other people who have been involved in the process and are familiar with the draft ordinance. We may be able to give you the information you need to enable you to speak effectively. Again, you may have some kind of expertise that particularly qualifies you to address some aspect of the ordinance. We need attorneys, biologists, design professionals, builders, hydrologists, and others who can provide expert testimony. If you can help in any of these capacities, call SOS coordinator Carol Wagner at 984-2219. Finally, if you want to help with the organizing, putting out mailings, telephone work, and other supporting activities, give us a call—the mountains need all the help you can give them.

Bill Donahue has attended most of the meetings of the task force that drafted the Mountain Ordinance, and has been organizing the SOS testimony for the ordinance. He has led five Sierra Club National Outings.

Companion Animals and the Environment

by Art Montana, PAWS

Our companion animals are an important and pleasurable part of our environment. Love of animals is not quixotic; their welfare is our welfare and reflects our abilities as stewards of this planet. To paraphrase from *The Art of Raising a Puppy* by the Monks of New Skete, for many of us, our love for creation deepens through the relationships we form with our pets. By their very nature and needs, they draw us out of ourselves; they root us in nature, unlocking a deeper part of ourselves, a part more compassionate and less arrogant, more willing to share life with another life.

This time of year, it is especially important to think about our animal friends—domestic and wild. Winters in the southwest are very nasty, especially for abandoned and mistreated animals. The cold, dry winds are chilling and desiccating, and food and water are difficult to find. Long winter nights are miserable to endure and too commonly impossible to survive. Imagine winter camping without food or shelter!

In northern New Mexico, the following organizations, among others, can use your help; they are manned by volunteer folk with no motives other than to help others: Northern New Mexico Animal Protection Society (Española, 455-2690); Sangre de Cristo Animal Protection (Albuquerque and Santa Fe, 983-4309); and our group, PAWS, the Pecos Animal Welfare Society (421-3975 or 471-3708). Giving to these agencies in the name of your family, friends, or other loved ones is a great way to express love for each other.

In addition to money, PAWS needs dog houses or material to build them and a Pet Mobile—a van, station wagon, or pick-up to transport animals to and from foster homes and veterinarians. We also need short-term foster care for homeless animals.

Remember



with a Memorial Gift

Consider saving a meadow instead of sending flowers. You can honor and preserve the memory of a special person while providing important funds towards accomplishing the Sierra Club's long term goals. For more information call Teresa Sweeney at 415-776-2211.

SIERRA CLUB
Memorials Program
730 Polk Street, San Francisco, CA 94109

The Trouble with "Takings"

by Barbara Johnson

What is a "taking"? The word comes from the Fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which says in part "... nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation." As with the other amendments, the Fifth Amendment is a restriction on governmental power. It restricts the government's right of eminent domain, to condemn private property for a use which will benefit the public at large, such as a road or the expansion of an airport. The government can take your property, but only if it pays you for it.

The Courts have defined "just compensation" to mean the "fair market value" of your property. The Courts have allowed citizens to challenge the government's right of eminent domain (in other words, the government must prove that what it wants to take your property for is a legitimate public use which will benefit the public at large and for which your property is essential) and to challenge the amount of compensation the government offers to give you, to make sure that it really is "just."

"Inverse" Condemnation

In addition to the government's right to physically take your property, citizens may sue the government in "inverse" condemnation. Sometimes, a governmental action, such as the construction of a road, has such a deleterious effect on your property, that it is destroyed—it can no longer be used. For example, the grading for the road may destabilize your property and cause it to slide onto the road. In this case, you may sue the government (instead of the other way around, as in direct condemnation) and ask it to pay you the fair market value of the property its action has destroyed.

The current controversy surrounding "takings" legislation started over 70 years ago, when Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes suggested in *Pennsylvania Coal Company v. Mahon* (1922) that, "The general rule is that while property may be regulated to a certain extent, if regulation goes too far it will be recognized as a taking."

Until 1922, both direct and inverse condemnation centered on physical actions which took or damaged property. Justice Holmes took the Fifth Amendment one step further, and suggested that a government, exercising its legitimate power to regulate for the health and safety of its citizens, could so regulate

land that its value was as totally destroyed as was the value of the land which slid onto the government road. For example, the government could change the zoning of land from high-density residential to open space, making what was a lucrative piece of property virtually worthless. Under the Holmes doctrine, this could constitute a "regulatory taking" of your land.

Doctrine of Regulatory Takings

Over the years, the U.S. Supreme Court has construed the doctrine of regulatory takings to include the following points:

- communities have the authority to adopt laws and regulations that are designed to protect and enhance the quality of life of their citizens;
- the owner must be **denied all reasonable use** of his property by a legitimate government regulation or a taking has not occurred;
- the **entire property** must be affected, not just a portion of it.

Recently, in Congress and in state legislatures such as our own, well-funded corporate coalitions have been introducing what has been termed "takings" legislation, supposedly based on the law of regulatory takings. Takings legislation comes in two basic flavors:

—Takings "assessment" provisions, which would subject virtually all governmental actions to a costly and largely unnecessary review of possible "takings" implications.

—Takings "compensation" provisions, which would require payment when government action may restrict a property owner's use of his property. These bills usually require compensation if an action is "likely" to be determined by a state or federal court to be a taking, if a regulation reduces the fair market value of property to less than 50% of its fair market value before the regulation was enacted, or if a regulation denies or modifies a previously allowed use of the property.

Takings Law v. Takings Legislation

There are several points of difference between takings legislation and takings law, the most notable of which is that takings bills require compensation for partial diminution in the value of property, but settled takings law requires compensation only if **all** viable use of the property is denied, thereby frustrat-

ing the owner's "reasonable investment-backed expectations." What does that mean? It means that the owner will not be compensated for a **potential** profit expectation, but only for the fair market value of the property at the time the regulation went into effect.

Because of the differences between current bills and the law as determined by the Supreme Court, there is a question as to the constitutionality of any takings bill. In addition, takings legislation would impose serious restrictions on the government's ability to protect the health and safety of its citizens under the guise of protecting private property rights. Before a takings bill in Colorado when down to defeat, the *Denver Post* warned that the measure "may appear innocuous, but it's actually an attempt to negate the whole concept of health, safety and environmental regulation by saddling the enforcement agencies with untenable costs."

Chilling Effect

Takings bills could have a chilling effect on:

—**Zoning laws**, including those that prevent landowners from opening industrial facilities or liquor stores in residential neighborhoods or adjacent to schools.

—**Worker health and safety laws**, including those that require employers to protect employees from exposure to toxic substances in the workplace.

—**Civil rights laws**, including those meant to halt unfair housing practices or job discrimination.

—**Environmental laws**, including those that protect the public from polluted air, unsafe drinking water, and cancer-causing toxic substances. (Takings amendments were proposed to be tagged on to several environmental laws in the last Congress.)

Republican Contradiction

Takings assessment bills would set up a large and unwieldy bureaucracy to review the supposed "takings" implications of any proposed regulation. This is an interesting contradiction from the Republican proponents of takings legislation. On the one hand, they bemoan the costly, bloated federal bureaucracy caused by what they see as the over-regulation of all aspects of American life. On the other hand, they want to set up a large and

(con't on page 8)

Welcome, New Members

Please welcome the following new members who have joined us from May 21 to July 1 of 1994:

Alex Peters, Albuquerque	Elenora Ferner, Albuquerque	Ford Petterson, Albuquerque	Pamela Harold, Albuquerque
Toni Lyons, Albuquerque	Ruth Schluter, Albuquerque	David Anderson, Albuquerque	Philip Zager, Albuquerque
Monica Frakes, Albuquerque	Harry McLean, Albuquerque	Mark Eifert, Albuquerque	Albert Owens, Albuquerque
Charles Stein, Albuquerque	Wayne Miller, Albuquerque	Joan Simonetty, Albuquerque	Naomi Stevens, Albuquerque
Bonnie Downey, Albuquerque	Ted Nee, Albuquerque	Jane Hickman, Albuquerque	Rebecca Hall, Albuquerque
Melvin Lytle, Albuquerque	Howard Blum, Albuquerque	Laurie Rouillard, Albuquerque	Catherine Buchanan, Albuquerque
H. Louise Coulombe, Albuquerque	Fred Bauer, Albuquerque	Tammy Abdalla, Albuquerque	Linda Dilley, Albuquerque
Susan Gandert, Albuquerque	Leslie Vargas, Albuquerque	Karla Kellog-Wilson, Albuquerque	Rosemary Wold, Albuquerque
Donald Cyphert, Albuquerque	Blanche Royce, Albuquerque	Kimberley Oldewage, Albuquerque	Roy Jorgenson, Albuquerque
Shanna Parris, Albuquerque	Gregory Zierer, Albuquerque	Loren Hoyt, Albuquerque	Judith Cabaniss, Albuquerque
Jana Stratmeyer, Albuquerque	Mary Flowers, Albuquerque	Karon Wagoner, Albuquerque	Phyllis Winsko, Albuquerque
Cheryl Ward, Albuquerque	Renee Garcia, Albuquerque	David Arnold, Albuquerque	Jeremy Becker, Albuquerque
Richard Hawkes, Albuquerque	Michel Levois, Albuquerque	Sherry Gracey, Albuquerque	Cristina Beato-Galey, Albuquerque
John Gunther, Albuquerque	Cheryl Iverson, Albuquerque	Jerry Hornbuckle, Albuquerque	Frederic Brown, Albuquerque
Louise Miller, Albuquerque	Mary Cottingham, Albuquerque	Pamela Morrow, Albuquerque	Marsha Napolin, Albuquerque
Donna Simmons, Albuquerque	Gerald Neuber, Albuquerque	Kenna Cantrell, Albuquerque	Alexandra Harrison, Albuquerque
Sheila Green, Albuquerque	Cynthia Barber, Albuquerque	Jeffrey Otis, Albuquerque	Stanley and Frances Schmidt, Albuquerque
Erin Creange, Albuquerque	David Kovarik, Albuquerque	Kenneth Quaschnik, Albuquerque	Robert and Dolores Garcia, Albuquerque
Dan Akenhead, Albuquerque	Steve McLemore, Albuquerque	Mary Boyd, Albuquerque	Lawrence Wells, Albuquerque
Jack Barkemeyer Sr., Albuquerque	Lisa O'Brien, Albuquerque	Timothy Osking, Albuquerque	Linda Alongi, Albuquerque
Tim Kildare, Albuquerque	James Salazar, Albuquerque	Vincent Duran, Albuquerque	Jean MacAulaymuller, Albuquerque
Carol Landis, Albuquerque	Amy Pohlen, Albuquerque	Adena Robertson, Albuquerque	Wendy Lobdell, Albuquerque
Erna Arkin, Albuquerque	Ruth Bustos, Albuquerque	Roy Boast, Albuquerque	Lewis Cook, Albuquerque
Linda Wilkinson Reng, Albuquerque	Karen Maher, Albuquerque	Catherine Lovato, Albuquerque	Thelma Flanigin, Albuquerque
Tari Jordan, Albuquerque	Joanne Roman, Albuquerque	Joanne Schiabor, Albuquerque	Linda Stillman, Albuquerque
Natalie Clark, Albuquerque	Charles Madewell, Albuquerque	Scott Han Cho, Albuquerque	Michael Corless, Albuquerque
Dr. Robert Lucero, Albuquerque	Leota Harbert, Albuquerque	Mark Kistner, Albuquerque	Carolyn Millar, Albuquerque
Victor Surface, Albuquerque	Audrey Swetman, Albuquerque	Sandra Mistler, Albuquerque	Janet McKenzie, Albuquerque
Robin Webb, Albuquerque	William Leo, Albuquerque	Nina Rhoton, Albuquerque	John Thorius, Albuquerque
Andrew Church, Albuquerque	R. Kelly, Albuquerque	Sylvia Reiner, Albuquerque	Michael Gross, Albuquerque
Ann Stevenson, Albuquerque	David Kennedy, Albuquerque	Pamela Russell, Albuquerque	Ellen Cox, Albuquerque
Holly Hedman, Albuquerque	Richard Hickox, Albuquerque	Lee Welsh, Albuquerque	Kevin Hull, Albuquerque
Deanna Coulter, Albuquerque	Walter Koozin, Albuquerque	James Pellerite, Albuquerque	Susan Davies, Albuquerque
Terri Brickner, Albuquerque	Jerry Forrester, Albuquerque	Tony Walker, Albuquerque	James Drennan, Albuquerque
Liza Nagel, Albuquerque	Ed Campbell, Albuquerque	C. Adams, Albuquerque	Susan Collins, Albuquerque
David Rocco, Albuquerque	Deborah O'keefe, Albuquerque	Patricia Nelson, Albuquerque	Joseph Spaeth, Albuquerque
Stephanie Arnold, Albuquerque	Matthew Gurule, Albuquerque	Alfred and Judith Schwery, Albuquerque	
Dennis Shaulis, Albuquerque	Kay Hale, Albuquerque	David and Linda Giaquinto, Albuquerque	
	Alan Ranft, Albuquerque	Eric Duxman, Albuquerque	

CONTINUING THANKS TO OUR DONORS

Recent Donations to our 1994 General Fund Appeal:

Margo Chavez-Charles - Santa Fe
M. Claire Cumbie-Drake - Albuquerque
Dr. David E. Drake - Albuquerque
Philip E. Green, Alameda Limited Partnership - Santa Fe
Marita Marshall - Albuquerque
W. W. McClellan - Albuquerque
Sandra F. Penn, MD - Albuquerque
Barbara C. Pijoan - Corrales
John Reeder - Santa Fe
William E. Stepp - Las Cruces
Er-Dien Minor Weiner - Santa Fe

Donations to fund our Chapter Water Projects:

Pleasant Rowland Frautschi - Tesuque
W. Jerome Frautschi - Tesuque
Beverly Garcia - Santa Fe
Heidi Steffen - Tesuque
Peggy Winkler - Tesuque

Pledges to underwrite Chapter office expenses:

Doug and Kathy Fraser - Los Alamos
Vickie Gabin - Santa Fe
Barbara Johnson - Santa Fe
Sue McIntosh - Santa Fe
Jana Oyler - Santa Fe
Ford and Margaret Robbins - Santa Fe
Mike Seidensticker - El Paso
Gwen Wardwell - Santa Fe

in commenting on that state's takings bill in June 1992:

"The bill will require the attorney general's office to analyze every rule and regulation to see if it will 'affect' anyone's property. If it does, the state will have to compensate that property owner."

"That means that not only will the state's attorneys have to spend massive amounts of time—not to mention your money—making regulatory taking since the founding of the state!

Takings legislation has been defeated in the New Mexico State Legislature in previous years. But in previous years, everyone knew that the governor would veto any such legislation which passed. That has changed this year. Governor Johnson has said that he will sign any takings legislation which comes across his desk.

In Arizona, a takings bill was passed by the legislature but later overturned by the electorate in a referendum. Unfortunately, the referendum process in New Mexico is so complicated that it has never successfully been used to overturn legislation. Therefore, we need to stop takings legislation in the State Legislature, before it might be signed into law by the Governor.

The effect of such legislation was adequately summed up by the Arizona Tribune

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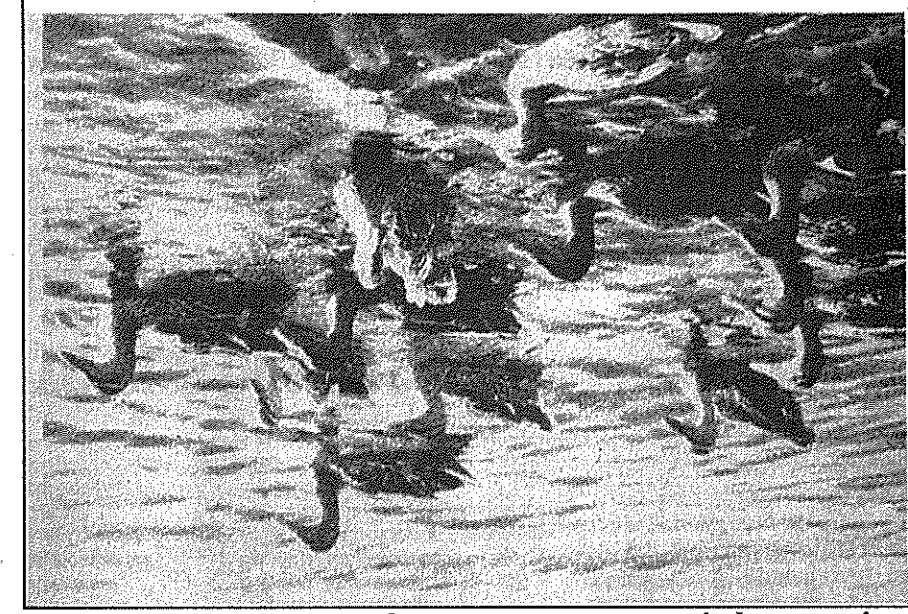
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AN UNUSUAL REQUEST TO ALL MEMBERS:

Please put the chapter in your March budget this year! You'll soon receive our once-a-year only mailing with an appeal for a generous contribution to support the local conservation work of the chapter. All funds received will strictly be used for local efforts. Watch your mailbox for the chapter's letter and, please send a generous contribution in March!

Episcopal Church's Decision to Subdivide Wilderness Area Stirs Controversy

By Jamie Allen

The Diocese of the Rio Grande is currently faced with an interesting stewardship dilemma. In 1958, 1345 acres of unspoiled wilderness at the southern tip of the Rocky Mountains was donated to the Church of the Holy Faith in Santa Fe. It was done with the hope that portions of it would "be preserved as wilderness areas" and that, for all of it, "the best approved conservation practices might be adopted, wildlife might be protected and encouraged, and . . . arrangements might be made for nature studies and for reforestation."

In 1973, the Church of the Holy Faith transferred ownership of the land (now known as Camp Stonely) to its governing diocese, and it has since served as a youth camp and conference center for the entire region. Unfortunately, the diocesan budget is rather modest, and it has not been able to maintain proper upkeep of the facilities. As a result, the buildings are now in desperate need of repair and renovation—an undertaking the diocese cannot possibly afford given its present financial condition. On top of that, the camp is located in a relatively remote area. The Diocese of the Rio Grande encompasses a vast area that stretches from the Colorado border to the north to Big Bend National Park in Texas to the south. Camp Stonely is in the northeastern corner of the diocese, making a journey to Camp Stonely for clergy and parishioners from the southern portion of the diocese impractically long.

Hence the decision, made four years ago, to sell off all but 216 acres of this land. The proceeds from this sale are earmarked for refurbishing the existing facilities as well as for purchasing a new property in a more central location. To this end, the diocese retained the services of Santa Fe Design Associates to draw up a Master Plan for the subdivision of the remaining 1129 acres of

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Episcopal Church to Subdivide Wilderness (cont. from page 8)

Camp Stonely.

Unfortunately, the Master Plan is fraught with problems. The most fundamental of these is that it does not seem to take into account the fragility of both the ecosystems and the traditional cultures that would be affected by such a subdivision. The wishes of the original donor of the land were examined by diocesan attorneys and found to be legally non-binding. So, in the interest of maximizing potential revenues, the Master Plan calls for the division of the land into approximately 50 lots suitable for the development of large homes. But Camp Stonely is conspicuous for its dry, rocky soil, and numerous steep inclines. Water resources and retention are crucial, complex issues for the region. The needs of both the diocese and the local communities. Among the proposed alternatives was a request that the diocese withdraw its Master Plan for one year, during which time a joint committee of representatives from both the local communities and the diocese would be entrusted with the task of finding one or more "preservation" buyers (individuals or organizations committed to retaining the land as a wilderness area). Such an agreement would save the diocese the added expense of redressing the faults of the Master Plan, generate good will among its neighbors, and preserve the fragile ecosystems and the few unimproved dirt roads that provide access to the proposed lots.

Another area of contention arises from the fact that Camp Stonely is flanked by two communities left in Santa Fe County. Many of the last remaining traditional Hispanic communities are low-income subsistence farmers whose great-grandfathers had settled there close to 200 years ago. If the proposed subdivision were to go through, it would necessarily raise local property assessments and taxes, thereby forcing many current residents to sell their family farms and move elsewhere. Although preservation of traditional communities is cited in the Master Plan as one of its goals, this is not substantiated by its content.

Needless to say, all of this has alarmed local residents considerably, leading them to organize rather quickly (the decision to sell Camp Stonely was not made public until August 1994), and to begin a dialogue with the diocese in order to develop alternatives to the Master Plan. In response to a petition signed

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by members of the community, Canon Ed Bale, Fritz Kueffer (author of the Master Plan), and Dennis Cooper (the hydrologist whose support of such an action. The diocese the Audobon Society, have also expressed their support of such an action. The diocese

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Notes from National

"We must remember that from 1984-1990 Newt Gingrich was a Sierra Club member, and that we endorsed him several times.

"He believes that most of the (environmental) movement is out of touch with what he likes to call 'normal Americans.' He thinks the environmental movement is too tied to the inside politics of Washington, too dominated by think-tanks, too short of grassroots energy. And he believes that other parts of the movement, like the Sierra Club, which he knows from his own political roots and history is just as deeply embedded in American neighborhoods as his own coalition, are too fractured, too splintered, too undisciplined to give him much trouble.

"He believes that because we are democratic, and grassroots, we can never muster the concentration necessary to defeat his forces which are disciplined and hierarchical.

"He believes that we will spend our energy fighting among ourselves over tactics, rather than focusing on the strategies we agree on.

"It is our duty to prove him wrong."

Carl Pope on December 16, 1994

The Electronic Sierra Club

by Blair Brown & Bruce Batson

bblairb@aol.com bbatson@novalink.com

One of the greatest challenges faced by Sierra Club members is communicating to each other about issues, alerts and policies. Traditional methods like newsletters are increasingly inadequate, so we're working on ways to use all forms of electronic communication to get the word out to members and the public.

Recognizing this need some years ago, the Club initiated the ccMail system, through which the National Club can send information to every Chapter and activists can write to each other. This system is now being extensively used by close to 1,000 activists all over the country. With ccMail's success has come a problem - it is expensive to operate and therefore it is not being expanded so that only 6 or 7 people in the Rio Grande Chapter have access to it.

The Club is looking into other ways to expand electronic communication between activists. The most likely answer will be a Bulletin Board (or BBS). With a BBS, activists will have the ability to send E-Mail messages to each other. Discussion Forums can be established for specific issues, through which activists can exchange ideas and develop action plans. Club policies can be made available for access by activists. There will be "reference" areas where Sierra Club policies, fact sheets and position papers can be made available for open access.

While this will happen in the future (hopefully in 1995), in the meantime, those of us who have access to Internet E-Mail can send messages to each other. If you are interested in being involved, send us a message with your address and any specific interests you want to discuss. We can develop an address book of Sierrans and distribution lists so we can initiate the Electronic Sierra Club now.

"As we all know, we are facing a War on the Environment. The assault is not new, but it will reach unprecedented ferocity in the first few months of the next Congress.

"The Sierra Club, in our view, is the critical organization that must blunt this assault.

"The following guidelines on our message are offered in an urgent plea to maximize our impact by focusing our effort.

"1. We can and will win.

"2. No partisanship. We will win with Republican votes.

"3. Focus on what is at stake, not the legislation or the regulation, particularly in communications with the press and the general public.

"4. Use all of our (local or state) efforts to strengthen our central effort.

"5. We are fighting for the environment, not fighting individuals."

*Robbie Cox and Carl Pope
on December 16, 1994*

A Note from the Chapter Chair

The national campaigns for 1995 are:

--Defending the Environmental Agenda

--Protecting Endangered Species and Their Habitats

--Protecting Wetlands and Aquifers

--Improving Auto Efficiency/Stopping Global Warming

--Protecting the International Environment

--Stabilizing the International Population

Phase I of Defending the Environmental Agenda will focus on defeating sections in the Contract with America that have the potential to undermine every major federal environmental law and program. Sections 8 and 9 contain an extremely damaging "takings" provision, a "no money, no mandates" provision, and a "risk assessment" provision. Look for details of these in this and future issues of the *Rio Grande Sierran* and be prepared to write and call your Congressman and Senators and to write letters to the editor of your newspaper.

Gwen Wardwell on December 20, 1994



Don't forget!

Don't forget your gift to the local chapter of the Sierra Club this year! Send \$10, \$25, or more to the local office and your full donation will benefit local conservation efforts. Please write your check to the "Sierra Club."

Group Executive Committee Elections

Newly elected to the Albuquerque Group Executive Committee is Sue Lowrey. Current members elected to full terms are Susan Gorman and Jay Sorenson.

At the Excom meeting on December 12, elections for Group officers were held. Susan Gorman was elected Chair; Nick Persampieri, Vice Chair; Blair Brown, Treasurer; Richard Barish, Conservation Chair; and Ron Grotbeck, Political Chair. The office of Secretary is open.

The Excom is planning a retreat in January to discuss ways to make the Albuquerque Group's organization more responsive to members' needs and to involve more people. Look for a report in the next *Sierran*.

The Wolf: Real or Imagined?

Learn about and meet North America's most fascinating predator, the Wolf. Watch an engaging slide presentation by Patricia Tucker, wildlife biologist and educator, that depicts the remarkable natural history of wolves. Hear stories of myth and folklore as Bruce Weide, documentary filmmaker and writer, examines the wolf that stalks through the human imagination. Then meet the real stars of this show—Koani, a hundred-pound Grey Wolf from Montana, and Indy, her dog companion. Following this enjoyable evening of stories, facts, fun, and wolves, don't be surprised if you feel an insatiable yearning to howl at the moon.

Pat and Bruce are part of Wild Sentry which provides environmental education that blends science and the humanities. Primarily, they present their programs in the rural schools and communities of Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming where wolf recovery is occurring. Emphasized throughout the program is the wolf as a symbol of wildness. Also stressed is the inappropriateness of wolves as "pets." The program challenges stereotypes and corrects misconceptions. If pictures are worth a thousand words, then the presence of a living, breathing wolf is worth a thousand pictures.

This enriching, spiritual and educational event will be held at Woodward Hall on the UNM campus on Wednesday, January 25, 1995, at 7:30 pm. The cost is \$4 for adults and \$2 for children and students.

All proceeds will be donated to further wolf education in rural areas. The presentation is sponsored by the UNM Biology Club and the Mexican Wolf Coalition. For more information, call Bud Lensing at (505) 873-2218.

Group Directory

1995 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Office Telephone: 265-5506

Group Chair	Susan Gorman	265-3231
Vice Chair	Nick Persampieri	281-7845
Secretary	open	
Treasurer	Blair Brown	265-3231
	Richard Barish	247-8079
	Ron Grotbeck	296-0944
	Sue Lowrey	281-9255
	Jay Sorenson	884-4314
	Stefan Verchinski	888-1370

The Albuquerque Group of the Sierra Club depends entirely on the efforts of volunteers. To help our efforts, call the following issue coordinators:

ADMINISTRATION

Activities/	open	
Special Planning		
Books/	open	
Calendars		
Information Technology	Bruce Batson	828-2570
	bbatson@novalink.com	
	Blair Brown	265-3231
	bblairb@aol.com	
Newsletter	open	
Outings	David Morrison	344-8693
	Stan Kauchak	292-9138
Political Chair	Ron Grotbeck	296-0944
Programs	Ralph Wrons	275-0856

CONSERVATION

Conservation	Richard Barish	247-8079
Chair		
Air Quality	Heidi Fleischmann	260-1217
Bosque	Richard Barish	247-8079
Energy	Ralph Wrons	275-0856
Las Huertas	Marion Davidson	867-5178
Mining Reform	open	
Petroglyphs/		
Westside	Ike Eastvold	255-7679
	Nick Persampieri	281-7845
Population	Michelle Meaders	266-8823
Public Lands	Barbara Stone	265-5304
Waste/	David Bouquin	265-7853
Recycling		
Water	Jack Pinney	293-3405
Wildlife/	vacant	
Endangered Species		
Wildlife/	Susan Larsen	897-2527
Mexican Wolf		

OUTINGS

Abbreviations: WSA-Wilderness Study Area, SW-Sandia Wilderness, NM-National Monument, SC-Sierra Club, ACEC- Area of Critical Environmental Concern

Outings may be cancelled or changed due to weather or other reasons, please call leader before outing

**Thurs Jan 5 & Sat Jan 7
Cross Country Ski Beginner's Lecture and Lessons**

Certified ski instructor John Turnbull of the Santa Fe Group will offer a beginners lecture Thursday night on X/C Skiing history, clothing, and skis. Saturday, the class will be taken to the field to practice their kick and glide, turns, and stops. Take advantage of these no cost lessons to experience the winter beauty of New Mexico. This will be the last lessons of the season offered by the club. Contact John Turnbull at 466-9329 or Georgia. Leader: Georgia 881-9329

**Sat Jan 7 Leisure-Moderate
Miles: 6-8 Car: 190 Elevation: +500ft
Little San Pasqual Wilderness, Antelope WSA Exploratory Hike**

These areas are east side of Bosque del Apache Wildlife Refuge. We may start by crossing a railroad bridge over the Rio Grande. On the list are the ghost town of Valverde and some Indian ruins along the Rio Grande. Antelope WSA, adjacent to Little San Pasqual Peak, is a proposed wilderness area of grassland. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the UNM Astronomy and Physics parking lot, Yale and Lomas. Leader: David Morrison 344-8693

**Sun Jan 8 Leisure Miles: 3-5 Car: TBD
X/C Beginners Tour**

Now that you have practiced your kick and glide, turns and stops, here is your chance to perfect your technique on the trail before you return those rental skis. The tour is especially designed for beginner class participants. Location to be determined (TBD). Contact John Turnbull at 466-9329 or Stan. Leader: Stan Kauchak 839-4301

**Sun Jan 8 Moderate-Strenuous
Miles: 6-8 Car: 200 Elevation: +2000ft
Abiqui Badlands Exploratory Hike**
Richard Capua's guiding this one, so we will probably have some challenging sections. North of Abiqui is an area of

white badlands, a small slot canyon, and cliffs. We will be at lower elevations. We will go farther south if the weather is bad. Meet at 7:30 a.m. behind the Winchell's at San Mateo and Academy. Leader: David Morrison 344-8693

**Sun Jan 8 Intermediate
Miles: 3 Car: 60
Las Huertas Canyon X/C Ski**
Weather permitting, we will ski Las Huertas Canyon with a chance of seeing winter birds and other wildlife. The lawsuit regarding the paving of the Las Huertas Canyon road is still in litigation. Attorney Grove Burnett represents the Sierra Club, Sandia Pueblo, and other groups. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Four Hills Shopping Center in the front of the United Artist Theater (Central and Tramway). Call for more information. Leader: Marion 867-5178.

**Sat-Mon Jan 14-16 Moderate-Strenuous
Miles: 4-8/day Car: 450
Cloudcroft Area X/C Ski Weekend**
Here is our chance to meet and ski with Rio Grande chapter members from the southern part of the State. Telemark and tour in the Lincoln National Forest among Ponderosa Pine. The first day will be dedicated to a back country tour, the next day to groomed trails. You don't have to be a Sierra Club member to participate. Contact John or Georgia (881-9365) for more information. See also "Santa Fe outings listing." Leader: John Turnbull 466-9329

**Sat-Sun Jan 14-15 Strenuous Miles:20
Car: 110
Full Moon Weekend, San Antonio Hot Spring Winter X/C Ski or Snowshoe Backpack**
We will meet at 10:00 a.m. We travel by ski or snowshoe to San Antonio Hot Springs, set up camp, soak, and meet with Stan's group later in the evening. In the morning we will head back out. This trip is for experienced winter campers, but if you think you want the challenge, give Craig a call. Call for details. Leader: Craig Dill 224-9795

**Sat Jan 14 Strenuous
Miles:20 Car:130
San Antonio Hot Spring X/C Ski**
Enjoy a magical moonlit ski to the warmth of the San Antonio Hot Spring. People have the choice of joining Craig's "snow campers" or returning with Stan's "not quite up to the full experience" group.

Snow can be icy. Full moon and weather permitting. Call for details. Leader: Stan Kauchak 839-4301

**Sat Jan 14 Leisure-Moderate
Miles: 6 Car: 90 Elevation: ?
Ball Ranch ACEC and Tonque Mesa Exploratory Hike**
NE of Alb., we head to this area of petrified wood and other fossils, along with Indian ruins. Bring lunch, extra food, and dress in layers. Meet at 8:00 a.m. behind the Winchell's at San Mateo and Academy. Leader: David Morrison 344-8693

**Sun Jan 15 Leisure Miles: 3 Car: 3
Rinconada Canyon Hike,
Petroglyph National Monument**
This is the largest, most pristine area in the Monument with over 2000 petroglyphs. Bring camera, binoculars and sturdy shoes. RSVP. Leader: Ike Eastvold 255-7679

**Sat Jan 21 Leisure Miles: 0 Car: 90
Bald Eagle Watch, Cochiti Dam**
At the break of dawn we will watch the fishing activities of several bald eagles. Dress extremely warm, bring binoculars. Meet at 5:30 a.m., behind Winchells, San Mateo and Academy. Leader: David Morrison 344-8693

**Sat Jan 21 Leisure Miles: 3 Car: 3
Piedras Marcadas Hike,
Petroglyph National Monument**
Tremendous variety and unique petroglyphs not found elsewhere in the Monument. Bring camera, binoculars and sturdy shoes. RSVP. Leader: Ike Eastvold 255-7679

**Sun Jan 22 Moderate
Miles: 4 Car: 120 Elevation: +500ft
Tent Rocks ACEC Hike**
NW of Cochiti, this ACEC contains large weathered cones of volcanic tuft protected by cap rock. We hike up a narrows to the mesa top, and then down an adjacent canyon. This area usually looks out for winter hiking, but be prepared to walk in snow. Meet at the SC office at 207 San Pedro NE at 9:00 a.m. Leader: Bob Cornish 255-6037

**Sat Jan 28 Moderate-Strenuous
Miles: 4 Car: 130
Las Conchas Burn Trail To East Fork Parking Lot X/C Ski**
A beautiful hike in spring, summer, and fall, it should be just as beautiful covered in snow. A moderate X/C overall, expect

strenuous conditions as we climb from the canyon floor up to the East Fork Ridge Trail. Contact Stan for details. Leader: Stan Kauchak 839-4301

**Sat Jan 28 Leisure-Moderate
Miles: 4-6 Car: 200+ Elevation: +200ft
Chaco Outliers National Historic Monument Hike**
The object of today is to drive to as many of the Anasazi ruins as time permits. These outliers are outside of the main monument. We are going to try some new ones, but we may visit Kin Bineola, Kin Yaa, and Pueblo Pintado. Call for details. Leader: Tom Leck 256-7217

**Sun Jan 29 Moderate
Miles: 4-6 Car: 10 Elevation: +500ft
Embudo Canyon Hike, SW**
Welcome Melissa, a new outings' leader to the group. Walk to waterfall, continue on to the ridge if the group is enthusiastic. There will be ice in areas, boots with lug soles are recommended. Bring lunch, and dress in layers. Meet at SC office at 9:00 a.m. Leader: Melissa Smith 292-8853

**Sat Feb 4 Leisure Miles: 3 Car: 3
Geological Windows Hike,
Petroglyph National Monument**
Secluded petroglyph areas in a near wildernesslike setting. Bring camera, binoculars and sturdy shoes. RSVP. Leader: Ike Eastvold 255-7679

**Sat Feb 4 Strenuous
Miles: 6-7 Car: 140 Elevation: +2500ft
Aspen Vista X/C Ski**
We will ski up 2500 vertical feet on the service road in the Pecos Tesuque Basin and telemark back down via the Santa Fe Ski Area. Metal edge skis required, adjustable poles recommended. Bring lunch, plenty to drink, and dress in layers. Contact Stan for details. Leader: Stan Kauchak 839-4301

**Sat Feb 4 Moderate
Miles: 8-10 Car: 80 Elevation: +1200ft
Lost Canyon and Red Mesa Hike**
This will be an exploratory hike in an area northwest of San Ysidro. There are many small canyons cutting through the Agua Sarca sandstone. We walk a portion of the largest canyon to a high point on Red Mesa, stop there for lunch, and then return via a smaller drainage. Meet behind Winchell's at San Mateo and Academy at 8:30 a.m. Leader: Tom Pentencin 255-1497

OUTINGS

**Sun Feb 5 Moderate-Strenuous
Miles: 6-8 Car: 120-200 Elevation: ?
Culle Canyon to Peralta Canyon and West Mesa Exploratory Hike**
Richard Capua's guiding this one. This area is NW of Cochiti. We will try to get to Bear Jump and some other narrows. Meet at 7:30 a.m. behind the Winchell's at San Mateo and Academy. Leader: David Morrison 344-8693

**Sat Feb 11 Leisure Miles: 3 Car: 3
Rio Grande Bosque Hike**
We will hike to the area north of Rio Bravo. Three miles and three hours. Meet at 9:00 AM at Furrows, near the corner of 2nd and Rio Bravo. Leader: David Morrison 344-8693

**Sat Feb 11 Strenuous
Miles: 6-8 Car: 240 Elevation: +2096ft
Amoli Canyon X/C Ski**
Conditions permitting, we will take the more difficult lower loop following the logging roads. Expect dramatic views and a 20% ft. grade, quarter mile, downhill run. Metal edge skis recommended but not essential. Bring lunch, plenty to drink, and dress in layers. Leader: Nick Persampieri 281-7845

**Sun Feb 12 Moderate Miles: 6 Car: 150
Riley Ghost Town and Cave**
We will drive to the ghost town of Riley, climb through the cave, and head to the Box. Riley Cave is 400ft long and optional. Bring flashlights, and a hard hat or call to reserve one. Meet 8:00 a.m. at the UNM Astronomy and Physics parking lot, NE corner Yale and Lomas. Leader: David Morrison 344-8693

**Fri Feb 17 Strenuous Miles: 10 Car: 130
San Antonio Hot Spring X/C Ski**
Enjoy a magical moonlit ski to the warmth of the San Antonio Hot Spring. Snow can be icy. Full moon and weather permitting. Call Stan for details. Leader: Stan Kauchak 839-4301

**Sat Feb 18 Leisure-Moderate
Miles: 5-6 Car: 120
Stallion WSA Hike**
East of Socorro, we look for wild mustangs and hike some of the unexplored mesa to the north. Meet at the UNM Astronomy and Physics parking lot at 7:30 a.m. Leader: David Morrison 344-8693

**Sun Feb 19 Leisure-Moderate
Miles: 5 Car: 30 or ?
Rio Puerco Valley Hike**

We will schedule a cancelled trip due to weather or head NW of Rio Rancho. This area lies adjacent to Bruce King's land. The former governor at Congressional Hearings in 1980 wrote that millions of acres of public land "are infested with predators, especially coyotes." Bruce King recommended that lethal control be initiated to remove these animals. Leader: David Morrison 344-8693

**Sun Feb 19 Leisure Miles: 3 Car: 3
Boca Negra Arroyo Hike,
Petroglyph National Monument**
Exciting flute and parrot figures together with some of the oldest petroglyphs in the Monument. RSVP. Leader: Ike Eastvold 255-7679

**Sat Feb 25 Leisure-Moderate
Miles: 4-5 Car: 100 Elevation: +300ft
Penteca Pinta Mesa WSA Hike**
This is an area of gypsum badlands and lava flows to the southwest of Albuquerque. The earth is multi-colored and is sculpted in many patterns, including hoodoos. Call for information. Leader: John Wright 247-4353

**Sun Feb 26 Moderate Miles: 1 Car: 80
Alabaster Cave**
To the northwest of San Ysidro, we will climb through this cave. One area is tight and is called the "Birth Canal." Good one for beginners. Bring flashlights and hard hat or call to reserve one. Meet behind Winchell's at San Mateo and Academy at 9:00 a.m. Richard's guiding. Leader: David Morrison 344-8693

**Sun Mar 5 Leisure-Moderate
Miles: 1 Car: 0
Oxbow Trash Cleanup**
Last time, I had the wrong date down, so I will try it again. Teenager party trash and construction material have been dumped. Plastic bags will be provided. Three hours. Meet 10:00 a.m. at the corner of St. Josephs and Coors. Leader: David Morrison 344-8693

X/C Ski Touring
Interested in ski touring, but nothing is scheduled? There may be a last-minute trip scheduled, or if sufficient interest one may be arranged. Phone either John Turnbull (466-3929) in Santa Fe or Stan Kauchak (839-4301). The non-scheduled trips often are the best, taking advantage of new snow, etc.

1995 Legislative Session Kickoff

January meeting

It's that time of the year again: the State Legislative session begins Tuesday, January 17. Last election saw many new faces introduced to the House of Representatives, so definitely make sure you know your legislator.

The legislative lobbyist for Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club, Doug Fraser, will address the Albuquerque Group at this month's membership meeting. Doug will have late breaking news on what the Club's legislative session priorities are. The meeting will be on Monday, January 16, beginning at 7:30 PM in the UNM Law School, Rm 2401. The Law School is near the corner of Constitution and Stanford NE. Please attend.

There may also be information available about how to sign up for the legislative phone tree. Active involvement by Sierra Club members is essential during this time.

Beyond Curbside Recycling - What's Needed and What's Next

February Meeting

by Ralph Wrons

Believe it or not, Albuquerque's curbside recycling program has already been in effect for three years. By all accounts, it has been very successful. A letter received from the City's Solid Waste Management Department a year ago stated that "residential solid waste diversion rates are increasing at more than 10 percent annually." The City credits public involvement and an "intensive education program."

The Sierra Club Albuquerque Group and many other groups and private citizens lobbied hard for the curbside recycling program, which was strongly opposed at that time by the City's SWMD. The SWMD was in turn very surprised by its huge success at the outset. But what is actually happening now? How does the program measure against the 1995 goal of 25% diversion? What about commercial businesses and multi-family dwellings? Has there really been an "intensive" education program? What about composting of food and yard wastes, which make up a full one-fourth of Albuquerque's residential waste? The same letter mentioned above stated that volume-based or variable rates were being assessed and analyzed; what were the findings? What about markets for the recyclables? Recycling fails if the cycle is not completed. Is it possible the program has already stagnated?

Recycling is more than just sorting out and setting out your recyclables by the curbside. More importantly, it's about resource conservation, rethinking how we consume our resources. There should be a hierarchical approach, best summed up the catchy phrase, "reduce, reuse, recycle." Right now we live in a throwaway society, agreed? In the book, *Saving the Planet* by Lester Brown et al., it states, "Our economies are engaged in a disguised form of deficit financing, depleting natural capital to inflate current output at the expense of long-term productivity" and goes on to quote economist Herman Daly, who says "there is something fundamentally wrong in treating the earth as if it were a business in liquidation." Ahh, but back to the matter at hand.

The month's meeting will discuss the particulars of Albuquerque's recycling effort, as well as provide a legislative update of the progress

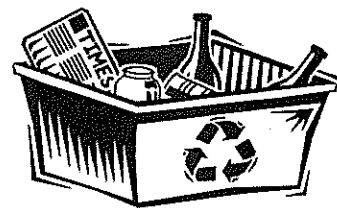
CALENDAR

Unless otherwise noted, meetings take place at the Club office at 207 San Pedro NE.

Jan 4:	Mexican Wolf Coalition, 7:30 PM.
Jan 9:	Executive Committee Meeting, 7PM.
Jan 16:	Sierra Club General Meeting, UNM Law School, Rm 2402, 7:30 PM.
Jan 23:	Conservation Working Session, 7:00 PM.
Feb 8:	Mexican Wolf Coalition, 7:30 PM.
Feb 13:	Executive Committee Meeting, 7PM.
Feb 15:	12 noon. Deadline for articles for March/April <i>Sierran</i> . Macintosh preferred.
Feb 20:	Sierra Club General Meeting, UNM Law School, Rm 2402, 7:30 PM.
Feb 27:	Conservation Working Session, 7:00 PM.

of the Beverage Container Recycling Act (see the accompanying article). Kevin Bean, longtime advocate for recycling and the "Bottle Bill" and currently serving as Chair of the volunteer Solid Waste Recycling Advisory Committee and on the Beverage Container Recycling Coalition (whew!), will address the membership. He will be joined by Sal Maretti of the City of Albuquerque Solid Waste Management Department. Sal and Kevin will be able to answer questions like those posed above and many others from the audience. Please attend.

The meeting will be on Monday, February 20, beginning at 7:30 PM in the UNM Law School, Rm 2401. The Law School is near the corner of Constitution and Stanford NE.



Beverage Container Recycling Coming to New Mexico

(compiled from press release of the Beverage Container Recycling Coalition, interview with Kevin Bean and fact sheet from Michigan Congressman Paul Henry)

Representative E. Shirley Baca (D, Las Cruces) and Senator Liz Stefanics (D, Santa Fe) are now leading a broad-based community groundswell for passage of the Beverage Container Recycling Act (BCRA) by the 1995 New Mexico State Legislature. "This is the year for this important bill to finally pass," says Rep. Baca. A July 1992 poll of New Mexicans from across the State revealed more than 80% were in favor of a system of deposits on beverage containers.

More than 22 New Mexico municipalities are now on record in favor of the BCRA. It has the active support of the New Mexico Municipal League, which represents the 99 municipalities in the State. It will be a State Sierra Club priority. The Act creates much-needed funds to operate curbside and other recycling programs while diverting recyclable materials away from landfills. Beverage containers represent between 5% and 11% of the total solid waste stream, but even more telling: they make up 60% of total litter by volume.

The BCRA establishes a simple system for recycling all beverage containers including beer, alcohol coolers, mineral waters, juices, soda water, and other carbonated beverages. Grocers need not redeem the deposits. Containers are to be redeemed for five cents at state authorized redemption centers or collected through local curbside or drop-off recycling programs.

Representative Baca urges concerned citizens and community organizations to contact their State Representative and Senator to support the BCRA. Overwhelming grassroots support is key to its passage. For more information, contact the BCRA Coalition at 254-1244.

TRIP REPORT

By Georgia Jannuzzi

SAT-SUN, OCT. 1/2 - COSTILLA, NM AREA: Three of us (Georgia, Stan Kauchak, and John Turnbull) and one yellow dog, now becoming a mascot, headed for the northern part of the state on Saturday morning. Because we had a small group, and no deadlines to meet, we traveled in one vehicle and took our time observing rock formations and the beauty of the season. There was certainly plenty of that as we explored around the area of Ski Rio. The fall colors were in full bloom. We did something quite different this time and traveled about 19 miles into Colorado for dinner at a wonderful Mexican restaurant. The food was excellent, some art for the art buffs, old pictures and objects for the historians and run by an interesting family. The one thing that was missed, however, since we dallied here a bit, was having a night campfire, as everyone was pretty well stuffed and tired by the time we got to camp.

About 4 a.m., right over our heads in the tree we had camped under, an owl (let's call him Hooty) decided to voice his opinion for a while. Breakfast was unhurried while we basked in the beauty of the area we were in and enjoyed the warm sunshine and looked at some of the flora and fauna of the area. A unanimous decision, since we were so close, took us a different route home. A visit to Ft. Garland, in Colorado - and making the circle complete, a few hours to stop at Great Sand Dunes National Monument where again the kaleidoscope of colors was magnificent. The contrast of the 14,000 foot peaks covered with some snow, the green of the forests on the way down the mountain, the varied yellow, light green and red contrasts along the river and the spectacular sand dunes (up to 700 feet high) would make anyone with a camera drool.

We had a picnic at the foot of the dunes, then, dog and all, headed up the dunes. We discovered there are groups who actually make the Mecca to this very different area, to ski on the sand - snowless. Anyone wish to try this venture next spring? The emblazoned tint of the leaves was actually to be exceeded on the way home by the flashy hue of the sky and its wondrous cloud formations. It was very hard for this driver to keep eyes on the road and off mother nature's colorful designs. It then got dark and the beauty went to sleep for another future trip. One we hope some of you may join us in taking.



the LORAX:

WINE & CHEESE PARTY: Our annual Wine & Cheese Party and Slideshow will be at 7 p.m. on Fri 20 Jan at the Env Ctr. Please bring your favorite wine & cheese to share and a dozen slides to show. Guests are welcome. A donation of \$3 per person will be greatly appreciated.

January Meeting: We hope to offer a presentation on winter sports and camping for the January meeting.

The program will start at 7:30 p.m. on Wed 25 Jan 1995 at St. Paul's Methodist Church at 7000 Edgemere, east of Airway. For info, call Ted 852-3011.

February Meeting: We hope to offer a presentation on local border environmental issues as well as a Sierra Club activist from Austin to speak on upcoming Texas legislative environmental battles. The program will start at 7:30 p.m. on Wed 22 Feb at St Paul's Church. **Conservation Meetings** will be gathering at a new time and place. Each meeting will convene over supper at Jaxon's at 1135 Airway at Viscount, starting at 6 p.m. on the last Wednesday of each month, just before the Gen Mtg.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Wed 4 Jan	I.C.O. mtg 6 p.m. Env Ctr
Wed 4 Jan	EXCOM mtg 7:30 p.m. Env Ctr
Tue 10 Jan	LORAX flier deadline 532-2652
Fri 20/Sat 21	Clean-Up at Env Ctr 532-9645
Fri 20 Jan	Wine & Cheese, Slides 7 p.m. Env Ctr
Wed 25 Jan	Conservation Mtg 6 p.m. Jaxon's
Wed 25 Jan	Gen Mtg 7:30 p.m. 7000 Edgemere
Wed 1 Feb	I.C.O. mtg 6 p.m. Env Ctr
Wed 1 Feb	EXCOM mtg 7:30 p.m. Env Ctr
Fri 10 Feb	LORAX Sierran deadline 532-2652
Sat 11 Feb	I.C.O. Leaders' Carcamp 544-5659
Wed 22 Feb	Conservation Mtg 6 p.m. Jaxon's
Wed 22 Feb	Gen Mtg 7:30 p.m. 7000 Edgemere

Volunteers For CLEAN-UP DAYS: The El Paso Environmental Center needs y'all to show up on Fri 20 and Sat 21 Jan to help in a much-needed clean-up. Please call 532-9645, and come by: 9 a.m. — 2 p.m.

El Paso Sierrans Sponsor Grassroots Las Chulas: Our local group, represented by treasurer Kathy Sunday, agreed to funnel SAFE 2000 grant funds to a local grassroots neighborhood cleanup club called *Las Chulas del Barrio*. These are mostly Spanish-speaking mothers living in the four blocks just west of Hart Elementary School, down near Park & Eighth, *segundo barrio*, second ward. Since *Las Chulas* don't have a bank account, a treasurer, or a non-profit permit, they will depend on Kathy to manage and dole out their grant money over a schedule approved by SAFE 2000. *Las Chulas* have the modest goal of running monthly neighborhood clean-ups, usually on the third Sat a.m. of each month. On Sat 19 Nov, Sierrans Ian Hanna, Sondra Denney, and Michael Bromka joined *Las Chulas* for a clean-up. A good time was had by all. For

info on how y'all can pitch in as well, during any schoolday call Hart Elementary School, and speak with Evelyn Borquin 533-4224.

EXCOM Election Results: Ted Mertig was reelected, Mike Seidensticker & Sondra Denney were newly elected, while Juan Enriquez & Adela Escudero tied for one seat. Adela won the coin toss, and Juan expressed an interest to be active in Club issues, as well. The new EXCOM kept Ted as Chair, voted Betsy as Vice Chair & Mike Seidensticker as Secretary, and begged Kathy Sunday to stay on as Treasurer. All graciously accepted these duties.

GROUP DIRECTORY

Chairman/	Ted Mertig	852-3011
Public Lands	Betsy Julian	544-5741
Vice Chair	Mike Seidensticker	544-5741
Secretary	Kathy Sunday	584-9301
Treasurer	Debbie Tomacelli	584-3929
Member	Sondra Denney	532-2652
Member	Adela Escudero	592-1570
Inner City		
Outings	Richard Rheder	544-5659
Env. Quality	Tom Brasfield	584-8739
Franklin Mtns	John Sproul	545-5157
Political Action	Jim Bell	581-8864
Population	OPEN	
Env Center	OPEN	
Mail	Bill Phillips	772-6503
Hospitality	Barbara Mertig	852-3011
Membership	Patricia Wood	542-0553
Office Rep.	Neil O'Hara	565-4735
LORAX, Outings,		
Publicity	Michael Bromka	532-2652

Sierra Club Environmental Center
800 S. Piedras @ Paisano
532-9645, 532-4876

Membership:
SIERRA CLUB
409 Robinson Rd
El Paso, TX 79902

LORAX information:
Michael Bromka
300 W. Schuster #5
El Paso, TX 79902

UPCOMING OUTINGS

Winter Caving Carcamp, Fri 6-8 Jan, moderate, call Sondra Denney 532-2652. We'll drive out Friday night to carcamp on BLM land, campfires permitted. Caves to be explored and possible service work are all to be announced. Each caver must provide at least 8 AA alkaline batteries for headlamp and bring a small flashlight as well. Comfy clothes and kneepads are highly recommended. You will get dirty. Not for folks with claustrophobia.

Cross-Country Ski Trip, Date to be chosen on short notice, weather permitting, moderate plus, call Jeannie French 592-1660. Either in Cloudcroft, NM or Alpine, AZ, we will bring or rent X-C skis or snowshoes to enjoy the winter wilderness. Bring your sleeping bag & mattress, since even in rented lodgings, frugal campers may choose to quadruple up, sleep on the floor, and thereby pinch pennies. Expect to spend a minimum of \$50 on a terrific weekend. Call to make the list, and we'll select time & place as the snow flies.

South Franklin Peak Dayhike, Sun 8 Jan, moderate 5 miles, 1500+ gain, call Carol Morrison 545-1701. Easy to reach trailhead and moderate hike should allow a pleasant work-out plus a brunch with a view.

Guadalupe Ridge Backpack, Sat 14-16 Jan, strenuous 30 miles, carrying water, call Michael Bromka 532-2652. A choice of routes still to be checked out may allow for a first day of dayhiking without heavy packs. We also hope to arrange a waterdrop to limit our max load at any time to 6 qts per person. Both nights out should allow us a campfire.

Franklin Mountains Dayhike, Sun 15 Jan, moderate 6 miles, 1000' gain, call Claus Christiansen 594-2505. The route, yet to be selected, will not summit a major peak. Rather, a gentler, less visited locale will provide a rare pleasure for the dayhiker of modest ambitions.

Ron Coleman Trail Dayhike, Sun 22 Jan, moderate 4 miles, 1500+ gain with some rock scrambling at a seemingly precarious precipice in the Franklins, call Carolina Greenfield 594-7342. We'll leave cars on Trans-Mountain Rd, and shuttle to the trailhead in McKelligan Canyon. Our trail will lead up and over South Franklin Peak.

Sapillo Creek Backpack, Sat 28-29 Jan, Aldo Leopold Wilderness, moderate 5 miles with several river crossings and cold-weather camping, call Alice Anderson (505) 523-5179. Be prepared for cold and possibly wet weather. Stream crossings could go over the boottop, so bring extra pairs of warm socks. Enjoy a pleasant moderate trek.

Volcano Dayhike, Sun 29 Jan, near El Paso, easy hiking, call Betsy Julian 544-5741. Vehicles with high clearance are preferable as we visit Hunt's Hole, Aden Crater, and Black Mountain. Who needs Hawaii? Check out our own local volcanos. Enjoy on-site geological Show & Tell.

Cook's Peak Carcamp, Fri 3-5 Feb, mod strenuous 8 miles 2500' gain dayhiking, call Joe Rodriguez 833-9655. We'll leave Fri evening to reach campsite and make camp, On Sat, we'll climb the peak. Sunday should allow short dayhikes before the return trip.

Aguirre Springs Dayhike, Sun 5 Feb, Organ Mtns, easy 4-mile loop, call Patricia Wood 542-0553. This classic local dayhike is quick to reach yet lovely to relish. There may be a modest fee levied by park officials.

I.C.O. Leadership Carcamp, Sat 11-12 Feb, Potrillo Mtns, easy & fun, call Richard Rheder 544-5659. This carcamp is for I.C.O. leaders, hopefuls, and even stray school teachers who'd like to bring young folks out to the wilderness. This will be an *Adults-Only* workshop & outing. Stringent I.C.O. rules of conduct will be relaxed. All relevant topics are open for discussion.

Anthony's Nose Dayhike, Sun 19 Feb, Franklins, strenuous 9 miles with 1500' gain, call Michael Bromka 532-2652. We'll start bright & early at Tom Mays park up the Mike Episcopo trail, then along the lechugilla-ridden crest leading to Tony's Schnoz. Hikers must wear long pants and leather gloves, to prevent scratches. This outing is best suited to experienced hikers with good balance and little fear of heights. There will be rock scrambling.

Alamo Mtn Backpack, Sat 25-26 Feb, Cornudas Mtns, mod strenuous 7 miles, call Rollin Wickenden 598-8042. We'll ride a half hour on paved roads, then an hour on gravel to reach the petroglyph site for a dayhike. After lunch, we'll drive to the trailhead and backpack a steady and challenging climb to the flat-topped peak. Each camper must carry a gallon of water, plus camping gear. On a clear night, this campsite offers a classic western view.

Grand Canyon Backpack, Fri 17-23 March, Grand Canyon Nat'l Park, Hermit-Tanto-Bright Angel trails, strenuous 26 miles over 4 days in the canyon, in-step crampons required for safety, call Rollin Wickenden 855-6836. We'll depart El Paso Fri p.m. and spend that night in Tucson before arriving at G.C.N.P. on Sat. Expect winter weather on the South Rim and summer weather in the Canyon. This strenuous, difficult trip with major elevation gain & loss mostly on unmaintained trails is only for experienced backpackers willing to comply with the strict regulations enforced in the Grand Canyon.



OUTINGS REPORTS

Backpack, Oct 22-23: On the Friday night preceding weekend, some of us opted to carcamp. Alice Ann Falknor, John & Arthur (Otter) Walton, Lars Brin, Colin Johnson, Sondra Denney, and leader Michael Brosho camped at Parks Ranch. It was a quick ride the next morning to the Pine Springs trailhead to meet Dave Kofoed, the Boon, Lolina Alvarez, Larry Hughes, and Rafael Porres. The McKittrick Canyon's carlot would soon be packed with hikers, park rangers only let us shuttle over our two most spacious vehicles to leave at our next day's terminus. Carrying 6 quarts water each, we set out on our long day's journey: up Tejas to the escarpment gaining 2000 ft, along Tejas through dense colorful woods, then hooking right along an open McKittrick Ridge trail for our last three miles. Bright sun made this a photo-op day, and once upon the escarpment, we saw few other hikers. We shared McKittrick Ridge campsite with two other parties, and enjoyed a quiet supper. The air was warm enough to allow sleeping under the stars. Pre-dawn mule deer clomped boldly up to us as we dozed just a yard or two away. The next day's descent into McKittrick went smoothly. Thank you to higher-gear hikers who shuttled and left cars for slowpokes at day's end.

I.C.O. Service Day, Sat 5 Nov, at the Env.Ctr. John Sproul and Richard Rheder worked with Mario Ruiz of the Texas Youth Commission and four volunteers from Schaeffer House: Angel Garcia, Ramon Martinez, Amador Trevino, and Joseph Vallejo. The lads cleaned up, painted over, and otherwise eradicated graffiti which had marred the Environmental Center. Schaeffer Halfway House is run by the T.Y.C. and our Inner City Outings program has set up an ambitious schedule with them over the coming year. Richard Rheder urges all interested volunteers to come along on the I.C.O. Leadership Carcamp on Sat 11-12 Feb, phone 544-5659.

Johnson Cabin Backpack, Nov 5-6: Beautiful autumn weather blessed the El Paso Sierrans' first official backpack to Johnson Cabin. A passing storm on the trip's eve left stray patches of fresh snow on the trail. Our hike stretched two miles further than expected. We deemed this a modest footfee to reach so lovely a campsite at the confluence of North Big Dry and Big Dry Creek. Despite a cold night, we slept snugly. Sunday morning's hike brought a nearly 1000 ft elevation gain leaving the canyon, warming us thoroughly. On our weekend of wilderness delights, our biggest thrill came on Sunday afternoon. We met a family of *coatis*, a mother and three younguns. The *coati* — a South American critter with long slender snout and ringed tail — is rare 'round these parts, according to our expert, Roy McCloud. Other campers were Shirley Phillips, JoAnna Blackburn, Alice Anderson, Kathy Sunday, and leader Joe Rodriguez.

I.C.O. Daytrip to Zinker Christmas Tree Area near Cloudcroft, Sat 17 Dec: We had a successful trip to get the Schaeffer House Christmas tree. One of the nice things about working our outings through Schaeffer House is that they provide their own 15-passenger van. Our crew consisted of 6 youths, one staff member, one agency member (a UTEP psychology student), 5 Sierrans, one 17-year-old exchange student from Latvia, and Richard Rheder's 9-year-old nephew. We got three tree permits and had a great time

hiking through the snow to find just the right ones. None of the Schaeffer House youths had ever been to Cloudcroft and few had ever experienced snow, so snowball fights were the first order of the day. It was a delightfully warm, sunny day, and we lingered over a picnic lunch before getting into serious tree "hunting." On the way back to the van, we somehow got turned around and wandered into an adjacent canyon by following a logging road down to where we *thought* we had parked. Fortunately, the rangers had been keeping an eye on the motley "mob with the backpacks" and rescued us by taking our driver back up to the van. After dinner at Burger King in Alamogordo, the tree hunting crew harmonized and rapped their way back to El Paso as a full moon rose over the Sacramento Mountains.

North Franklin Peak Dayhike, Sun 18 Dec: Warm weather and bright sunshine graced Cynthia Farah, Laurie Lamar, Perry Buck, Monte Hall, Wesley Leonard, Joe Rodriguez, and leader Kathy Sunday up to the rooftop of El Paso, North Franklin Peak. We relished a leisurely lunch with an expansive view in windless sunny warmth. Our return trip got us back to our cars by 3 p.m.



SANTA FE GROUP NEWS

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

TUESDAY, JANUARY 17, 1995

SEE BELUGA WHALES IN THEIR SUMMER ARCTIC PLAYGROUND

Hundreds of Beluga whales (the only true "white" whale) travel thousands of miles to the Canadian High Arctic Waters to molt and play. Belugas (sorry, no caviar from these babies) are known as "sea canaries" because of their impressive range of vocalizations. They squeal and chirp and are considered among the most vocal of all whales. Ellen Kemper spent a week this summer in her muk luks at the edge of the Arctic Circle photographing and watching these beautiful creatures and has a great slide show to entertain us.

The 1995 Legislative Session will start this week and so Doug Fraser, the Sierra Club lobbyist, will give a short preview of proposed environmental legislation.

The meeting is free to all and will be held at the Unitarian Church (on Barcelona between Don Gaspar and Galisteo) Tuesday, January 17, 1995, at 7:30 PM.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 1995

YOUR LEGISLATORS AT WORK FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

At press time, it's much too early to know what bills that affect the environment will be introduced during the upcoming Legislative Session. We plan to invite State Representatives and Senators who are advocates for environmental protection to discuss bills on wildlife, takings, water planning, waste management and, for sure, the return of the bottle bill.

As a result of the elections this past November it is critically important that we all join forces to empower ourselves and help our representatives in the government to protect our natural resources, air, water and land! Come to the meeting to find out what you can do. The meeting is free to all and will be held at the Unitarian Church (on Barcelona between Don Gaspar and Galisteo) Tuesday, February 21, 1995, at 7:30 PM.

EMPTY STORAGE SHED WANTED

Very shortly we will be reprinting our very popular "Day Hikes" guide book. It is the Santa Fe Group's major fundraiser, and the money from the book's sale is used to support conservation issues.

Do you have space in your garage or perhaps a spare room or storage shed for us to keep these books in? This could be your contribution toward the Sierra Club and the environment. Please call Lionel Soracco (983-6715)

MEETINGS: [call for location and time]

Executive Committee: (Norma 471-0005)

February 7 and March 7 at 7 PM

Conservation Committee: (George 982-1024)

January 24 and February 28 at 7 PM

OFFICE SPACE WANTED

Get us out of the basement! We're looking for a new office, doesn't have to be big, are willing to share with another organization, need handicap access and would dearly love a window. Any ideas, call Norma (471-0005) or Mark (983-5870)

>> SANTA FE GROUP OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS <<

Co-Chairs — Mark Mortier*	983-5870	Newsletter Editor — Kay Carlson	982-3926
— Norma McCallan*	471-0005	Phone Tree —	
Secretary/Treasurer — Lionel Soracco*	983-6715	Kids' Sierra Club — Justine Freeman	988-9126
Conservation — George Grossman*	982-1024	Recycling/Office — Carolyn Keskulla	982-9570
Chapter Representative — Norma McCallan*	471-0005	Outings — Norbert Sperlich	983-1962
Publicity — Kay Carlson	982-3926	— Norma McCallan*	471-0005
Political Committee — Ken Hughes	474-0550	Welcomer — Susan Banks	757-2284
		Membership— Fundraising— Education— open	

* Member of the SF Group Executive Committee

Terms expire 12/95: McCallan/Mortier/Soracco/Goldman/Grossman

12/96: Jerry Bober/Marth Ann Freeman/Barbara Johnson/Gwen Wardwell

>>>>>>>>> SANTA FE GROUP OUTINGS <<<<<<<<<<



Happy New Year !!



Sat Sun January

- 1 Norbert Sperlich (983-1962) Moderate Hike in La Bajada area. Call for details and reservations.
- Thursday, January 5
John Turnbull (466-9329) Indoor Ski Class Introduction to Cross-country skiing. Discussion of Nordic skiing, its history, various applications, relationship to Alpine (downhill) skiing; Nordic equipment, especially for backcountry skiing; what to wear. Unitarian Church. 7:00 PM to approximately 9:30 PM.
- 7 Norma McCallan (471-0005) Easy/Moderate Hike South of town, starting on the RR tracks. Dogs allowed. Leave 9:30 AM.
- 7 John Turnbull (466-9329) Outdoor Ski Class Beginning Cross-country Skiing - Basic techniques. Introduction to fundamentals of Nordic skiing, classical style, emphasizing backcountry needs. Probably at Los Alamos Golf Course, depending on snow. Bring snacks or a small lunch, and water. Equipment can be rented at most shops. Leave 9:00 AM from Wild Mountain Outfitters (previously known as Wilderness Exchange) next to Osco Drug on Cordova. Return early afternoon.
- 8 Jeff Jones (466-2389) Easy Hike 5-6 miles R.T. in Diablo Canyon. Children encouraged. Leave 9 AM.
- 8 John Turnbull (466-9329) Beginners' Cross-country Ski Tour Snow permitting, probably in the Jemez Mountains, or Amole Canyon, near Peñasco. Thoughtful pace with time to look at the trees. About six miles. Instruction in assessing and skiing various terrain. Bring snacks, at least one quart of water, and generous lunch. This is a follow-up of the ski classes. Leave 9:00 AM from Wild Mountain Outfitters (previously known as Wilderness Exchange) next to Osco Drug. Return about 4:00 PM.
- 14 Steven Janus (988-4137) Moderate/Strenuous Snowshoe/Cross Country Ski Tour Southwest Ridge-Lake Peak-Ravens Ridge Loop. 6-7 miles roundtrip. Your choice of which equipment. Call for time of departure and details.
- 15 Bob McKee (672-3426) Moderate Hike from Otowi Bridge along the north bank of the Rio Grande. Carpool from PERA at 8 AM, or meet Bob at the Otowi Bridge at 8:45 AM.
- January 14, 15, 16 (Saturday, Sunday and Monday)
John Turnbull (466-9329) Chapter-wide ski weekend in the Cloudcroft area, Lincoln National Forest. An opportunity to meet Sierra Clubbers from the southern reaches and have some fun. A day at the resort for some Telemark (or downhill) skiing; track skiing at a groomed area; a day of backcountry touring in the ponderosas; cozy evenings in front of a fireplace. Bring your favorite friend. Phone John Turnbull, or in Albuquerque Stan Kauchak (839-4301) for details and carpooling.
- 21 Caroline and Arnold Keskulla (982-9570) Easy Hike along the Rio Grande. Leave 9 AM.
- 21 Lionel Soracco (983-6715) Moderate Cross-Country Ski Trip Call for destination. Leave 8 AM.
- 22 Norrine Sanders (984-0386) Moderate Hike to Ancho Rapids, near White Rock. Leave 8:30 AM.
- 22 Phone Tree Party at Jo Kinney's house — see elsewhere for details.
- 28 Joe Whelan (984-0746) Moderate Cross-Country Ski Tour in the Jemez. Leave 8:30 AM.
- 29 Elizabeth Altman (471-8490) Easy Hike "A river runs through it" — 6 miles along the Santa Fe River. Leave 9 AM.

Saturday and Sunday, January 28 and 29

Margo Wilson (1-505-744-5860) Journey down to the warmer climes of Truth or Consequences for a weekend of new scenery and camaraderie. Camp in at Margo's house, Moderate Day Hike Saturday to Turtle Back Mountain, followed by a bath at a hot springs in TorC, pot-luck supper Saturday night, Moderate day hike Sunday in Hillsboro area. Leave after work on Friday, Call Norma McCallan (471-0005) for carpooling.

Outings Notes — Unless otherwise noted, all outings leave from the PERA parking lot at the corner of Paseo de Peralta and Old Santa Fe Trail (across the street from the State Capitol and Corbae). Carpooling will be arranged at the parking lot, and each hiker should come prepared to pay 5¢ a mile to the driver of the car in which hiker rides. Hikers should 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 the 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.

Sat Sun February

- 4 Arnold and Carolyn Keskulla (982-9570) Easy Hike Call leaders for destination. Leave 9 AM.
- 4 John Turnbull (466-9329) Moderate/Strenuous Cross-country Ski Tour Up Aspen Vista Road, down on Ski Area side. Great views! Steel-edged skis required. Leave 9 AM from Wild Mountain Outfitters (previously known as Wilderness Exchange) next to Osco Drug. Call leader for details.
- 5 Norma McCallan (471-0005) Easy Hike on La Bajada Loop. Dogs Allowed. Leave 9:30 AM.
- 11 Joe Whelan (984-0746) Moderate Cross-Country Ski Tour Leave 8:30 AM. Call leader for details.
- 12 Easy Hike from Diablo Canyon to Rio Grande and back. Leave at 9 AM. Call 471-7575 for details.
- 18 Norrine Sanders (984-0386) Easy Hike from Embudo Station along Rio Grande. Leave 8:30 AM.
- 19 Elizabeth Altman (471-8490) Easy Cross-Country Ski Trip weather permitting. Leave 9 AM. Call leader for details.
- 25 Lionel Soracco (983-6715) Moderate Cross-Country Ski Tour Leave 8 AM. Call leader for details.
- 26 Bob McKee (672-3426) Moderate Exploratory Bushwalk in Bandelier. Call for time and meeting place.

Sat Sun March

- 4 Lionel Soracco (983-6715) Moderate Cross-Country Ski Tour to wherever snow is good. Leave 8 AM.
- 4 Norma McCallan (471-0005) Easy Hike Arroyo Chamisa Loop. Dogs Allowed. Leave 9:30 AM.
- 5 Norbert Sperlich (983-1962) Moderate/Strenuous Hike Diablo Canyon to Sagebrush Flats and White Rock Canyon Overlook. Most off-trail. Call for details and reservations.
- 11 Bob McKee (672-3426) Moderate Exploratory Hike "Bandelier Bushwalk II" Mostly off-trail. Call leader.
- 11 Joe Whelan (984-0746) Moderate/Strenuous Cross-Country Ski Tour Leave 8:30 AM. Call leader for location of trip.
- 12 Easy/Moderate Hike from Galisteo Dam to Waldo. Leave at 9 AM. Call 471-7575 for details.
- 18 Norrine Sanders (984-0386) Easy/Moderate Hike from Ojo Caliente area. Leave 8:30 AM.
- 18 Caroline Glick (984-3184) Strenuous Hike in Bandelier. Call leader for reservations/information.
- 19 Julie Montoya King (438-7197) Moderate Hike Call leader for destination and time of departure.
- 25 Carolyn Keskulla (982-9570) Easy/Moderate Hike in Tent Rocks. Call leader for meeting place. Leave 9 AM.
- 25 Leader training workshop (see below for information)
- 26 Elizabeth Altman (471-8490) Easy Hike Leave 9 AM.

Note: On Saturday, March 25, there will be a leader training workshop, from 9 AM - 3 PM, for all active and potential outings leaders and any other interested parties. Please call Norma McCallan (471-0005) or Norbert Sperlich (983-1962) for further information.



SKI TOURING

Interested in ski touring, but nothing is scheduled? There may be a last-minute trip happening, or if there is sufficient interest one may be arranged. Phone either John Turnbull (466-9329) in Santa Fe or Stan Kauchak (839-4301) in Albuquerque. The non-scheduled trips often are the best of all, taking advantage of new snow, etc.

PHONE TREE PARTY
Sunday, January 22, 3-5 PM

All phone tree members and anyone interested in climbing onto the tree are invited to Jo Kinney's house (954 Santo Niño Place, off Old Taos Highway). The phone tree is *mas importante* during the Legislative Session especially and **WE WANT YOU !!**. Sierra Club lobbyist Doug Fraser will be there to update us on upcoming bills. You don't have to belong or even join, just come and socialize with us. For more information, call: Martha Ann Freeman (438-0697) or Dorothy Grossman (982-1024)

SIERRA CLUB -- Santa Fe Group · 440 Cerrillos Road · Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501 · 505/983-2703

SKI AREA CONTAINMENT COALITION

The Forest Service has included the Citizen's Alternative in their deliberations over the proposed Ski Area expansion, but it is not known yet what will be decided. SACC intends to appeal if the expansion extends past the existing boundaries.

SACC is protesting the Ski Area's water rights application for snow making from the Rio En Medio. The State Engineer's decision is pending.

Remember last year's —

BEST WINTER PARTY EVER THROWN
Now, here's the

Second Annual !!

SACC's fundraiser will be held **Friday, February 17, at La Fonda Ballroom, 7 to 11 PM.** Music by Lumbré del Sol and the Big Tesuque Ramblers. Cash bar. Door prizes. Silent auction of donated paintings by local artists. Roger Morris, historian and former host of KNME's *At Week's End*, will be there. Big Tesuque posters on sale. Tickets \$5 from SACC members or at the door.

To volunteer to help or further info: Victor Martinez (471-1509). If you'd just like to send \$\$: SACC, POBox 1101, Santa Fe, NM 87504.
SEE YOU THERE !!



FROM THE CHAIR'S CORNER

We want to welcome our newly elected Executive Committee members: Jerry Bober, Barbara Johnson, Gwen Wardwell and Martha Ann Freeman (who is now in her second term).

We also would like to express deep appreciation to the outgoing Executive Committee members, Ken Hughes, Sue McIntosh and Van Perkins, all of whom have contributed significantly to our environmental endeavors in both the Santa Fe area and across the State of New Mexico. We wish them all well and know that they will still find time to contribute their expertise to the Santa Fe group.

*Norma McCallan ** Co-Chairs ** Mark Mortier*

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE REPORT

All members of the Santa Fe Group will soon be receiving a questionnaire concerning their interest in and ability to become involved in conservation activities.

There seems to be a nearly unlimited number of environmental issues with which the Santa Fe Group could be involved, and we try to be active in the issues that have support of our members. Some that we are currently concerned with are forest management, grazing management, wilderness designation, water quality and quantity, wildlife management, endangered species, county open space, and hilltop development. The extent of our involvement in an issue depends entirely on how much member interest there is.

The Group leadership is very aware of the significant differences in levels of support which our members can offer. However, all of our members are appreciated for whatever they can provide. We would like to hear from each of our members, even if all they can contribute is their dues. We want to involve as many members as possible in the issues in which they are interested and at the level at which they are comfortable.

Please return your questionnaire as early as possible.

All members are invited to the monthly Conservation Committee meetings which are held the fourth Tuesday of every month. Please call me for meeting places.

George Grossman (982-1024)

EMPOWER YOURSELF...

... And in as little as 30 minutes a year you can turn your vague, flabby environmental sensibilities into rock-solid effectiveness, *without working up a sweat!*

Volunteering for the Sierra Club phone tree is the most painless and effective way to effect policy at the state and federal level. It merely consists of calling your legislator's office about a dozen times a year, as soon as possible after getting an alert from the Sierra Club caller above you on the tree. Or, if you have another half-hour to spare over the course of the year, you can volunteer to call five other people with an alert.

Don't Delay. Get in practice and start now by calling: *Martha Ann Freeman (438-0697)* or *Dorothy Grossman (982-1024)*

THE LOG

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

All meetings are held in 107 Science Hall on the NMSU campus. Directions: Enter the NMSU campus on Espina driving south. At the second stop sign, Stewart St, turn left. At the first stop sign, Sweet St., turn left again. Immediately after turning, enter parking lot on the right and park. Take the walk at the northeast corner of the parking lot and walk straight ahead into Science Hall.

January 19, 1995, Thursday 7:30 pm

"What changes can we expect to see in our National Forests with the new Ecosystem Management?"

SPEAKER: Charles "Chip" Cartwright, Southwest Regional Forester.

This is a **JOINT GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING WITH MESILLA VALLEY AUDUBON, and NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF DONA ANA COUNTY.**

February 23, 1995, Thursday 7:30 pm

SPEAKER: Kris Havstad, Jornada Experimental Range, USDA

March 23, 1995, Thursday 7:30 pm

SLIDE PRESENTATION: Subhankar Banerjee, Sierra Club member, hike leader, and backpacker. Hiking, Backpacking and Driving through the Southwest: New Mexico's Organ Mountains and Gila National Forest, Colorado's San Juan and Uncompagre National Forests, and Rocky Mountain National Park, and parts of Arizona and Southern Utah.

We will discuss possible hiking/backpacking trips to some of these places, and would like to hear where people would like to go.

NMSU STUDENT DIRECTORY

Coordinator	Laurie Schmierer	527-1120
Asst. Coordinator	Andrew Hands	523-9059
Outdoors Coordinator	Bruce Gafner	524-3241
Sec. and Publicity	David Mondragon	
	dmondrag@nmsu.edu	
Internet Coordinator	Tony Garcia	
	tony@taipan.nmsu.edu	

CONSERVATION MEETINGS

A Chapter Conservation Meeting is tentatively set for January 28th or 29th. If you plan to attend, call 522-3421 for exact date, time, and place.

OTHER

Watch the Las Cruces newspapers for public meetings on the Organ Mountains tentatively being scheduled for late January.

January 12 and 13, 1995--WSMR "Information Fair" in Socorro, New Mexico Tech Univ., Macey Center. Jan. 12, 1995, First Session 1 to 4 pm, and Second Session 7 to 9 pm. Subject: new HERA launch area in the Northern Extension Area. Jan. 13, 1995, Open House at the launch pad construction site, 10 am until noon. See stories and map, page 25 and page 26.

OUTINGS

January 14-16: Chapter organized ski trip. See the Santa Fe and Albuquerque Group News Outings for further details.

January 28: Organ Mountain Baylor Pass Hike. Easy/Moderate 6 mile hike with grade. A very interesting and pleasant hike. We will meet at the north Pan Am parking lot at 9:30 am. Call Subhankar Banerjee at 521-7025 for further details.

February 11: Hike to the spectacular Organ Needles. Moderate/Strenuous. This is the highest point in the Organ Mountains. This may be your first opportunity to touch a real summit, a truly breathtaking experience, so don't miss it. Call Ben Zerbey at 526-6207 for further details.

February 25: A spectacular 8 mile hike on a brand new trail all across White Sands National Monument. Easy/Moderate. Imagine hiking through one of the world's most gorgeous sand dunes on a cool February day. We will meet at the Pan Am north parking lot at 9 am. Call Marianne Thaeler at 522-3421 for further details.

NMSU STUDENT SIERRA CLUB MEETING

January 18: First meeting of the new semester! We will discuss outings and programs for the spring semester. Where? 107 Science Hall. Time? 7 pm. Call Lori Schmierer at 527-1120 for further information.

WHY SHOULD MILITARY TAKE OVER OF NEW LANDS CONCERN NEW MEXICANS (And all citizens of the United States)?

by Marianne Thaeler, Chapter Military Issues Chair

New Mexico and its citizens have always supported the military of the United States and will continue to do so. The military has provided jobs and economic development to New Mexico. Before the explosive population growth in southern New Mexico, as a result of other border activities and the climate, the US military was the major employer in New Mexico.

Why should we be concerned now?

1) Because the geographic expansions have been soooo large, and more are planned.
2) Because the WSMR, Holloman AFB, Ft. Bliss complex has so many different ac-

tivities involving all branches of the military.

3) Because the military presence is so concentrated.

4) Because the number of existing Hazardous Waste sites on these facilities needing clean up is so large (at least 54 on WSMR alone).

5) Because water quantity and quality is a major problem for New Mexico.

6) Because the military has not fully complied with the Federal Facilities Compliance Act, which requires them to comply with existing environmental laws.

7) Because the military makes decisions

that affect New Mexico citizens and begins executing them before telling Congress and the public.

8) Because hazardous waste clean up monies may be cut by Congress, and those most effected by these proposed cuts will be New Mexicans.

9) Because foreign governments use our lands for military purposes (Japan, Germany, Taiwan, etc.).

(This listing is not in any specific order.)

Sierra Club Takes the Army for a Hike

By Barbara Coon

After recent discoveries that areas in the Organ Mountains most frequently used by hikers may be contaminated by unexploded ordnance and are part of the Ft. Bliss, Dona Ana Range, tank firing range, the Southern New Mexico Group invited the Range Manager, Lt. Col. Lund, to go hiking in the Organs to see another perspective.

The hike was led by Jim Basler, Group Outings Chair. Those going along on the hike included Lt. Col. Lund, Captain Kontny, Bruce Gafner (NMSU Student Sierra Club, Outdoor Coordinator), Barbara Coon (Sierra Club member and member of the NM Mountain Club) and her husband and daughter, Paul Bronson, Rudy Provencio, and John Bryant.

The hike went up Achenbach Canyon and explored the archeological site at the Indian cave. Ranch horses were seen in the valley above the falls.

A good time was had by all.



Group Directory

Marianne Thaeler, Chair	522-3421
Myra Price, Vice-chair	524-0261
David Pengelley, Secy, Student Advisor	525-8286
Ben Zerbey, Treasurer	526-6207
Cheryl Blevins, Publicity	524-4861
Jim Basler, Outings	521-4822
Andrew Hands, Education	523-9059
Jim Winder, Education	267-4227
Erika Kocsis, Water	527-0523
Tony Chiaviello	525-1802
Marian Nygard	522-4689
Kris Paulsen	523-9059
Lori Schmierer, Student Group	527-1120
Chapter Delegate	vacant

New Group Officers will be elected in January

WSMR INFORMATION FAIR or How WSMR expanded its boundaries before the public knew about it!

by Marianne Thaeler, Chapter Military Issues Chair

Under the Federal Facilities Compliance Act the United States military is supposed to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Each facility must have a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) from which Environmental Assessments (EAs) for minor activities are tiered, or Environmental Impact Statements (EISs) are prepared for major activities. (WSMR has not had a Final PEIS accepted. Holloman AFB and Ft. Bliss have not yet begun to prepare a PEIS, to the best of our knowledge.) After an EA or EIS is prepared which explores and evaluates Alternatives for executing the activity, an Alternative is chosen, a Finding of No Significant Impact can be made, a Decision is rendered, funding is acquired, and the activity is executed. But....

Lo and behold, the US Army is not working that way. They do the NEPA process backward, although officials in the Environmental Directorates say they are trying to change. First the Decision is made, then the activity is executed or "tested," then Congress is asked for funds based on the fact that they have been doing the activity all along, then the NEPA process is begun, and finally they complain bitterly of unnecessary government paperwork.

This is the reverse of the NEPA process. The NEPA process is the only way that some members of Congress and the public learn what is planned.

WSMR has begun construction on a HERA launch area in the Northern Extension Area. (See article and map on page 26.) This is the area about half the size of the existing WSMR, which extends north from US Hwy. 380 to US Hwy. 60. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) refused to allow construction of lands under its management without Congressional action, so... WSMR went to the private landowners in the area and negotiated leases to private property. These leases allow for permanent launch pads with temporary buildings for the assembly and fueling of missiles. An EA was prepared, not under the EA which was prepared entitled "HERA", but under an EA entitled "Theater High Altitude Area Defense" (THAAD). THAAD is part of the Theater Defense Extended Range (TMD) for which an EIS has not yet been finalized and which does have Alternatives to WSMR. (Can one really believe the Alternatives are real as NEPA requires, if construction has already begun?) If TMD sounds familiar, it is because there has been much controversy over the proposed shooting of missiles from Ft. Wingate and Green River, Utah, under TMD. So the public, including this author, believing the NEPA process was being followed, as required by law, didn't notice that construction had already begun on the TMD project THAAD.

It may be legal for the federal government to construct permanent launch pads for weap-

ons on private property, but land is leased for a specific length of time. Then the question is, is it legal for private property owners to have a launch pad for weapons? or should it be legal for private property owners to have the missile launch pads? We have not yet been able to discover whether the leases have a provision for the removal of the launch pads on the expiration of the leases. The NM Attorney General's Office has sent us a letter indicating these are issues of federal law, although regulation might be possible by the State of New Mexico. Further study is needed and perhaps the State Legislature should act. A letter has been sent to the US Assistant Attorney General asking similar questions.

Perhaps we can find get some answers at the WSMR "Information Fair" to be held in Socorro at NM Institute of Mining and Technology (Tech) in Macey Center on January 12, 1995. A flyer entitled *Across the Fence, Issue 2* has been sent to property owners in the Northern Extension Area. The lead Article is "Information Fair and Open House planned for Jan. 12 & 13 in Socorro and at Hera Launch Site." In this article it refers to the Northern Extension Area, the area known to all to be the WSMR buffer zone, as WSMR. "Our intent is to try to answer just about any question you might have concerning activities on White Sands Missile Range." Perhaps a question might be asked, what area will be used as a buffer zone in the future?

ARMY FIRES CLUSTER BOMBS INTO WSMR NORTHERN EXTENSION AREA

by Marianne Thaeler, Chapter Military Issues Chair

According to *Across the Fence, Issue 2* (December 1994), a publication of White Sands Missile Range, the Army has successfully demonstrated an advance version of the Army Tactical Missile System (TACMS).

Three prototype TACMS missiles were fired into the White Sands Missile Range buffer zone, also known as the Northern Extension Area, also known as the FIX Area (Firing In Extension Area). These missiles were fired in October, November, and on December 7, 1994 at 9:30 am according to local residents of Mountainair, New Mexico,

who reported feeling the impacts. The missile was launched from McGregor Range on Fort Bliss, an area jointly managed by the Bureau of Land Management, Las Cruces District. The fielded Army TACMS is 13 feet long and carries 950 submunitions or small "bomblets" which are designed to explode on impact. The number of bomblets was reduced to 275 in the prototype which was shot into the Northern Extension Area. The bomblets were loaded with borax, not explosives. Residents of the Northern Extension Area have reportedly been collecting the bomblets.

The Northern Extension Area is marked on the map which appeared in the November/December issue of the *Sierran*. It includes most all of the area south of US 60 to US 380. The land in the Northern Extension Area is owned by the BLM and by private ranchers. The private land owners have signed agreements with the US Army, which are presently being renegotiated. These agreements provide the ranchers who must evacuate their lands during launches compensation, money. Each agreement is different, so each rancher is paid a different amount for evacuating.

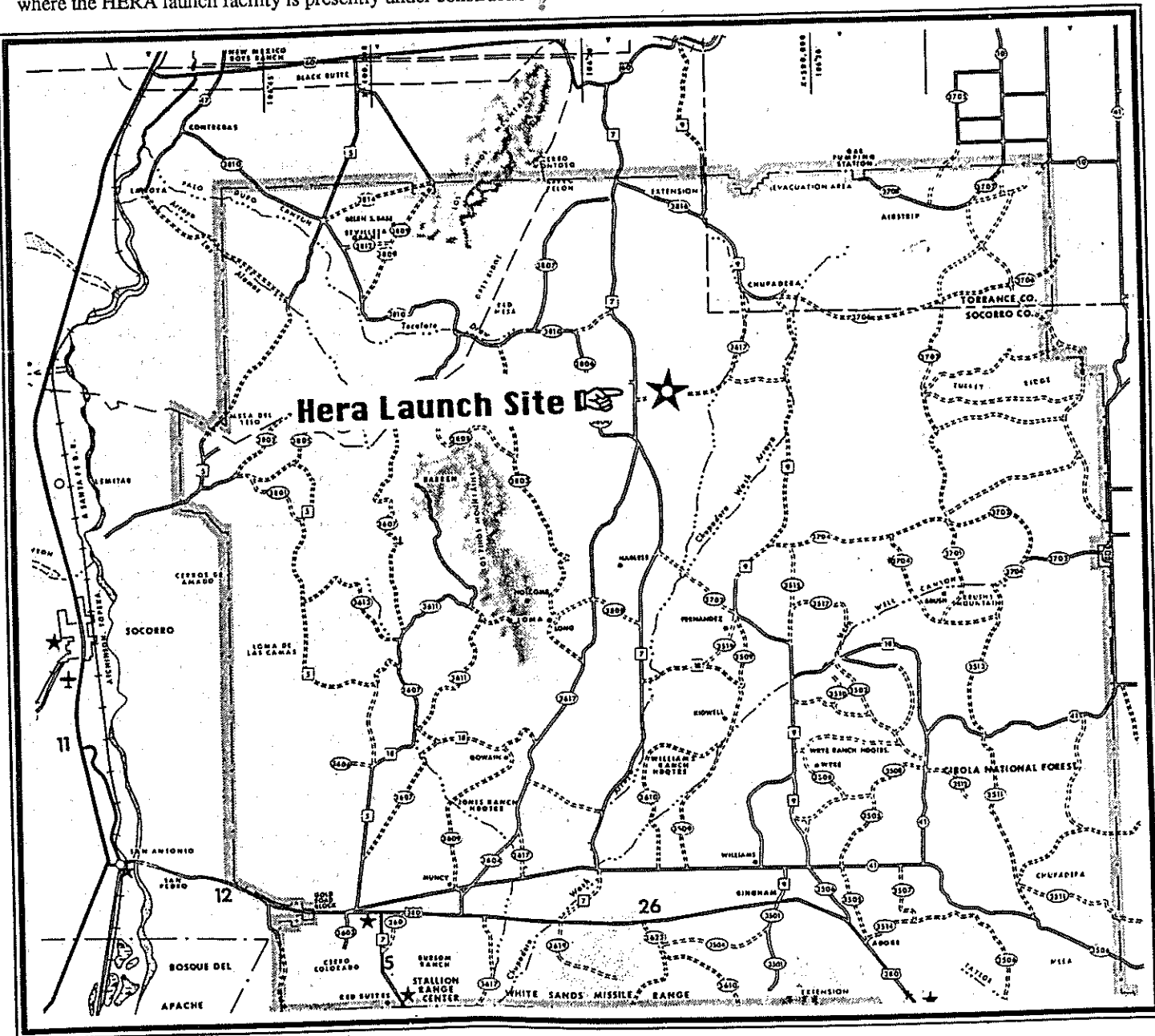
HERA, What is it?

by Marianne Thaeler, Military Issues Chair

The Ballistic Missile Defense Organization (BMDO) manages the Theater Missile Defense (TMD) Initiative. The U.S. Army Space and Strategic Defense Command, headquartered in Huntsville, Alabama, is a tenant on White Sands Missile Range, and it manages the TMD and HERA programs (and many others) for the BMDO. The TMD HERA Target Systems provide realistic targets for the TMD interceptor missiles, which include Theater High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) missiles, Phased Array Tracking to Intercept of Target (PATRIOT) missiles, Extended Range Interceptor missiles (ERINT) and other interceptors.

Confused? This is shooting missiles to shoot down other missiles. HERAs are missiles used as targets. They are realistic simulations of threats used to test the TMD missiles, and the missiles' systems. They are "scud-like" missiles. HERA is a target system, to use the Army jargon.

The HERA site for the launch of target missiles, which will be shot down by the interceptors aimed at it, is located 15 miles south of US Hwy 60, and 25 miles north of US Hwy 380. (See map below, which shows the boundary of the Northern Extension Area and the site where the HERA launch facility is presently under construction.)



Rio Grande Sierrans Invigorate, Activate and Mobilize!

by Susan Gorman

We live in a special place of fragile beauty which must be protected and defended. Yet, many people who live in New Mexico and West Texas do not see the beauty or understand how easy it is to irreparably damage this place.

The Rio Grande Chapter has over 5000 members. Many of us have joined because we believe that we must stop those human activities that squander the earth's resources and pollute the air and water, leaving our children a place which has lost its beauty and its ability to nurture life. Our involvement in the Club ranges from those of us who pay dues and read about the conservation issues and activities described in the *Sierra* or *Sierra Magazine* to a few of us who dedicate many hours working as volunteers to influence events and make change happen.

Club Self-Examination

During much of 1994, the Sierra Club has been going through a process of self-examination. We have been making changes in the organization to increase its effectiveness while living within our means. So far the changes have been primarily at the National level, but it is time for us to begin our own self examination.

To initiate this self-examination, I'd like to suggest some ways to invigorate, activate and mobilize ourselves to a greater level of effort than ever before because the stakes are higher and the resource users and polluters are stronger than ever before.

We must imagine an organization which enables more Sierrans to be more active--an organization that helps them to gather together to meet to share ideas and receive training about how to organize and formulate action plans to protect and defend our special places. We must enable Sierrans to know other Sierrans who live near them. We must use all forms of communication, especially electronic, because of the large distances which separate us. We must act locally and make a collection of local actions combine into a powerful wave.

We must focus on nurturing and enlarging the numbers of activists and volunteers throughout the region and on giving everyone who is willing to contribute their time and effort something useful to do. We need to become more effective in getting more peo-

ple involved in major campaigns and initiatives. We need to find letter writers and phone callers and give them ideas about who to call or write to and what to say. We need to educate ourselves and others. We need to communicate effectively and persuasively. We must be missionaries!

Re-examine Groups

We need to re-examine the way we are separated into the four groups. We can begin by realizing that an "Albuquerque Group" which includes Grants and Santa Rosa and meets in Albuquerque cannot address the concerns of those faraway communities. We can encourage "Gatherings" in communities throughout the area. New Mexico has 99 recognized communities, so it is easy to imagine 12 or 15 Gathering Places. A Gathering can be even 2 or 3 Sierrans who want to do more for the environment.

I am making a personal commitment to work with any Sierran anywhere in the region to organize a local Gathering. I will come and bring others to listen to your special local issues and concerns and to share broader regional concerns. (Often these will be parallel.) Together we will make plans, discuss actions and seek volunteers.

Electronic Sierra Club

Meanwhile, computerized Sierrans can become activists in the Electronic Sierra Club, via E-Mail. We are working to develop ways to use this powerful form of communication effectively for Electronic Gatherings, Issue Forums and Alerts. (See article on page 10.) We hope to make information on Club policies available to the public, offer education and convince more people to share our values.

The National Sierra Club already has an E-Mail system in place to send messages from the offices in San Francisco and Washington, DC to the Chapters so we can all speak together on National issues. They let us know when to write letters or send faxes and E-Mail messages to Congress. They write model press releases to help us communicate with the media. We need to develop a system to spread this information to more members rapidly and effectively.

Do you have other ideas about how to invigorate, activate and mobilize our mem-

bers? That's great.....tell me what you think. We need to begin a healthy and constructive debate that results in a stronger revitalized Sierra Club with many activists working hard to preserve the places we love.

Note: Plans are already being made for Gatherings in Tijeras and Gallup. To organize a Gathering in your area, contact Susan Gorman, 2226B Wyoming NE #272, Albuquerque, NM 87112, TEL 505-265-3231, FAX 505-256-0373, E-Mail bblairb@aol.com.

*Join Rio Grande
Underwriters and Assure
Our Continued Activity
in New Mexico and West
Texas*

What do Tom Brasfield, Blair Brown, Doug Fraser, Vicki Gabin, Susan Gorman, George Grossman, Barbara Johnson, Sue McIntosh, Jana Oyler, Ford Robbins, Mike Seidensticker, Gwen Wardwell and Ben Zerbey have in common?

They have joined the Rio Grande Underwriters, by pledging monthly financial support to the Chapter, and have agreed to encourage at least two of their friends to do the same.

Through their generous monthly contribution, in addition to the many other contributions they make to the Chapter, these Underwriters are assuring that the Chapter can continue its presence in New Mexico and West Texas with a dependable funding source.

Interested in joining this elite group? Call Ford Robbins (505/466-7665) for details on how you, too, can become a Rio Grande Underwriter.

*Call 1-800-742-2662 and
get your very own copy of
the Republicans' "Contract
'On' America" and find out
what we need to fight.*

Wildlife and Development in New Mexico

by Robert Harrison, Biology Department, University of New Mexico

New Mexico is currently experiencing a tidal wave of development. One need not have lived here long to notice the rapid increase in the numbers of houses and subdivisions, especially in the vicinities of Albuquerque and Santa Fe. To those of us, including myself, who love undisturbed landscapes and value the beauty and serenity of wilderness, housing development is a disgusting, sickening, and disheartening sight. Clearly the aesthetics of an undisturbed landscape are severely reduced as soon as houses appear. It would seem that developed areas have no value for wildlife either, but that is not always true. Properly done, housing development does not have to mean loss of native species or total disturbance of natural communities. Whether or not and under what circumstances development and wildlife can coexist is a gray, cloudy, and largely unexplored subject. From two years of studying gray foxes in a rural residential area, I can offer some insights.

90% Want Wildlife

From a survey of over 1400 homeowners in my study area of Tijeras and Cedar Crest (known as the East Mountain Area, or EMA), I learned that over 90% wanted wildlife in their neighborhoods. In general, both homeowners and developers were quite interested to learn what they could do to keep wildlife in their neighborhoods. People who move into the EMA often do so in order to be closer to nature. This attitude offers genuine encouragement that rural housing development may be moderated or even eventually regulated enough to allow permanent coexistence with wildlife. This is known as **sustainable development** and is a very popular subject among conservation biologists. Below I offer some specific suggestions for ways that this can be achieved, but first we must be clear about the limitations of sustainable development.

First and foremost, there is no substitute for undeveloped, undisturbed natural habitat. But given the difficulty of stopping development on private land, we can strive to reduce its impact. The goal of biologists studying sustainable development is not to find a way to mollify environmentalists in order get on with development, but rather to reduce the impact of development. The idea is to lock in those land uses which are least harmful to

wildlife and to give residents a reason to resist further changes. In this sense, rural residential development, while certainly not an ideal solution for wildlife, is better than urban, agricultural, or industrial development. For example, once an area is developed for residential use, it is less likely that the lots will be subdivided further. Human residents of the area may then take it upon themselves to prevent further degradation of the area out of self-interest. If the original lot size was large enough to accommodate wildlife and the habitat was not destroyed, then losses should be relatively minimal. But there are still plenty of problems.

In general, both homeowners and developers were quite interested to learn what they could do to keep wildlife in their neighborhoods. People who move into the EMA often do so in order to be closer to nature. This attitude offers genuine encouragement that rural housing development may be moderated or even eventually regulated enough to allow permanent coexistence with wildlife.

Endangered Species

Special consideration must be given to endangered species. In general, those species which are able to survive in close proximity of humans are not endangered. It is species which cannot tolerate humans or human-driven habitat changes that are endangered. We must also be very careful that embracing sustainable development does not push additional species over the edge. Unfortunately, our current knowledge of how much habitat loss a given species can tolerate is pitifully limited.

Sustainable residential development is particularly difficult for those species which

occasionally attack humans, such as mountain lions, tigers, and bears (oh my!). People can and do live in close proximity to such species, but permanent, peaceful coexistence requires effort on the part of humans. We must educate ourselves and others about the needs and habits of such species, be more vigilant, especially when children are present, and prevent access to human food sources, such as garbage. To what extent people are willing to make these extra efforts on a permanent basis is basically unknown, although it was very encouraging that, in a short period, 600 residents of the EMA recently signed a petition protesting the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish's policy of trapping and removing bears in their area.

Recommendations

With these limitations in mind, here are some recommendations for sustainable housing development:

--Prior to development, an **endangered species survey should be done**. This is especially important for large tracts of previously undisturbed land. In some cases, development can proceed after proper measures have been taken.

--**Keep lot sizes large**. This is the most difficult issue because it directly affects the profitability of development.

In my fox research, I found that the foxes avoided areas with housing densities greater than one house per three acres. We need this type of information for many more species.

--**Destroy as little habitat as possible**. When building a house, put the house in the trees, rather than clearing an area and then planting new trees. Doing so reduces losses of the innumerable small species that are present.

--**Make roads windy** in order to slow traffic down and reduce road kills.

--**Look for critical travel paths for animals and avoid blocking them with houses**. Where paths cross roads, provide culverts for animals to cross under the roads.

--**Provide corridors linking undeveloped areas** so that populations in those areas are linked.

--**Strictly control dogs and cats**. Both can wreak havoc in the immediate area of their homes.

(con't on page 29)

Docent Program Helps National Forest Service

Several Sierra Club members have volunteered for the American Bicycle and Cycling Museum Project's Docent Program with the National Forest Service, which began because budget cuts have made it difficult for the Forest Service to find staff to facilitate volunteers.

The Docent Program is based on the docent programs than many museums have, but it is unique in that it incorporates volunteers in a new way.

The Pilot Project started with 5 Docents on mountain bikes for 3 months, August, September, and October. Each Docent was assigned 1-2 trails within the Espanola Ranger District of the National Forest. Each Docent agreed to ride his or her assigned trail a minimum of twice a month. Each Docent wore a special vest with a patch identifying them as a volunteer of the National Forest.

The Docent's primary responsibility is to serve as an information source to all other trail users, although particular problems with trails or mis-use of trails are reported to the proper authority. The Docents are not involved with any sort of law enforcement, and they do not assume any role of authority while on the trails.

Each Docent filled out a short Trail Report at the end of each ride, documenting the number of other trail users encountered and the type of questions asked. This information was funnelled back to the Ranger's District.

The Forest Service has approved an expansion of this program for 1995, up to 35 miles of trails with 10 Docents. It is hoped that these volunteers will eventually become involved with organizing trail maintenance for their specific trails and will serve as a liaison between the National Forest Service and the general public.

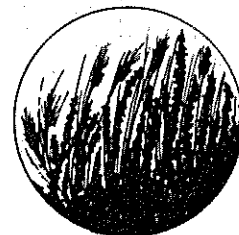
According to Jeffrey Della Penna, Founder of the Bicycle Museum, "We have already proven that the Docent Program is very easy for the Forest Service to maintain and, at the same time, it has been a valuable resource for them. The program is not only

Wildlife and Development

(con't from page 28)

--**Utilize natural water drainage patterns to preserve or create wetlands**. If properly constructed, these areas can harbor a surprising number of plant and animal species and provide greatly improved aesthetics. They are especially good for endangered plants.

At this point, we need to present these ideas to developers and prospective home buyers and to establish the principle of sustainable development for wildlife in county development plans. Based on the attitudes that I encountered in the EMA, we can be cautiously optimistic that we can reduce the impact of rural residential development.



extremely cost and time effective, but incredibly easy to implement and maintain. With the Docent Program, all that's needed is one person to step forward with the desire to be of service. This program provides the opportunity for volunteers to immediately make a difference."

Sierra Club members will be monitoring their trails on foot, which will allow them to reach areas which mountain bikers cannot. Anyone interested in volunteering may call Jeff Della Penna at (505) 989-7634.

News from Sierra Club Books:

Savage Dreams: A Journey Into the Hidden Wars of the American West

by Rebecca Solnit

In 1851, a war began in what would become Yosemite National Park, a war against the indigenous inhabitants that has yet to come to a real conclusion. A century later—1951—and about a hundred and fifty miles away as the crow flies, another war began when the U.S. government started setting off nuclear bombs at the Nevada Test Site, in what was called a nuclear testing program but which functioned as a war against the land and people of the Great Basin. *Savage Dreams* is an exploration of these two landscapes, the arid and forbidden expanse of the Nevada Test Site, the celebrated, crowded landscape of Yosemite National Park. Together, they serve as our national Eden and Armageddon, though their real histories complicate the meanings of such mythical places.

Written as a travel book by an art historian and environmental activist, it describes her own growing realization that the West as presented in popular history, paintings, monuments, and parks leaves out many crucial elements. Her book brings together many themes and narratives in an examination of what it means to be living in the American West, and how our beliefs about nature have shaped the fate of these places. These two federally managed landscapes offer up a lot of the history of the West, not only in terms of Indian and environmental wars, but in terms of the relationship between culture—the generation of beliefs and views—and its implementation as politics.

Savage Dreams is a story about civil disobedience, landscape painting and photography, Indian wars, place names, Henry David Thoreau, many heroines, a few conquistadors, Adam and Eve in and out of Paradise, physicists, country music, nuclear fallout, gardens, storytelling, walking, traveling, home, and friendship.

Born in 1961, Rebecca Solnit studied history and literature in San Francisco and Paris, then took a Master's Degree in Journalism from U.C. Berkeley in 1984. She has worked as an art critic, historian, and journalist, as well as an environmental and social justice activist. Much of her recent activism has been centered in Nevada, with work against nuclear testing and in the Western Shoshone land rights struggle.

The Rio Grande Chapter has 30 copies of this book at \$22 each, for those of you who are interested. Contact Gwen Wardwell at (505) 438-3060.

Ski Report

By John Turnbull

Snow. Two months ago, I commented that winter was on its way, and that snow tends to be more predictable in the northern reaches of New Mexico. Both have proven correct, but with a difference: all of the snow is above 9,000'. The Santa Fe Ski Area opened with 98% of runs usable, and the best snow for November in recent memory. Similarly for the Nordic (cross-country) skiers, the hills above 9,000' at both Cumbres Pass, above Chama, and west of Tres Piedras, were already well-covered in November. As of mid-December there is about three to four feet of loose powder at both locations, and the skiing is truly marvelous!

Elsewhere, there hasn't been more than a sprinkling of snow since the beginning of December. Snow-wise, the Jemez Mountains as of mid-December are marginal. Lots of grass showing through. Above Los Alamos, north-facing slopes have about eight inches of loose, dry snow: enough to carefully navigate around on. The area in the Sangre de Cristos, near U.S. Hill and Amole Canyon, usually a high-snowfall area, is surprisingly thin, due partly to a freak rainfall. In the Sandia Mountains things also are sparse, and frequently icy, though at the top there is enough to ski on. Down south, according to reports, things aren't any better. The rule, at least for the past month, is: "Over 9,000'." Below that altitude you'll probably be hitting rocks and scratching skis. The nice thing about this year, so far, is that the roads typically are dry and there's little chance of getting stuck. The best of both worlds--almost.

Ski Classes. The first round of Sierra Club ski classes finished in Santa Fe on 18 December, ranking as some of the best ever, not only in numbers but in enthusiasm. About 34 people attended the indoor equipment class. The Saturday outdoor class near Los Alamos attracted a total of 22; a number that would have been unmanageable except for the able assistance of National Ski Patrol member Gordon Spencer of Los Alamos. All of the participants were enthusiastic and eager to learn--and did. On Sunday, 21 people, including two intrepid carloads from Albuquerque, joined the beginners' tour, intended to reinforce and refine skills in backcountry conditions. We traveled to the vicinity of Hopewell Lake, near Tres Piedras, and found three feet of fluffy snow. The weather was

perfect; the scenery was beautiful; and the hills were lots of fun. Even the snowmobilers we met were unusually courteous.

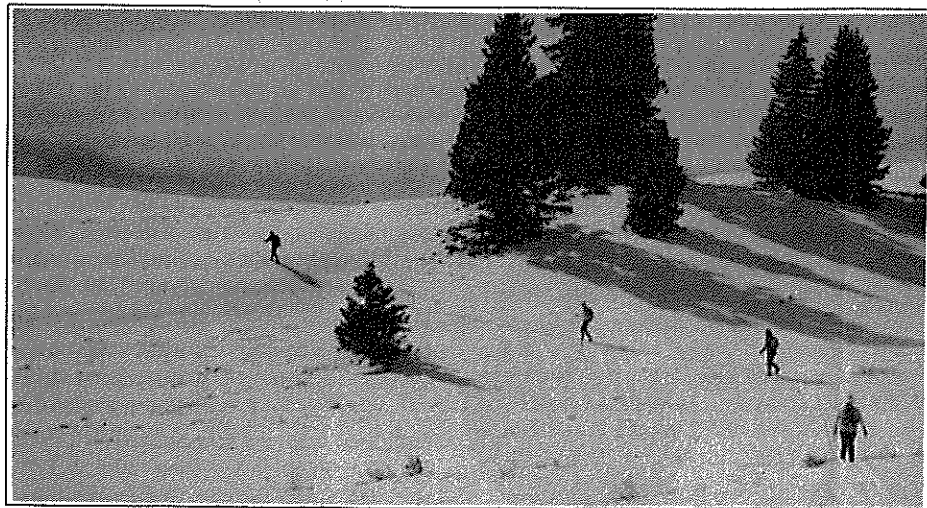
Buying Boots. What you have on your feet is critical to how well you ski the unbroken snow of the backcountry, where most Sierra Clubbers want to go. A couple of years ago, I did an article on boots, and since that time a lot has changed. First, the venerable 75mm 3-pin binding in the intermediate and light weights has, regrettably, all but disappeared from larger retail shops. It's still the hottest thing going at ski swaps, which says something. The "Old Reliable" 3-pin still dominates in the heavier touring boots, but in the more affordable intermediate weights has been largely supplanted by the patented boot-binding systems. For backcountry use, these are either the NNN-BC system (which still has its bugs), or the new Salomon "Country" system (with which few, as of now, have any experience). Besides coping with the new binding gadgetry, their comparatively greater cost, and the exasperating and costly incompatibility problems they present, shopping is further confused by a welter of new and unfamiliar boot model designations, and the perennial headache of sales personnel lacking first-hand experience. Healthy skepticism and prudence are in order.

The functional criteria for backcountry boots still is torsional rigidity: the stiffness and resistance of the sole to twisting; and ankle support: the stiffness of the boot around the ankle. Stiff boots keep the skis going where you want them to go. With a soft boot, the ski goes where it wants to go, and the result is fairly predictable. As a generaliza-

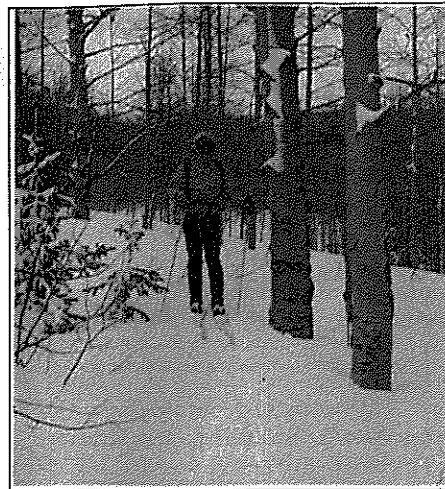
tion, if the boot is selling for less than about \$120, it's probably not suitable for serious backcountry skiing.

Backcountry Skis. For the hard-core mountaineer and Telemarker (collectively known in the business as "Granola-heads") things are better than ever. The models today are nothing short of marvelous, and though price in the \$240 to \$340 range, even the dedicated beginner should consider them. Most require boots of considerable stiffness, in the \$200 to \$300 range to handle them. Equipment in this class lasts. The dedicated skier, willing to spend the \$\$\$ can reasonably consider these items lifetime investments. In this class there is a big selection.

In the less expensive entry level category, finding skis wide enough to provide flotation in loose Rocky Mountain snow has been a constant problem. People lucky enough to own wide, 60+ mm skis rarely let go of them (mine are late 1970s vintage). Last year Peltonen introduced its extra-wide "Eagle" model, an attractive ski in many ways and inexpensive as well. This year, mass-market specialist Karhu has introduced a couple of extra wide models: The "Escape" (also labeled "Pathfinder"), similar to the Peltonen model, and the "Catamount," a steel-edged wonder 85 mm wide at the tip. All is not clover, however, because these models come in only two or three lengths (compared to the traditional eight lengths) to accommodate everybody from 85 lb. to 300 lb. As attractive as these wide skis are, many buyers will find the limited choice of lengths and flexes problematic. Again, caution is in order, and impartial expert assistance in fitting these



An early November Sierra Club ski trip on Cumbres Pass



Winter scene at Hopewell Lake, near Tres Piedras

skis is essential. There are alternatives, fortunately, in the more traditional models offered by several manufacturers. Those attending the Sierra Club classes in early January will learn about all this.

Thinking About Winter. It didn't really begin officially until the winter solstice on 22 December. As a result of the earth's axis tipping relative to the sun, the amount of solar energy hitting the surface decreases, and temperatures cool. Vapor, condensing and falling back to earth as liquid water during most of the year, becomes a shower of solid, crystalline dust, or snow. Snow accumulates on much of the earth's surface and in the northern latitudes the frozen accumulation makes the earth inhospitable to most life. Human beings (and their recognizable ancestors) have been on earth for about three million years. They inhabited these northern latitudes only 10,000 years ago, when they invented skis to travel on top of the snow accumulation.

In another 10,000 years or less, the earth probably will enter another Ice Age. By that time, most of the resource base upon which high technology exists, including all non-renewable fuels, will be gone, and societies will be predominantly agrarian. Provided human beings haven't done themselves in, historians of that future age may think of skis as among the most significant and enduring inventions of all time.

(The author is a former chair of the Santa Fe Group, a long-time Nordic instructor, a member of both the Professional Ski Instructors of America and the U.S. Amateur Ski Instructors' Association, and a Regional Staff Editor of NordicWest Magazine, published in Bend, Oregon.)

Trip Report

PILGRIMS WITH SKIS

by Georgia Jannuzzi



The hale and hearty along with the meek and mild from Los Alamos, Santa Fe, Albuquerque and El Paso congregated in Taos starting on Thanksgiving Day for fun of all sorts. Nine in all and the yellow four-footed mascot. (After all we needed at least one couch potato.) Seven took off for the ski lifts and lessons, two and mascot went to Taos Pueblo and downtown Taos. Everyone met for the buffet dinner at the Quality Inn where we all stayed. If you went away hungry it was your own fault. The stories of the day were fun (almost as bad as those fishermen stories I've heard in the past) and plentiful. We were then joined by two more latecomers bringing our number to 11. A little hot tubbing after the extreme quantities of food was an excellent way to end an already delightful day.

Friday, the downhill folks skied, some taking lessons, while the x-country folks went scouting trails in the area, as more folks were to join us on Saturday for a x-country trek. It was decided that a trek to Williams Lake seemed like the place to go. A bit of comradery for lunch together in the cafeteria below Al's run brought the group in touch with each other daily to make plans for the evenings. The fireplace at the Rathskeller below the run was found to be an excellent place to warm up and meet some of the folks who had also come to ski, watch, relax or just hang out.

The group got together Friday evening in our own Hospitality Room for food, beverage, gossip of the day and games. We had put a message board on the outside of the door with our own Sierra Club Logo and it was always fun to look to see what messages were left, including people who just wanted to say Hi. Even the maintenance man and Security joined us. Then there was this hot tub again. It says it holds 12 folks, I'm still not convinced of that as we made the water overflow that night without 12 people in it.

Saturday morning, the last members of the group appeared now making a total of 13. After breakfast, the downhill diehards went their way, we x-country type headed up the mountain to Williams Lake. We got our workout for the day. It started out just putting on chains to get to the starting point,

and it was a good feeling when we returned, knowing what we had traversed, including the last run of the day. Two of us were sure the river was going to give us a bath on the last run down, but we persisted in not taking a cold dunking. Boy, what a great incentive plan that is to stay on the area you belong in.

The day group headed back south after a stop at the Hospitality Room for some warmth, food and beverage as it was blowing snow on and off by this time. (Fresh snow for the next day.) A bit of hot tubbing, then on to a place called Eske's A Brew Pub in town where a young man from England with a guitar and harmonica did a good job of entertaining us. On the way back to the motel, it was nice to see some of the lights and farolitos making the occasion even more festive.

Sunday, our last day, meant packing and goodbyes as not everyone would see each other again for the rest of the day. When you spend a lot of time together, the goodbyes get a bit harder each time. The diehard downhill folks went for their last spin on the slopes, the x-country folks went on to Tres Piedras only 27 miles away, and into some virgin 2-1/2 to 3 foot snow. We were very proud of ourselves when we found the markers we had tied to the trees last summer to mark trails for this winter's snow escapades.

We're terribly sorry you couldn't join us. Maybe next time we'll see you there too.

THE SKI NETWORK WORKS

by Will Richardson

On November 6, the first impromptu ski trip by 5 Albuquerque and Santa Fe members, to Cumbres Pass, turned out to be a huge success. The weather was wonderful, the scenery breathtaking, the trail challenging. By the end of the day, there was a total elevation change of 3,900 feet. The snow was terrific, the cheese, wine and crackers at lunch to celebrate the first trip of the year, were scrumptious. Come join us for the next one. Call anyone from the Ski Committee if you think you might be interested in going cross-country skiing.