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*An Evening Slide Show with Martin Gray*

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1993

# RIO GRANDE SIERRAN

Environmental News of New Mexico and West Texas

## Fear and Loathing at the Pyramid

By Patricia Wolff, Chapter Wildlife Chair

THE RANCHING INDUSTRY turned out in full force for a public hearing on public land grazing issues May 6 at the Pyramid Holiday Inn in Albuquerque. Hundreds were there to protect their subsidies and their way of life. Along with the public land ranchers themselves were the Animal Damage Control agents, the wise-abuse allies—People for the West and the Coalition of Counties—and the political frontmen, from Governor King on down.

Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt conducted the hearing with hopes that he would find reasonable ranchers who could help build consensus and support for reforming federal grazing policies. What he found instead was total intransigence by an industry that would rather die than change.

Babbitt had held hearings on this issue in Bozeman, Grand Junction and Reno, but never before had he seen such division, such polarization, such fear and loathing.

The belief that the ranching industry in the Southwest is dominated by ideologues and extremists was confirmed for all to see at the May 6 hearing. Over and over again, representatives of the industry demanded that ownership of federal land in the West be transferred to ranchers, and each time these radical demands were met with thunderous applause.

According to many who testified at the hearing, there are two groups in the world. First and foremost, there are ranchers who believe in God, freedom, and man's dominion over nature. And then there are the "enviros;" the pagan

nature-worshippers who seek to destroy America.

There were claims that rangeland is in better condition than ever before, and that wildlife is thriving, thanks to ranchers, even though countless scientific and government reports have documented just the opposite. A 1990 report by the Environmental Protection Agency concluded that many western riparian areas are in their "worst shape in history." There were also claims that higher grazing fees would destroy rural communities and "put the little guy out of business," even though General Accounting Office studies have shown that most public land grazing permittees are

*continued on page 11*

## Interfaith Hearings on Toxic Poisoning in Communities of Color

by Glenda P. House, Southwest Technology and Research Assocs.

EARTH IS A LIVING PLANET FACING DEATH. As humans, we are all participants in a system that is engaged in the business of poisoning the land, the water, the air, destroying whole ecosystems and habitats, causing the mass extinctions of species. Some humans benefit from this system, while others fall prey to it and die. The Interfaith Hearings on Toxic Poisoning in Communities of Color held by the Southwest Organizing Project (SWOP) on April 3, 1993, in Albuquerque, New Mexico, focused on this fact: in the land of the free, people of color pay disproportionately—in the currency of

our lives, our culture, our souls.

The testimony presented at the hearings is emotional and heart-rending. Many of us in the audience have tears in our eyes as we listen to a woman worker describe ailments caused by hazardous workplace chemicals. Thirteen religious leaders, twelve representing Christian faiths, and one Jewish woman rabbi, sit in a semicircle, listen, and take notes while the testimonies are presented. Later, all of them promise to work with their congregations to try and redress the wrongs they have

*continued on page 8*

### Sierra Club Group News:

**Albuquerque: pages 12-14**  
*Keeping the water in the river: instream flow protection in New Mexico. Mon., June 21, 7:30 PM, UNM Law School, Room 2402.*

**El Paso: pages 15-17**  
*Impact of population growth and industry on plants and animal life on the Rio Grande. Wed. June 30, 7:30 PM, St. Paul's Methodist Church, 7000 Edgemere*

**Santa Fe: pages 18-20**  
*Summer Solstice Poiluck Plenic, 945 Camino de Chelly, Sat., June 19, 6 PM.*

**Southern NM: pages 21-23**

## RIO GRANDE SIERRAN

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## LETTERS

To the Editor:

The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, under the direction of Mr. Fernin Chavez, is scheduled to destroy a historical ditch and the environment by installing a 42-inch diameter plastic culvert for a length of 1.6 miles in northern New Mexico.

The ditch (Acequia de la Sierra) was constructed in the early 1700s by pick and shovel high in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains (10,000 feet in elevation) to bring water to the town of Truchas, New Mexico. The achievement in bringing water through a half-dozen miles of precipitous mountain country to homes and fields was a prodigious feat.

The total cost of the Corps' project is over \$800,000. To get to the ditch, a road needs to be built through the forest by cutting evergreen trees of many species and cutting many of the trees along the ditch. The stated reason for the project is to save water because of seepage and to eliminate maintenance.

The ditch has been serving the people of Truchas for over 200 years with very little maintenance. Once a year in the spring, the people clean and repair it with pick and shovel, which provides work for a lot of the young folks. There is no guarantee that the plastic culvert will last 25, 50, or 200 years. It's a waste of taxpayers' money and the environment.

The ditch is a SYMBOL of all the things that give sweetness to Truchas life—the purity of its air, the hearty generosity of its people, the poetry in their collective soul. I am begging you to stop this unnecessary project.

Luis H. Sandoval  
Chimayó, New Mexico

## NEWS SUMMARY

Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt conducted a grazing hearing at Albuquerque's Pyramid Holiday Inn, hoping to find reasonable ranchers who could help build consensus and support for reforming federal grazing policies. What he found instead was total intransigence by an industry that would rather die than change. There were claims that higher grazing fees would destroy rural communities and "put the little guy out of business," even though General Accounting Office studies have shown that most public land grazing permittees are large operators. .... **Pages 1 and 12.**

As humans, we are all participants in a system that is engaged in the business of poisoning the land, the water, the air, destroying whole ecosystems and habitats, causing the mass extinctions of species. Some humans benefit from this system. In the land of the free, people of color pay disproportionately—in the currency of their lives, their culture, their souls. .... **Page 1.**

The US Army and the Defense Nuclear Agency developed an Environmental Assessment for a Large Blast Thermal Simulator (LBTS). The environmental effects of operation of the LBTS include air blast over-pressures, noise, and the release of clouds of alumina into the atmosphere. .... **Page 4.**

Despite its lofty title the "Hardrock Mining Reform Act of 1993" backed by the mining industry would not significantly reform the 120-year-old federal mining law. S. 775, approved on May 6 by the U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, would reaffirm the industry's existing privileged superiority on the use of western public lands. .... **Page 6.**

Citizens organized to oppose a medical waste incinerator which EcoLogics was trying to locate in Cibola County. .... **Page 7.**

## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Recent format changes in the *Rio Grande Sierran* reflect some of the points I picked up at the national Sierra Club newsletter editors' conference in April. Because I also attend Sierra Club Council meetings as the delegate of the Rio Grande chapter, I wasn't able to fully implement the changes until this month. (For an explanation of the functions of the council, as well as the workings of chapters, groups and the national organization, see the article on page 5.)

The conference gave me a perspective on the decision we made two years ago to consolidate the monthly group newsletters and quarterly chapter newsletter into one monthly chapter newsletter. This makes the *Rio Grande Sierran* more costly to publish than most other chapter newsletters, but overall the chapter saves money by not publishing five newsletters.

Our chapter is apparently the only one that publishes complete group sections within a monthly chapter newsletter. In the larger California chapters, where groups are community organizations mainly concerned with outings, the group sections in the monthly chapter newsletters are mainly announcements of outings and meetings. Other groups either publish their own newsletters or accept whatever group news appears in quarterly or bimonthly chapter newsletters.

A reminder to contributors: although I referred to the monthly publication schedule, the *Sierran* is actually published 10 times a year. The next issue will be the July-August issue, and anyone missing the June 20 deadline will not see their article in print until September. The group sections will each have an extra page to cover two months of outings.

Marc Bedner  
Editor

## CALENDAR

June 5-6: Chapter Conservation Committee & Executive Committee, Kingston. Ben Zerbey will lead a moderate/strenuous hike to Hillsboro Peak, starting from Emory Pass at 1 PM Fri, June 4. (For hike details, call Ben at 526-6207.)

June 20: deadline for July-August *Sierran*

## WANTED

OLD ORIENTAL RUGS  
AMERICAN INDIAN RUGS  
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Call Michael Andrews (415) 641-1937

## Celebrate the Bisti!

(and help the chapter as well)

**B**ISTI: PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE BADLANDS, an exhibit of 45 photographs by 15 artists, will be on display in Santa Fe from June 8-29, 1993, at the Gallery at the Rep, 1050 Old Pecos Trail.

In October of 1992, a diverse group of people—doctors, dentists, scientists, lawyers, designers and other artists—met in Farmington, New Mexico. They wanted to experience and record the magic that is the Bisti through photography, their common link. All were participants in a workshop sponsored by the Santa Fe Photographic Workshops. The result of their meeting is a collection of photographs that share the magic and spread the word about this unique New Mexican treasure.

Once threatened by mining interests, it is the hope that the exploitation of the Bisti's tangible resources will end and that generations to come will be inspired by and learn from this incredible site. To that end, the photographers of the Bisti have all agreed to donate a portion of the sales of their work to the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club.

Please join us at the exhibition's opening reception on Friday, June 11, from 5-7 PM at the Rep.

Participating artists:

Chris Anderson, Milwaukee, Oregon  
Baron Barnett, Oregon City, Oregon  
Susan Crocker, Santa Fe, New Mexico  
Michael Desjarlais, Albuquerque, New Mexico  
Karl Koenig, Albuquerque, New Mexico  
Stu Levy, Portland, Oregon  
Suzan Phillips, Santa Fe, New Mexico  
Janet Russek, Santa Fe, New Mexico  
John Scanlan, Austin, Texas  
David Scheinbaum, Santa Fe, New Mexico  
Martha Swanson, Santa Fe, New Mexico  
Niels Waehneltd, Vancouver, Washington  
Mark Wainer, Scotts Valley, California  
S. H. (Bud) Watkins, Vancouver, Washington  
Stephen Wolf, Hoboken, New Jersey

Sponsored by the Santa Fe Council for the Arts, with the support of the Santa Fe Photographic Workshops. (For further information, contact Martha Swanson, 505/983-1400 or 988-2049.)

# New Facility for White Sands Missile Range: Large Blast Thermal Simulator

by Marianne Thaeler, Southern NM Group Chair

THE U.S. GOVERNMENT has requirements in its procurement contracts that military systems and equipment be able to survive in a nuclear environment. Although systems and equipment are being purchased, there has been no way to test, and thus verify, if systems and equipment can survive the blast over-pressures and thermal stress of an integrated nuclear battlefield.

The US Army and the Defense Nuclear Agency developed an Environmental Assessment (EA) for a Large Blast Thermal Simulator (LBTS) published in January 1989 for this LBTS test facility. Because of a change in the way power will be provided, a new FONSI is required and has been promised soon. A smaller facility which also includes a Thermal Radiation Source (TRS) has been operational at Kirtland AFB since 1979.

The LBTS has been under construction at Stallion, New Mexico on White Sands Missile Range, for 18 months and should be operational in September 1993. The test section of the LBTS will be 54 meters long, with the unique feature of a seven-meter-deep soil test pit for testing buried structures and for characterizing the properties of various types of soils. Used soil will be moved to a landfill. The Thermal Radiation Source (TRS) will burn fuel composed of powdered aluminum and liquid oxygen. A 1,500 gallon tank will store the liquid oxygen (technically a propellant rather than an explosive) for 30 days of TRS operation. The alumina (aluminum oxide) discharged from the TRS unit into the air is classified as simple dust. A dense white cloud of alumina will be produced when the TRS is operational, about once a week. For a maximum TRS burn of seven seconds, the cloud will contain 532 kg (1,170 pounds) of alumina and would be expected to dissipate in 15 minutes in a five mph

wind. The heat flux from the end of the LBTS tube is estimated to be equivalent to a 20 megawatt radiant source. When a blast/thermal test is executed the LBTS will produce considerable noise. For this reason the LBTS will be oriented toward the south.

Blast over-pressures are produced in the test chamber by the rapid release of heated nitrogen gas from canisters to produce a shock wave. The nitrogen gas is obtained by heating liquid nitrogen with pebble bed heaters on site. These heaters account for about 80-90 percent of the critical power requirements during tests. The peak power requirement for these heaters is estimated to be about 3.6 million watts of power. The heaters will operate on average 6.5 hours per test depending on the type of test.

An EA addendum was prepared, dated November 15, 1992. This addendum was required because the original concept was to purchase the vast amounts of power needed from New Mexico commercial sources. When this became impossible, it was decided to use three diesel powered generators (engines).

Fuel for the diesel engines to produce the power will be stored in an above-ground tank with a 20,000 gallon capacity. Operation of diesel generators for 975 hours per year is estimated to require about 300 thousand gallons of diesel fuel per year. This will increase the use of diesel fuel at White Sands Missile Range (WSMR) by approximately 35-40 percent. Total U.S. consumption of diesel fuel in 1991 was 1.5 million barrels (42 gallons per barrel) or 63 million gallons. Total diesel fuel use at WSMR during 1991 was 824,000 gallons.

Nitrogen oxides are the primary contaminants produced when using diesel engines. When the source operates for 975 hours per year at an average

power of 3.6 million watts, the annual emissions of oxides of nitrogen will be 27-44 tons per year. Cold engine starts are expected to exceed 150 per year.

According to 'Air Quality' Control Regulations any person constructing a stationary source with an emission rate greater than 25 tons per year of regulated air contaminant must have a permit. Any stationary source which emits or has the potential to emit 250 tons per year or more of any regulated pollutant is defined as a major point source emitter. Intermittent operation of diesel engines at the LBTS will not result in a major point emitter under New Mexico air quality regulations.

The life expectancy of the LBTA facility is 30 years. Operation of diesel engines will generate noise levels of 90 DBA to 115 DBA at distances within one meter of the engines.

The environmental effects of operation of the LBTS include air blast over-pressures, noise, and the release of clouds of alumina into the atmosphere. A seven-foot fence around the facility will preclude animals from coming within 1.0 psi over-pressure range where they could be injured. Noise levels that might cause ear injury will be confined to a triangular area just south of the LBTS where no personnel will be permitted but where near-by animals are likely to be disturbed.

The LBTS will need a permit from the New Mexico Air Quality Bureau. The use of such a large portion of the of total U.S. consumption of diesel fuel, leads to questions regarding the overall pricing of fuel.

The LBTS will, for the first time, permit evaluations of the vulnerability and survivability of full-scale military systems exposed to simulated high-yield nuclear weapon blast/thermal outputs.



## The Way It's S'posed to Be

by John Colburn

THE SIERRA CLUB is arguably the largest grassroots environmental organization in the world. No other has the same sort of structure and policy-making procedures that we have, but with more than a half million members scattered through all fifty states, Canada, and several foreign lands, things don't always operate the way they are supposed to.

Here, briefly, is the way it's supposed to work:

The Sierra Club is a California nonprofit corporation with 61 chapters and more than 400 local groups. The chapters are a subset of the national club, and the groups are subsets of their parent chapters. In other words, a group cannot exist without being authorized by the chapter, and the chapter cannot exist without being authorized by the national Sierra Club.

The national club is governed by a Board of Directors (BOD) who are elected by the members by secret ballot. There are fifteen directors, five of whom are elected each year for a three-year term. No director may serve more than two consecutive terms—six years. The directors elect the officers of the club: a president, a vice president, a secretary, a treasurer, and a fifth officer. These offices form the Board Executive Committee.

The BOD sets policies and procedures that govern the entire club and resolves differences between other club entities. They also hire an Executive Director and a staff that conducts the business of the club.

The Sierra Club bylaws provide for a Sierra Club Council which is made up of a delegate from each of the 61 chapters. The Council acts as an advisor to the BOD in administrative matters and, at its semi-annual meetings, acts as a general membership meeting to satisfy California law.

The BOD has set up Regional Conservation Committees (RCC) which coordinate conservation activities among the chapters in a region. [The Rio Grande Chapter, along with the Grand Canyon, Rocky Mountain and Utah Chapters, is in the Southwest Regional Conservation Committee (SWRCC).]

Each chapter is governed by an executive committee (ExCom) consisting of at-large members and delegates from each of the local groups. [In the Rio Grande chapter, the membership elects annually three at-large members for three-year terms, and each of the four group ExComs chooses a representative, so that the chapter ExCom has 13 members.] The chapter ExCom elects the chapter officers: a chair, a vice chair, a secretary, a treasurer, and a Sierra Club Council delegate who must be an at-large member.

The chapter ExCom sets policies and adopts positions for the entire chapter geographic area within the guidelines and positions set by the BOD, the Council, and the RCC. If a proposed chapter policy of position would affect (an) other chapter(s), the ExCom would make recommendations to the RCC or the Council for a regional or national policy or position. The RCC or the Council may pass the recommendation to the BOD for action if necessary.

Each group, in turn, is governed by an ExCom consisting entirely of the members elected at-large by the group membership. The exact number of ExCom members and their terms varies and is set by the group's bylaws. The group ExCom elects the group officers: chair, vice chair, secretary, and treasurer.

Usually the local group can set policies and adopt positions that affect the group and its geographic area within guidelines, policies and positions set by the national Sierra Club and the

chapter. If the desired policy or position affects other groups or areas outside the group's area, recommendations are made to the chapter ExCom for a chapter policy or position or to be passed on up the line for regional or national matters.

As you can imagine, the process can be pretty slow, especially when the chapter ExCom meets quarterly, the RCCs meet three times a year, and the Council meets twice a year, but like the slow-grinding mill-wheel, it grinds exceedingly fine.

However, every once in a while, something goes wrong. When a group or chapter doesn't agree with a policy or procedure, the usual procedure is to appeal the decision to the next governing body up the line: group to chapter, chapter to RCC, etc. If a convincing appeal is made, the policy or position is changed or a recommendation is made by the chapter ExCom to the RCC or Council. If not, an appeal is made to the next body, and eventually up to the Board of Directors. Decisions by the BOD are appealed to the membership as a ballot referendum, but that process gets pretty involved.

Policies and positions have been changed throughout the hundred years the Club has been in existence, and they will be in the future when everyone works the system in good faith. That's the way it's s'posed to work, and that's what's made the Sierra Club the most effective environmental organization.

*Editor's note: John Colburn, a former chair of the Rio Grande Chapter, wrote this article for the Fall 1992 Big Sky Sierran while chair of the Montana Chapter. The article is now a part of the handbook for Sierra Club Council delegates. Chapter references in the original text have been modified to describe the Rio Grande Chapter and to reflect the current number of chapters in the Club.*



## Federal Mining Law Reform:

# Senate Committee Coughs Up A Furrball

by Sue McIntosh

DESPITE ITS LOFTY TITLE the "Hardrock Mining Reform Act of 1993" backed by the mining industry would not significantly reform the 120-year-old federal mining law. S. 775, approved on May 6 by the U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, would reaffirm the industry's existing privileged superiority on the use of western public lands. The bill, sponsored by Senator Larry Craig (R-ID), is only an industry shell which fails to address most of the elements needed for true reform.

The good news is that Committee passage of S. 775 was only part of an overall strategy to achieve mining reform in this Congress. The strategy was designed by Energy Committee Chairman Senator Bennett Johnston (D-LA) who said in a statement at a mining reform hearing that he was passing S. 775 out of the Committee only so that the issue could ultimately be settled in conference committee.

The House is expected to pass a strong, comprehensive reform measure when it acts, later in this Congress. It is important that the measure passed by the House be as strong as possible so that true reform is seriously represented at the House/Senate conference.

The important thing to remember about S. 775 is that it is counterfeit reform and everyone recognizes it as such. The bill does not represent the sense of the Energy Committee, let alone the sense of the Senate or the House. It is nothing more than an empty measure that allows the Senate to shirk its responsibility and punt the ball to folks like Chairman George Miller (D-CA) and New Mexico Congressman Bill Richardson of the key House Natural Resources Committee. Once again, it will be these guys who will have to do the heavy lifting on this issue.

One bright event did emerge from the Senate action in May. Senator Jeff

Bingaman, alone, (not even the mining reform "champion", Senator Dale Bumpers spoke up in defense of true reform) advocated much stronger reform than that represented by S. 775. Senator Bingaman referenced the recently enacted New Mexico Mining Act as providing a guidepost for reclamation and environmental measures that are minimally acceptable to the people of New Mexico. Senator Bingaman reminded the Committee that his state would settle for no law that is less protective on federal public lands than what New Mexico now demands on its private lands.

Mining reform has now passed out of Senator Bingaman's committee and will soon pass out of the full Senate. Yet Senator Bingaman's continued vocal support and advocacy for strong, comprehensive mining reform will be

a critical factor in ensuring that an acceptable reform measure finally emerges from the Congressional process later on. As a western Senator, Bingaman has installed himself in an elite group (actually, its a group of one) of Senators who have the courage to speak out for the protection of the people and resources of their own state, in the face of tremendous pressure from national and local industry groups. Unfortunately the battle is far from over and it is likely to become more heated the closer we get to reform.

The Sierra Club appreciates Senator Bingaman's statements and is hopeful that he, along with congressman Bill Richardson, will follow the lead of the people of New Mexico and work hard to enact true reform of federal mining laws.

## Washington Directory

### US Senators:

#### New Mexico

The Honorable Pete Domenici  
US Senate  
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The Honorable Jeff Bingaman  
US Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

#### Texas

The Honorable Phil Gramm  
US Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bob Krueger  
US Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

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## Incinerators are a Threat to Rural New Mexicans

by Candace Dylla, Bluewater Valley Neighbors Association

OVER A YEAR AGO we citizens of Cibola County organized to oppose a medical waste incinerator which EcoLogics company was trying to locate in our area. Part of our efforts included a petition drive which over 1,400 people signed in support of our cause. That might not sound too impressive in a city like Albuquerque, but we live in a small community. Our group includes miners, business people, farmers and many others you might not expect to find involved in environmental issues. What we all have in common is that we care very much about New Mexico's future. We do not want to see New Mexico become like so many other states which have been unwilling or unable to control their waste.

Operators of incinerators claim that they are recycling plants, describing them with euphemisms such as transformation facility, resource recovery and waste-to-energy. They can do this because steam, which can be used as an energy source, is a byproduct of the process, along with contaminated water and ash.

Incinerators should not be allowed to be call themselves recycling centers. Common sense tells us that the primary purpose of an incinerator is to burn garbage. In fact, incineration discourages recycling because it must compete for the waste in order to make money on a per-pound basis.

Also, when legislation considers exempting "manufacturing facilities that used recycled materials in the production of a new product," this could directly apply to incinerators as well as the McKinley Paper Co. We discussed the paper company at a recent meeting and how it has not had to go through the normal permitting process. Putting this in would guarantee it would not have to be permitted. We feel very strongly that it should go through the permitting process like every other waste processor so the public will have an op-

portunity to understand what is happening in their community and comment if it have an adverse effect on their lives.

At least one incinerator intending to locate in New Mexico has said they intend to use ash from their medical waste incinerator to make bricks and paving stones. This may already be allowed under the current solid waste regulations, even though this may prove to be a health risk in the future.

It will come as no surprise that the waste industry has spent a lot of time and money learning how to make themselves as palatable as possible to the general public. There are some reputable companies in the industry, but we have found that generally they have no problem complying with existing regulations. The incineration industry has hired a Los Angeles consulting firm, Cerrell Associates, to develop a detailed report on how to pick sites for incinerators. Their criteria for the ideal incinerator host community, i.e. a community not likely to resist an incinerator project, include:

- rural
- conservative politically
- above middle age
- high school of less educated
- farming, ranching, mining
- low income
- Catholics
- not involved in social issues
- long time residents

These criteria fit a lot of communities in New Mexico. Communities that often cannot afford to defend themselves from this onslaught by well-financed and, in some cases, unscrupulous companies.

Our experience is a case in fact. The company which wanted to build a medical waste incinerator in Cibola County first tried to slip in quietly. The people would never have known they

were attempting to locate in our area if the solid waste regulations had not required public notification. Many of our local leaders were also caught unaware of what was being proposed, but the solid waste regs did help.

We brought to the attention of the state Environment Department the fact the solid waste regulations required a three mile buffer zone around incinerators and that there were more than 300 people with a 3-mile radius of the proposed site. The company president, George Hensley, told us that would be no problem since the next New Mexico Legislative session would take out that regulation. He state this as though it was a done deal and, not knowing any better at the time, we believed him.

During our investigation of incinerators, we came to realize that the buffer zone is absolutely essential and, in fact, we would recommend extending it to 5 miles based on the many questions still unanswered concerning dioxins and furans. Mr. Hensley also told us that his company was strictly a New Mexico concern. We discovered that they had originally tried to build the incinerator in East Phoenix and then trying to locate in Moriarity and then Grants.

One of the most important components of the Solid Waste Act is the provision for public hearings. This provides a good example of how disastrous it would be to weaken any part of the act. In theory public hearings sound like an opportunity for a community to successfully oppose a company like EcoLogics. In fact, it is only true if the community can come up with enough money. Let me give you an example. Valencia County Concerned Citizens Association will square off against EcoLogics sometime this spring in public hearings to determine whether or not EcoLogics will be al-

*continued on next page*

## Incinerators

continued from previous page

lowed to site their mediate waste incinerator in Valencia County. EcoLogics' president is past president of Eco-Pro, the company which is to net \$8 million in 1993. Without scientific evidence from experts testifying on their behalf, the Valencia County residents' group will have no impact on the Environment Department's decision regarding EcoLogic's permit. To hire experts will cost them up to \$30,000, a great deal of money for a poor community. Now you know why Carrell Associates says it's best to locate an incinerator in low-income areas. Poor

**"Incinerators should not be allowed to be call themselves recycling centers."**

communities, poor states for that matter, are targeted by these types of projects, and the only protection we have is our solid waste and air quality regulations.

Companies like EcoLogic are already taking advantage of current regulations. Those of us will live in neighborhoods that are rural, poor, suffering economically and ethnically diverse are most vulnerable. Any loopholes created would weaken these regulations, and there will be no way for ordinary people in communities all across New Mexico to protect themselves.

*(Editor's note: this article was adopted from testimony originally prepared for the 1993 New Mexico Legislature against bills to weaken the Solid Waste Act. Environmentalists and community groups succeeded in defeating these bills.)*

## Poisoning in Communities of Color

continued from first page

heard, continue the dialogue that has begun, agree to sign a resolution. It is a beginning. Much remains to be done.

In his opening remarks, Michael Guerrero of SWOP underscores the need for the hearings, for the building of a coalition between environmental groups, religious organizations, and those fighting for economic and social justice. "Communities of color and indigenous communities," he says, "are experiencing the worst case scenarios.... Today, we ask that you listen to those in the State of New Mexico who are living these realities, and fighting to change them. And we ask that you consider what you and people within your faiths might do to educate others of these realities.... We do not expect full agreement on all of the issues and views.... nor do we expect to resolve any issues.... We view this activity as one step in an ongoing process of education and understanding."

The first panel of testimonials is four Native Americans who address the issue of sovereignty and the American Indian Religious Freedom Act. Lt. Governor Gilbert Sanchez from the Pueblo of San Ildefonso addresses environmental contamination caused by the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL). The lands of his people are the most directly affected: a highly radioactive waste disposal facility has been built immediately adjacent to the Pueblo's boundaries, and in the center of a sacred area; canyons that once had pure water running in them, that are still used for ceremonial purposes, and that contain the Pueblo's largest production wells, are now contaminated with plutonium, americium, cesium, and tritium. "My whole gene pool sits at the base of LANL," he says. "We could all be wiped out." This is no idle speculation. Reports compiled by the Pueblo Office of Environmental Protection of the All Indian Pueblo Council describe that the types of

wastes buried and stored at Area G in Technical Area 54 of the Los Alamos National Laboratory include those that must be remotely handled by robots, comprising millions of curies of radioactivity. This waste disposal area is situated on Mesita del Buey, a thin finger of fractured rock running next to Cañada del Buey, a canyon that connects with others leading down to the Rio Grande. The area is marked even on USGS topographic maps as a "Sacred Area", Sanchez says, and contains the ruins of a giant Pueblo ceremonial place of worship. These

**"Earth is a living planet facing death."**

wastes stem from the creation of the first nuclear bomb, and its increasingly deadly successors: there is a bitter irony and a twisted logic in the fact that their creation had to have contaminated a sacred area. Lt. Governor Sanchez speaks with little rancor, in a tone of voice that contains pride and determination: in the old days, the warriors went out for battle in paint and with weapons; today, he says, he does battle in a suit and with a briefcase. Governor Walter Dusheno of the Pueblo of Santa Clara also has concerns about the Los Alamos National Laboratory. His Pueblo, along with the Pueblos of San Ildefonso, Jemez, and Cochiti, has signed a recent accord with the Department of Energy to begin independent monitoring of their air, water, and soils. The Laboratory, he says, plans to conduct underground blasts within the sacred Jemez mountains to map their interior. The American Indian Religious Freedom Act lacks the enforcement powers needed to stop such activities. Manuel Montoya of the Pueblo of Sandia speaks of his people's

continued on next page

## Poisoning in Communities of Color

continued from previous page

unsuccessful land claim for the west face of the Sandia mountain, and their struggle with the US Forest Service. John Redhouse of the Navajo Nation summarizes the panel's views: it is impossible to describe five hundred years of genocide in a few minutes: the real claim of the Native American nations to their land and values is spiritual, not simply legal and political.

The next panel deals with the role of extractive industries in New Mexico. Janice Varela talks of the legacy of the Terrero mine, of the dangers faced by her community from mine and mill wastes containing heavy metals, and of the death of ninety thousand trout in their local fish hatchery. Gabe Lucero speaks of the determination and grit of striking workers in Las Vegas, New Mexico, another predominantly Chicano area, where environmental and economic justice were fought for and won, with limited and grudging support from oversight state and federal agencies. Doug Meiklejohn of the New Mexico Environmental Law Center puts the role of extractive industries into perspective: disadvantaged communities do not have the educational skills, the legal and political strengths, to fight permits for mining and other extractive industries, and to prevent the ensuing destruction of their lives. What

kind of community, he asks the audience to guess, would have the surface rights to their land, but not the mineral rights? The answer becomes more obvious as the hearings progress.

The speakers empaneled in the afternoon testify to similar accounts. The panel on problems within the local high-technology industries discusses the disproportionate exposure to toxic chemicals in the "high tech" workplace of women and minority workers. The testimony leaves the audience visibly distraught. Several workers describe their suffering from adverse health effects caused by callous disregard for their safety. Dorothy Morris, for instance, speaks of the lack of ventilation in her work area despite the heated toxic chemicals she constantly worked with. The story of her anguish, pain, and suffering caused by exposure to the toxic substances is retold with only minor variations by the other members of the "high-tech" panel. The lack of infrastructure amongst communities of color is detailed by the next panel. They tell of groundwater contamination, of the lack of adequate sewage systems, and of the State's unwillingness to provide them assistance. This lack of infrastructure is even worse in the border area of the US-Mexico border area. The panel that

talks of issues related to the border area attests to the further degradation of the US-Mexico border area that would be caused by the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Representatives from the US and Mexico share their stories of a common struggle to get safe drinking water, and their fear of contamination. Isabel Santos describes the situation in Sunland Park where the children have suffered hair loss and rashes from suspected environmental problems. NAFTA without adequate environmental safeguards is vehemently opposed by the panelists.

The hearings end on a positive note, despite the testimonies of environmental racism presented by the speakers. The religious leaders pledge their support to the efforts of SWOP. We hope their congregations, too, will listen, take the message to heart, begin to act. Everybody present joins hands and prays for peace and harmony. The woman rabbi trills in proud defiance.

The hearings have ended. Much remains to be done.

*Editor's note: this article was made possible by a Sierra Club Ethnic and Cultural Diversity Committee grant to the Rio Grande Chapter.*

## 1993 Chapter Fund Appeal: Second Round Of Results and Thanks

from Jana Oyler, Chapter Treasurer

The following generous folks have contributed to the Chapter's fund appeal since mid-April and have permitted us to publish their names:

*Gifts to general chapter account:*

William C. Baker and C. Robinson, Albuquerque  
William M. Davies, Santa Fe  
Randy Diner, Albuquerque  
Mr. and Mrs. C. Robert Emigh, Los Alamos  
M. D. McKay, Los Alamos  
Mary W. Parker, Los Alamos  
Thomas and Jean Payne, Albuquerque

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Terry N. Taddeucci, Santa Fe  
Sally S. Venerable, Santa Fe  
Irving L. Webber, Santa Fe

*Gifts to Sierra Club Foundation:*

Joseph and Frances Caldwell, El Paso  
Whitney Laughlin, Placitas  
Norma McCallan, Santa Fe  
Tim Smith, El Prado  
Dyanna Taylor, Santa Fe

We are still far short of our fundraising goals for 1993. If you can help, we urge you to do so. Please send a check payable to "Rio Grande Chapter of Sierra Club" (not tax-deductible; funds the Chapter's conservation projects) or to "Sierra Club Foundation" (tax-deductible to extent allowed by law; used for environmental education) to:

Jana Oyler, Treasurer  
Route 19, Box 120-KO  
Santa Fe, NM 87505.

# Southwestern Views of Renewables

by Jane Hotchkiss, energy consultant, and Ken Hughes, Chapter Energy Chair

**I**NCREASING THE USE of renewable power throughout the Southwest was the focus of recent conferences held in Boulder and in Santa Fe.

Environmental activists, attorneys and policy advocates met in Boulder in late February to outline commonalities in Southwest states, focusing on the economic benefits of renewable fuels such as solar, wind and geothermal energy. If this loose coalition has its way, the Southwest may take center stage with a bold vision that embraces renewable energy despite no immediate need for new power plants and the region's historic dependence on coal, oil and gas plants.

The underlying theme of the Boulder meeting was the devastating impact that poor energy choices are having on the environment of the Southwest. Discussion focused on three ways to affect change:

- Identify the opposition to renewable advancement and point out policies lacking renewables as a result of faulty planning
- Identify avenues for public and political education, such as a published vision piece, regional conferences and state regulatory and legislative proceedings.
- Identify steps necessary to organize this effort.

Bruce Driver of the Law and Water Fund of the Rockies and former Colorado Public Utilities Commissioner Ron Lehr outlined basic avenues available to advancing renewables in the Southwest through regulatory arenas. The Integrated Resource Management approach (see May *Sierran*) is seen as particularly useful.

Chris Shaver described overlapping environmental air quality issues that states in the Southwest share. She also spoke about the synergy between advance renewables and the Grand Canyon Commission's work on visibility

issues (the Southwest has in places lost 50 percent of its visibility).

Charles Bensinger outlined a solar-for-coal retrofit plan with environmental economic advancement opportunities for Native Americans in New Mexico and Arizona. Ken Hughes gave an update on the fight to stop the OLE powerline and utilities' struggle to grapple with the movement for retail wheeling.

What do environmental activists see as the key to renewable progress in the Southwest? The practical answer may be projects which have the backing of an organized public as well as technical and regulatory support. The real key, however, lies in organizing this discussion into a coordinated effort.

## Why Renewables? Why Now?

On May 15 and 16, momentum continued with a conference entitled "Why Renewables? Why Now?" Hosted by Center for Resource Management, chaired by Stewart Udall, the conference was the first in a series of steps in developing a shared vision by various interests—regulators, utilities, environmentalists, renewable energy companies, and government policy makers and researchers—on renewable energy.

BLM Commissioner Jim Baca promised a salient role by the Clinton Administration in pursuing renewable energy in a variety of settings, including on public lands. Navajo President Peterson Zah argued that we "should concentrate on what nature has to offer" and admitted the downside to overreliance on coal: "what we're doing is going to be our downfall."

Charles Imbrecht, head of the California Energy Commission, also suggested a Western Energy Development Assistance for Renewable Energy, or WE DARE, a process leading to a re-

gional renewable energy plan for the Western states.

Points raised at the conference include:

- We need to understand the need for, and environmental benefits of, renewables. Successful acceptance of renewable projects will depend on the participation of all affected constituencies.

- Renewables must compete with fossil fuels, not with conservation.

- Green pricing received some support as one way to allow the public the option to implement renewables' use. Senator Jeff Bingaman expressed support for government purchases of renewable generated power, or "green purchasing."

- Renewables cannot be considered monolithically. Some are cost effective now, some are not. However, as environmental externalities are added to the cost of fossil fuels, along with fuel price risk and need to diversify fuel portfolio, the amount and range of renewables shown to be cost effective expands rapidly.

- A portfolio approach to energy sources, with shared risks/rewards, is far better than exhausting single energy "monocultures."

The Santa Fe conference ended with moral suasion from Hopi Chairman Vernon Masayesva, who argued that responsible people must act responsibly and that the U.S. can only be moral leaders if it practices energy stewardship. He related that when the Hopi's clown kachina ceremony features owls, it's a signal that it's time to get our house in order. "We have no choice but to pursue renewables. There is only so much clean air, clear water, fossil fuels. We must act not only for present customers but for our children, their children, and their children's children. Today begins a journey toward sustainable energy use."

## Fear and Loathing *continued from first page*

large operators. Perhaps that explained the large number of cadillacs and \$40,000 four-wheel-drive trucks sporting anti-environmentalist bumperstickers in the parking lot. During my testimony, I asked why taxpayers should be subsidizing multi-millionaire beef barons like Bruce King, but there was no answer.

The 100 or so environmentalists who attended were outnumbered 8-to-1 by the ranching interests, primarily because the hearing was held on a Thursday, which prevented many average working people from attending. As a result, Babbitt never got to hear from many people concerned about tax subsidies that promote the destruction of public lands or from those whose businesses are impacted by the effects of overgrazing or from ordinary public land users who prefer wilderness and wildlife over cow pies, polluted streams and trashed meadows.

Many of us who did get a chance to testify were booed and heckled during

our two minutes at the mike. More heckles and obscene gestures came from passers-by in muscle trucks when we staged our "rally for reform" outside the Pyramid at noon. To keep the peace, dozens of uniformed and plain-clothed law enforcement agents were on hand, along with the Albuquerque mounted police and K-9 units. Who they were protecting wasn't clear.

Another hearing on public land grazing issues will be held in the fall, Babbitt said, after specific reform proposals are fleshed out. In the meantime, letters to Babbitt are urgently needed. Write to: Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C St. NW, mailstop 6218 (MIB), Washington DC 20240.

Range reform activists have suggested that the following points be stressed in your letters:

1. The goal of federal land management should not be to maximize livestock production but to maintain healthy ecosystems that support a thriving spectrum of native plants and

animals.

2. Grant the public land management agencies (the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service) the authority to declare especially fragile or environmentally significant rangelands "unsuitable for grazing."

3. Ensure that the federal government manages public land for the benefit of all who use it, including wildlife, recreationists, hunters and anglers.

4. Give the public the right to participate fully in public land management decisions, including the right to ask that certain areas be declared unsuitable for grazing.

5. Reform the grazing fee structure: raise grazing fees to fair-market rates, redirect grazing fee revenues to range restoration, and abolish grazing advisory boards.

*Editor's note: for more on the Grazing Conference in Albuquerque, see article on next page (first page of Albuquerque group section).*



Demonstrators in front of Pyramid Holiday Inn during grazing hearings demand an end to subsidies for ranchers. Photo © 1993 by Marc Bedner



## ALBUQUERQUE

# ALBUQUERQUE GROUP

## June General Meeting: Keeping the Water in the River: Instream Flow Protection in New Mexico

by Susan Gorman

Water rights in the West are governed by laws which were developed in the 19th Century. During the 20th Century, additions have been made to these water laws to provide ways to keep water in the rivers and protect riparian values. The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act is an excellent example of this. As we approach the 21st Century, we should re-examine these laws and evaluate their relevance in the New West.

To help us understand the laws which determine how water, a public resource, is distributed, the program for the June General Meeting will be presented by Tim De Young, a lawyer who specializes in water law and the author of several papers and manuals about instream flow protection in New Mexico. This topic may seem a bit technical and, well, DRY. However, Tim promises to present information which will clarify the importance of keeping water in the river and help us understand how we can help.

Preceding the main program, we will write letters to Congress on the most urgent environmental legislative crisis (to be determined!). The June meeting will be on June 21st, at 7:30PM, UNM Law School, Room 2402 (next door to the usual room), on the NW corner of Mountain and Stanford NE. Please bring a cup if you care to have refreshments provided by the Albuquerque Group. Please come!

## Bruce Babbitt's Grazing Summit—A Forum for Divergent Visions of the West

by Susan Gorman

The Holiday Inn Pyramid in Albuquerque in Albuquerque was packed with ranchers wearing cowboy hats and boots. Environmentalists were a less visible but sizable component of the crowd attending the Federal Grazing Policy Meeting on May 6th. The meeting was the last, and best attended, of four which Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt had called to gather testimony about federal rangeland grazing.

During the 5 hours, Secretary Babbitt heard from 2 panels of experts as well as individual speakers who were selected by random drawing. The experts included representatives from environmental organizations, cattle ranching associations and universities who presented a variety of cases for and against the present system of public land grazing.

Babbitt clearly wants to find common ground between the groups. He asked for comments, ideas and thoughts about how to develop a new policy which will enable ranchers to stay in business and improve rangeland conditions.

Much of the talk was on grazing fee increases, which ranchers believe will drive them out of business. Yet the real issue is range management: removing cattle and sheep from riparian areas, decreasing the AUMs (Animal Unit Months) on all overgrazed lands to avoid erosion, invasion of exotic plants, and degradation of wildlife habitat.

After listening to all the words, views, opinions, tearful stories, pleas, whining and discussion, some thoughts have emerged:

\* Change is inevitable, perhaps now more than ever. Change often brings short term pain (ask any Russian). Policies and formulas that worked 50 or even 10 years ago won't continue to work into the 21st century.

\* There are more and more people sharing resources in the West, including public lands. The suitability of all public lands for grazing or other uses should be re-examined using

scientific methods. The principle should be accepted that grazing should not be allowed in some riparian and especially fragile areas.

\* Rangeland management is, after all, a subject which can be approached using modern scientific methods and principles. The survivors in the ranching business, as in all businesses, will be those who do their homework and learn how to implement these methods effectively. The BLM and Forest Service should help ranchers implement enlightened methods.

\* Adjustments to the grazing fee formula are appropriate and necessary. The new formula could consider factors such as the size of the ranch, the dependence on public land allotments, and the carrying capacity of the land in determination of fees.

### What You Can Do

Even if you were not at the meeting, Secretary Babbitt wants to hear from you. Send comments and ideas to him at:

Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240

### Wed Jun 16 Office Brainstorming and Cleaning Party

We will discuss how we want the office organized and then we will proceed to clean house. If you have organizational ideas, then bring them. If you know of the importance of any of the documents in the office, then bring your knowledge or let us know about them beforehand. Meet at 6:00PM. We will split the cost of pizza. Bring some old work clothes. Call David 344-8693, Susan 265-3231, Terry 265-8274.

## ALBUQUERQUE

## Don't Get Nervous—It's Only Some Mercury in the Fish

by Stefan Verchinski

Studies have found that 20% of the mercury exposure in the U.S. (about 25,000 tons) is from fossil fuel combustion. Knowledge of mercury coming up the food chain in fish in almost all our lakes and streams has been known since 1982 in New Mexico and is on the rise.

Asked if the State of New Mexico Air Quality Monitoring Bureau has been taking any air sampling to trace the cause of airborne emissions, they responded no. This is a problem in need of an activist. Call Ron Grotbeck, the Conservation Chair at 296-0944 to get started. The rest of us should write the Governor and ask just what is his plan for the future -- eat no fish?

## Babbitt is sent Executive Committee Comments

The New Secretary of the Interior, Bruce Babbitt was sent a letter from the Albuquerque Group on a number of local issues. We asked that the APS National Environmental Education Landmark be reviewed for possible funding assistance after the deletion of funds from the school budget. We asked that the Land and Water Conservation Fund be fully funded to protect the Tres Pinos area and Petroglyph National Monument. We asked that a people transport system be considered for Petroglyph National Monument as an energy saving as well as a resource protection and interpretation measure. We asked that the present makeup of the Petroglyph National Monument Advisory Board be redone to better reflect the park's needs. We also complimented Al Albee, the BLM Manager of the Rio Puerco Resource Area for some of his resource protection concerns.

## Open Space is Laid to Waste!!!

The City of Albuquerque has moved to allow ORV uses in a portion of Open Space by Montessa Park in Tijeras Arroyo. We would encourage you to take a look at the area and call the Mayor and your City Councillor about the desirability of opening up such areas for abuse. Call 768-3100 for the Mayor or City Council.

Stefan

## CALENDAR

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

- June 1: Activities & Special Planning meeting at Olde Tymers, Central & Louisiana, 7pm. Terri - 265-8274 or Dave - 344-8693
- June 3: Mexican Wolf Coalition, 7:30 PM.
- June 10: Executive Committee Meeting, 7PM.
- June 12: 12 noon. **Deadline** for articles for July group newsletter. Macintosh preferred. Call Dorothy if supplying hardcopy only.
- June 21: **Sierra Club General Meeting**, UNM Law School, Rm 2402, 7:30 PM
- June 28: Conservation Committee meeting, 7:30 PM.

## 1993 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Office Telephone: 265-5506

|              |                   |          |
|--------------|-------------------|----------|
| Group Chair  | Jay Sorensen      | 884-4314 |
| Vice Chair   | Blair Brown       | 265-3231 |
| Treasurer    | Richard Barish    | 247-8079 |
| Secretary    | David Bouquin     | 265-7853 |
| Conservation | Ron Grotbeck      | 296-0944 |
|              | Bob Cornish       | 255-6037 |
|              | Tom Leck          | 857-0765 |
|              | Nick Nicolaus     | 884-5433 |
|              | 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:

|                      |                   |          |
|----------------------|-------------------|----------|
| Air Quality          | Heidi Fleischmann | 260-1217 |
| Books/Calendars      | Rich Adam         | 266-4657 |
| Bosque               | Richard Barish    | 247-8079 |
| City Planning        | (vacant)          |          |
| City Trails          | Dan Feller        | 266-1922 |
| Energy               | Ralph Wrons       | 275-0856 |
| Las Huertas          | Marion Davidson   | 867-5178 |
| Mailings             | Doreen Kahl       | 345-7919 |
| Mexican Wolf         | Susan Larsen      | 897-2527 |
| Mining Issues        | Blair Brown       | 265-3231 |
| Newsletter           | Dorothy Brethauer | 275-6113 |
|                      | Larry Compton     | 899-0679 |
| Outings              | David Morrison    | 344-8693 |
|                      | Stan Kauchak      | 292-9138 |
| Petroglyphs/Westside | Ike Eastvold      | 255-7679 |
| Population           | Bruce Ferguson    | 765-5757 |
|                      | Michelle Meaders  | 266-8823 |
| Programs             | Susan Gorman      | 265-3231 |
| Public Lands         | Hubert Davis      | 299-6904 |
| Solid Waste          | David Bouquin     | 265-7853 |
| Water Quality        | Chris Strobe      | 836-6304 |
| Wildlife             | Marc Bedner       | 299-2004 |

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Sierra Club needs a representative for an Army Corps of Engineers advisory committee on **Abiquiu Lake**. If interested, contact Jay Sorenson at 884-4314.

### Louie, Louie...

Anyone interested in being on a committee concerning a Sierra Club endorsement in the **mayoral race**, contact David Bouquin at 265-7853.

### Just the FAX ma'am...

If you have a **Fax machine** that you would like to get rid of our office could use one. Call Jay Sorenson at 884-4314.

A class on **water conserving landscapes and native plants** will held Tuesday, June 8, 7-9pm. Cost: \$5. Call the Council of Albuquerque Garden Clubs, 296-6020.

Public hearings on **USFWS proposal to list the Rio Grande silvery minnow**. June 2, 7-9 PM, Indian Pueblo Cultural Center, 2401 12th St. NW.

# OUTINGS

Abbreviations: WSA- Wilderness Study Area NM- National Monument SC- Sierra Club SW- Sandia Wilderness  
Outings may be cancelled or changed due to weather or other reasons, please call leader before outing

**Fri- Sun June 4-6** Moderate  
Miles: ? Car: 400  
**Cabezon, De-Na-Zin,  
Fossil Forest Car Camp**  
We will stop at the Jemez Hot Springs bat-  
house on the way back. Lots of exploratory  
off trail hiking. Cabezon provides some in-  
teresting rocks and a great climb. De-na-  
Zin and the Fossil forest has fossils, hoo-  
dos, and lots of badlands. Dry camps,  
bring water. Bring your own food. Call for  
details.  
Leader: Stefan Verchinski 888-1370

**Sat June 5** Leisure to Strenuous  
Miles: 2 Car: 0  
**NATIONAL TRAILS DAY  
Pino Service Project**  
This is a joint venture with the Alb. Open  
Space, NM Volunteers for the Outdoors,  
Boy Scout troops, the USFS, and others.  
Some tools provided, but bring shovels,  
picks and rakes. We will be doing trail  
maintenance, a trail reroute, and re-  
habilitation of a dirt road. **From 8:30AM  
until early afternoon. Meet at Elena Gal-  
legos Picnic Ground.** Ice cold soda pro-  
vided. For information call Barbara 344-  
8605, David 344-8693, Stan 292-9138.

**Sat Jun 5**  
**National Trails Day Fair at San Gabriel  
Park**  
Sponsored by the Albuquerque National  
Trails Day Coalition (includes the Sierra  
Club). San Gabriel Park is reached by turn-  
ing west off of Rio Grande onto Mountain  
Rd and following Mountain until it enters  
the park. From 12:00PM until 5:00PM  
Come Out and Join the Fun. Speakers,  
Booths, Food. For more information call  
Alb. National Trails Coalition 344-7240 or  
David 344-8693.

**Sun June 6** Leisure- Moderate  
Miles: 3-4 Car: 140  
**Indian Ruins of the Jemez Hike**  
These ruins lie east of the small town of  
Ponderosa. We will hike into three sites,  
one containing petroglyphs. Bring lunch.  
Meet 8:00AM at Winchell's at the San Ma-  
teo and Academy.  
Leader: David Kelton 275-0171

**Sat- Sun June 12-13** Moderate  
Miles: 3-4 Car: 200  
**Rio Grande Bioregion Series IV  
Astronomy Car Camp, Magdalena Mts**  
During the daytime, hike in the Magdalena  
mountains, light to moderate hiking (3-4  
miles). During the nighttime, stargazing  
from 10,000 feet- Jupiter, Mars, galaxies,  
star clusters. Attendance limited to 15 peo-  
ple, RSVP. Call for details.  
Leader: Tom Leck 857-0765

**Sat Jun 12** Leisure Miles: 3 Car: 2  
**Piedras Marcadas Hike,  
Petroglyph NM**  
Thousands of petroglyphs. Bring bi-  
noculars, camera, sturdy shoes. RSVP.  
Leader: Ike Eastvold 255-7679

**Wed Jun 16**  
**Office Cleaning Party**  
Meet at 6:00PM. See Group news.

**Thurs Jun 17** Leisure Miles: 1 Car: 1  
**Beaver Biology and Control on the Rio  
Grande, Field Demonstration**  
Every year within Albuquerque, about 100  
beaver are killed by NM Game and Fish  
Dept. and others. What are the techniques  
used? What are the problems with bea-  
vers? Are there any alternatives? We will  
look at beaver biology and trapping meth-  
ods, including lethal. Demonstration by  
Animal Damage Control and maybe  
NMGFD. Meet at 6:00PM, bring wading  
shoes. David 344-8693.

**Sat Jun 19** Leisure Miles: 3 Car: 120  
**Fly Fishing the Jemez Stonefly Hatch**  
Beginners welcome. We can help with set-  
up, casting. We will also cover en-  
tymology, catch and release, the environ-  
mental benefits of steel weights over lead,  
mercury pollution, instream flow, native  
trout populations, and recycling fishing  
line. We will try the Guadalupe or Jemez  
river for the stonefly hatch. Meet  
8:00AM, behind Winchell's at San Mateo  
and Academy.  
Leaders: Phylis Martinez 247-4353,  
David 344-8693

**Sun Jun 20** Leisure Miles: 3 Car: 3  
**Boca Negra Hike, Petroglyph NM**  
Short hike of approximately three hours,  
explanation of the religious significance of  
the petroglyphs to the Pueblo Indians,  
thousands of petroglyphs in the area.  
RSVP.  
Leader: Ike Eastvold 255-7679

**Sun Jun 20** Leisure? Miles: 0 Car: 180  
**Whitewater Rafting,  
Rio Grande Box**  
Hot springs, Class IV rapids, lunch pro-  
vided. Bring extra clothes and expect to  
get wet. Outfitted by Far Flung Ad-  
ventures. Cost \$76.50, deposit \$25. First  
12 people with money get to go. Meet  
6:00AM at Winchell's, San Mateo and  
Academy. You can meet us up at Taos if  
you like. Call Ingrid Baker 839-4678 for  
making reservations and more information.  
Leader: David

**Mon Jun 21** PreMeeting Dinner  
Baca's Mexican Restaurant, 6:00PM. Call  
to reserve a chair. David 344-8693.

**Sat- Sun Jun 26-27** Strenuous  
Miles: 28 Car: 300  
**Hermit Peak and Elk Mountain Hike,  
Pecos Wilderness**  
These two peaks lie on the east side of the  
Pecos. We will climb 3000 feet to Hermit  
on one day and 3000 feet to Elk on the  
other day. Views are extensive and im-  
pressive. Wildflowers should be ex-  
travagant. Option of car camping at Porve-  
nir Campground or staying in Las Vegas.  
Leader: Dan Feller 266-1922

**Sat Jun 26** Leisure- Moderate  
Miles: 4 Car: 230  
**Vega Redondo- Oso Creek Hike,  
Overgrazing in the San Pedro Parks  
Wilderness**  
This area is at the north end of the Wild-  
erness. Interspersed with beaver ponds,  
pine forest and rich aspen groves are the  
cow mowed lawns of this wilderness area.  
Grazing exclosures show elk are not the  
problem. Moisture content has decreased  
destroying what use to be exquisite wet  
meadows of wildflowers and moisture  
loving plants. Grass specialist will be  
present to provide interpretation. Bring  
lunch. Call for details.  
Leaders: John Wright, Phylis Martinez  
247-4353

**Sun Jun 27** Moderate  
Miles: 12 Car: 250  
**Pecos (Baldy or Trampas Lakes?) Wild-  
erness Hike**  
Brisk hike into an area where the snow  
most of the snow has cleared. Bring lunch.  
Meet at 7:30AM at Winchell's, San Mateo  
and Academy.  
Leader: Nick Persampieri 281-7845

**Sat- Sun Jul 10-11** Moderate to Strenu-  
ous Miles: ? Car: 230  
**Backpack Service Project,  
Pecos Wilderness**  
We will backpack in 2 to 3 miles from Ir-  
ongate and then do trail work on Hamilton  
Mesa. We will do waterbars, check dams,  
and remove duplicate trails. Access to wa-  
ter. Joint project with the NMVFO.  
Leader: Glen Kepler 296-0402

**Sat Jul 10** Leisure- Moderate  
Miles: 4-6 Car: 200  
**Pecos Wilderness Hike**  
Start at Jacks Creek Campground and hike  
up to the mesa meadows of wildflowers.  
Bring lunch. Meet at 9:00AM at SC of-  
fice, 207 San Pedro NE  
Leader: Bob Cornish 255-6037

# the LORAX

Sierra Club  
El Paso Regional Group

## JUNE MEETING

Our June meeting will feature Luis Salazar from the River  
Watch Network. The title to his presentation is River  
Protection and Monitoring. He will speak to the issues of  
population growth and industrial impact on environmental  
damage to plants and animals, particularly on the Rio  
Grande.

The program will start at 7:30 PM on Wednesday, June 30,  
at St. Paul's Methodist Church, 7000 Edgemere (two blocks  
east of Airway). For more information, call Ted Mertig,  
852-3011.

## CALENDAR

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| June 2   | EXCOM (800 So. Piedras)   |
| June 5-6 | Rio Grande Chapter EXCOM, Hillsboro, NM   |
| June 17  | Deadline for El Paso newsletter information<br>(send to 331 Vista del Rey, 79912) |
| June 30  | General Meeting (7000 Edgemere)   |
| July 7   | EXCOM (800 So. Piedras)   |



The  
Environmental  
Center

Only a Few Hours a Month... The Environmental Center  
continues to have a critical need for volunteers. Can you  
contribute a few hours one day or more a month helping with  
office tasks and the recycling program? Better yet, would  
you be interested in managing the Center? Please contact the  
Center (532-9645), John Sproul (545-5157) or Ted Mertig  
(852-3011) if you can help.

Thanks go to volunteer Amanda Beattie for her recent work  
at the Center. Also thanks are due the City of El Paso  
for relocating the fence on the east side of the  
building. With the east-side yard expanded,  
all of the recycling facilities are now  
in one place, a more convenient  
arrangement for Center  
works and customers  
alike.

## GROUP DIRECTORY.

| EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE         |                     |          |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|----------|
| Chairman/Public Lands       | Ted Mertig          | 852-3011 |
| Vice Chairman/Franklin Mtns | John Sproul         | 545-5157 |
| Secretary                   | Joe Rodriguez       | 833-9655 |
| Treasurer                   | Kathy Sunday        | 584-9301 |
| Member/Outings              | Mike Episcopo       | 833-3770 |
| Member/ICO                  | Richard Rheder      | 544-5659 |
| Member/Programs             | Betsy Julian        | 544-5741 |
| CONSERVATION                |                     |          |
| Environmental Quality       | Tom Brasfield       | 584-8739 |
| Political Action            | Jim Bell            | 581-8864 |
| Population                  | open                |          |
| ADMINISTRATION              |                     |          |
| Environmental Center        | open                |          |
| Group/LORAX Mail            | Bill Phillips       | 772-6503 |
| Hospitality                 | Barbara Mertig      | 852-3011 |
| Membership                  | Carolina Greenfield | 594-7342 |
| Office Rep.                 | Neil O'Hara         | 565-4735 |
| Publicity                   | Todd Daugherty      | 584-2730 |
| LORAX Editor/SIERRAN        | Wyona Turner        | 585-0251 |

## Sierra Club Environmental Center

800 S. Piedras  
532-9645, 532-4876

Please send any changes or corrections in membership to  
Carolina Greenfield, Membership Roll  
1510 Dale Douglas, 79936

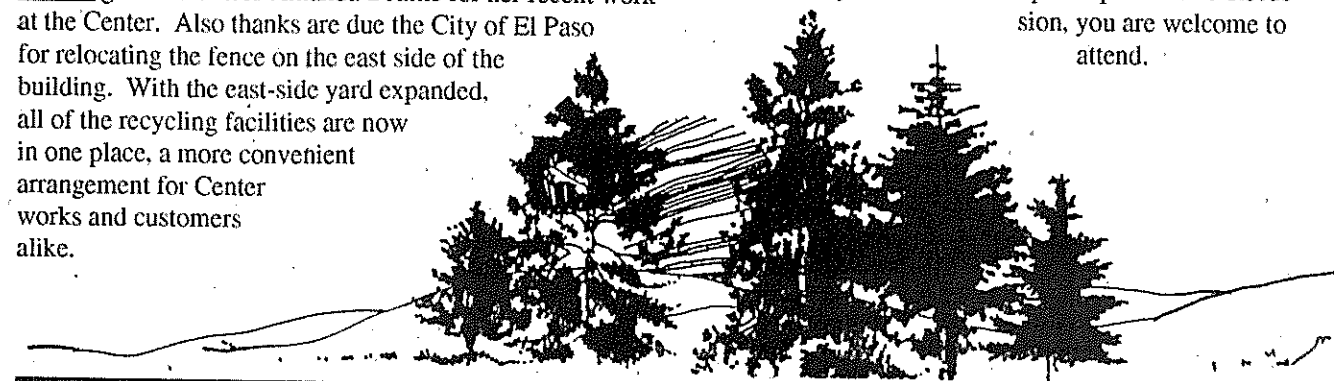
Send LORAX information to  
Wyona Turner, Editor, 331 Vista del Rey, 79912

## EXCOM NEWS

✓ Members of the excom are currently negotiating  
with the city for a 10-year lease instead of an annual  
lease.

✓ The excom voted to establish a Planning Committee  
for 1994 Earth Day. If you are interested in serving on  
this committee, please call Ted Mertig, 852-3011.

✓ Agenda items for the next excom meeting, June 7,  
will include a discussion of the lighting of the star. If  
you would like to participate in this discus-  
sion, you are welcome to  
attend.





## OUTINGS

## TRANS-GILA WILDERNESS BACKPACK

DATE: June 4-13, 1993  
 CLASS: Strenuous  
 LIMIT: 12, leader approval and reservations required  
 LEADER: Jim Owen, 598-9332

While this outing is directed towards the more experienced, well-equipped hiker, each individual day will be of a moderate nature focused on enjoying the wilderness experience. After driving up on Friday evening, we will spend a week trekking the Gila's grandeur from east to west.

## RABB PARK-CURETON CANYON DAYHIKE

DATE: June 5, 1993  
 CLASS: Moderate  
 LIMIT: 12, reservations required  
 LEADER: Carl Horkowitz, 755-3968 (hm), 755-9344 (wk)

This trip will depart the city early Saturday morning for the three-hour drive to the trailhead right off NM Highway 90. Our trail will take us over the foothills on the backside of the Black Range and down into Rabb Park, a wide and unusual collection of smoothly and intricately worn boulders and rock formations interspersed with conifers. Along the way we may take the time to duck into the steep and narrow Rabb Canyon where the only walkway is the streambed itself.

SPRING CABIN BACKPACK  
White Mountain Wilderness

DATE: June 12-13, 1993  
 CLASS: Moderate  
 LIMIT: 15, leader approval and reservations required  
 LEADER: Eva Peppel, 591-9713

It's time again to take a break from the city and enjoy the peace and beauty of the wilderness with its meadows in full bloom at this time of year. We will hike the four miles to Spring cabin (elevation gain 1,200') and set up camp with plenty of time to enjoy a lazy afternoon. Sunday we will hike along the Crest Trail to Bonita Seep and from there take the Bonita Trail back to our cars. We will hike a total of nine miles.

## CLOUDCROFT CARCAMP/BIKE RIDE

DATE: June 19-20, 1993  
 CLASS: Moderate +  
 LIMIT: None  
 MILEAGE: Variable  
 LEADER: Richard Rheder, 544-5659

Beat the heat in Lincoln National Forest. Sierra Club members are invited to join with the El Paso Bicycle Club for its annual Cloudcroft ride. Route choices: paved roads, forest trails, challenging hill climbs and thrilling downhill.

Saturday's ride will be the Cloudcroft-Mayhill 40-mile Loop on paved roads. Sunday's choices include a ride at Sunspot or possibly riding the Rim Trail or Telephone Canyon.

There are a number of campgrounds or motels available in the Cloudcroft area. Call Richard for more details and the daily meeting spot.

Those who are unsure of equipment or riding ability can call Richard or join the Bicycle Club for a shorter ride and/or advice. Call 584-4455 for a recording of upcoming rides.

## HILLSBORO PEAK DAYHIKE/BACKPACK

DATE: June 26-27, 1993  
 CLASS: Moderate  
 LIMIT: 6 for the backpack and 10 for the dayhike, leader approval and reservations required for both  
 LEADER: Joe Rodriguez, 833-9655 (backpack)  
 Mike Episcopo, 833-3770

Backpacking group will leave the Albertson's parking lot early Friday evening and drive to the Emory Pass area where we will camp for the night. The dayhike group will go up Saturday morning and meet the backpack group at the Emory Pass Lookout. We will then start up to Hillsboro Peak. Estimated roundtrip mileage is about 12 miles for both groups. For more details contact Joe for the backpack and Mike for the dayhike.

## RIO GRANDE FLOAT TRIP

DATE: Sunday, June 27, 1993  
 CLASS: Easy  
 LIMIT: 12, leader approval and reservations required  
 LEADER: Laurence Gibson  
 594-7342

Leaving El Paso at 8:30 AM, we will drive to Percha Dam State Park, spotting vehicles at our take-out point. We will float the river in inner tubes for about five hours including a lunch stop. After returning to our vehicles there will be an optional no-host dinner at one of the eateries along the old road. You will need to supply your own tube and life jacket. This trip is for good swimmers who are willing to follow the leader's instructions! Call Laurence for reservations.

## 4TH OF JULY MIMBRES LOOP BACKPACK

DATE: July 3-5, 1993  
 CLASS: Moderate +  
 LIMIT: 12, leader approval and reservations required  
 LEADER: Kathy Sunday, 778-8030 (days) or  
 584-9301 (evenings)

We will leave Friday evening and drive to Cooney Campground in the Aldo Leopold Wilderness, where we will carcamp. Saturday morning we will hike up the scenic Mimbres River Trail #77. We will follow a loop up towards Mimbres Lake to the Crest Trail #79, and then north to Reeds Peak. On Monday, we will return to Cooney Campground via Trail #77, for a total trail distance of about 25 miles. If you would like to spend the 4th of July in the beautiful Black Range, call Kathy early for details and reservations.



## OUTINGS, continued

COLORADO BACKPACK  
Weminuche Wilderness

DATE: July 10 - 18, 1993  
 CLASS: Moderate to strenuous  
 LIMIT: 12, leader approval and reservations required  
 LEADER: Laurence Gibson, 915-594-7342

Returning to the Weminuche after a year's absence, we will hike the Continental Divide Trail from Stony Pass south to Rock Lake, taking time to fish or relax at several of the lakes along the way. We will then head west over to Chicago Basin with a layover day for peak-bagging, followed by the hike down to Needleton where we will catch the train back to Durango. Because of the 12,000'+ elevations, participants must be in excellent physical condition with proper equipment. Packs will be weighed at the trailhead. It will be necessary to share shelter and cooking equipment. Call Laurence for reservations.

WYOMING 10-DAY BACKPACK  
Wind River Range

DATE: August 7 - 15, 1993  
 CLASS: Strenuous  
 LIMIT: 12, leader approval and reservations required  
 LEADER: Laurence Gibson, 915-594-7342

We will gather in Pinedale, Wyoming, on Saturday. Those wishing to fly in will have a chance to buy supplies. Our 40-mile+ trip through the Bridger and Popo Agie Wildernesses will visit the magnificent Cirque of the Towers with layover days for fishing, etc. Call Laurence for more details and reservations.

## RUNNING THE GILA



At the last annual Wine and Cheese Party, Rob Belk showed some slides of an earlier Gila River trip and announced that he was planning another trip this spring. He invited anyone who was interested to join him. Not having put a paddle in the water for the three years I have lived in El Paso, I jumped at the opportunity.

Six of us put our canoes in the Gila on Thursday, April 29. The water was running at 340 cfs (cubic feet per second) which made for an excellent three-night canoe trip through the sycamore and ponderosa pine bottoms of the Gila. The canyon topography opens and narrows many times along the route, causing much excitement in terms of both boating and scenery. The view from the river is very different from the trail, and I highly recommend this trip. Even though the spring flood earlier in the year had destroyed much of the riparian grassland, the Wilderness was, as always, beautiful. Hopefully, the US Forest Service will take note of the riparian damage and reduce grazing allocations for the next few years.

Chuck Turner

## OUTINGS REPORTS

## San Andres Canyon Backpack, 4/24-25/93

On Saturday, seven of us met at the Burger King in Alamogordo and drove to our trailhead. Someone had partially worked the trail to our campsite, so it was an easier hike than before. Upon arriving at the campsite, most of us left our packs and walked on down the canyon to the top of the waterfall. With so much wind from up the canyon, the waterfall was almost upside down. The water was being blown back up in the air. Those that didn't go on down the canyon, napped in the sun.

Because of the wind, we couldn't have a fire at night, but one felt good in the morning because it had frozen during the night. We improved the trail more as we came out. Those enjoying this trip were Bill and Shirley Phillips, Dale Harris, Rae Hamilton, Sandy Anderson, Eva Peppel and leader Roy McCloud.

## Coudcroft Rim Trail Dayhike, 5/2/93

Sunday, May 2, was a beautiful spring day for a hardy group of Sierrans to hike 14 miles of the National Scenic Cloudcroft Rim Trail. The absolutely gorgeous day was highlighted with cool breezes and intermittent warm spots in the protected areas. Those doing the hike were Tom Beattie and daughter, Amanda, Roy McCloud, Mike Lehman, Ben and Jean Collins, Rita Schmidt and her daughter, Karen Schwartz from Las Cruces, Tom Boles from Alamogordo and Leader Jim Bell. Special thanks to Roy McCloud for being Assistant Leader.

## Monticello Box, Very Large Array Carcamp, 5/8-9/93

This was a windy trip back into the past. First, we went back into the 1870's by visiting the remains of the old fort and trading post occupied during the Apache chief Victorio's problems with the white man that resulted in the annihilation of his tribe in Mexico in 1880. We then hiked the Box Canyon and examined the large spring from which the area and tribe were named. One participant found the spring so inviting that a skinny dip could not be resisted. (Guess which one.) After a windy night's camp among the juniper and pinon pines, we drove to the VLA where we viewed a movie documentary of the operation of the twenty-seven 470,000 pound disks and walked to one of the disks for a close examination.

These disks are allowing us to view the various bodies in the universe as they were millions of light years in the past.

Participants were Barbara Samuels, Dale Harris, Ray Hamilton, Jean and Bryn Duffey, Sally Meeks, Robert Bell, Rafaela Schuller, Leader Harold Naylor and Corky, the seven-inch high Yorkshire Terrier, who did an admirable job of keeping the bears from us during the night.

## SANTA FE

### SANTA FE GROUP NEWS GENERAL MEMBERSHIP ANNUAL SUMMER SOLSTICE PICNIC

SATURDAY, JUNE 19, 1993

Join us on Saturday, June 19, at 6:00 PM for our annual Summer Solstice Potluck Picnic. Please bring a dish (entree, side dish, dessert, drinks, whatever) sufficient for at least 8 people. Also bring your own cups, plates, and utensils to save on trash. Lawn chairs and rugs are welcome also.

The picnic will be held at Gwen Wardwell's house, 945 Camino de Chelly, in Santa Fe (see map).

The picnic replaces a June general meeting. Our next general meeting will be on September 21, 1993.

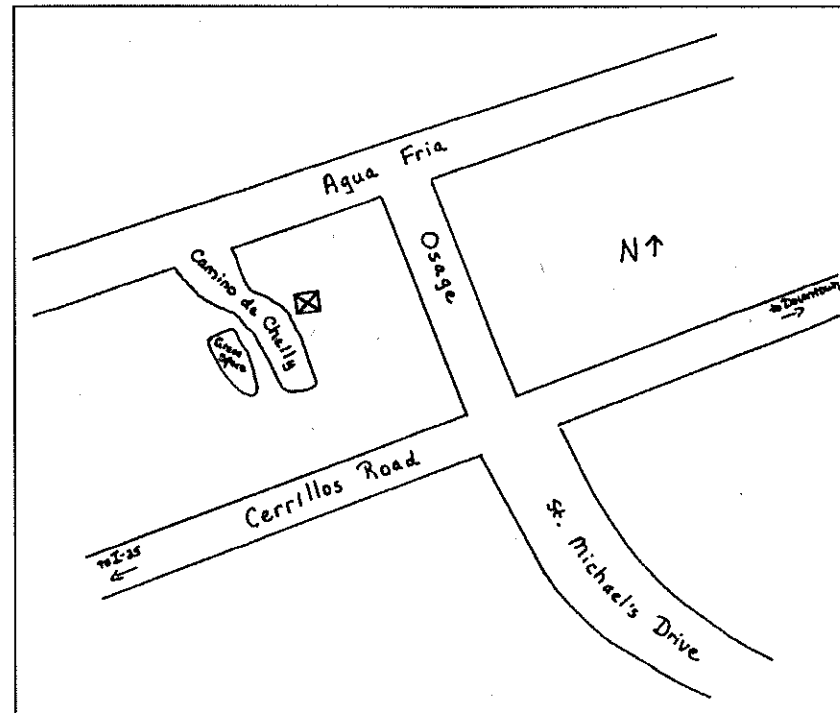
Conservation Committee and Executive Committee meetings will be held on their regular schedules throughout the summer.

#### MEETING SCHEDULE

The Executive Committee of the Santa Fe Group is currently meeting at noon on the first Tuesday of each month at the offices of Jurgens, Tallmadge & With, 322 Montezuma. The next three meetings are scheduled for Tuesday, June 1; Tuesday, July 6; and Tuesday, August 3, 1993. All members are welcome to attend and bring your lunch.

The Conservation Committee of the Santa Fe Group is again meeting at 7:00 PM on the fourth Tuesday of each month at the group office, 440 Cerrillos Road. All conservation matters to be brought before the Executive Committee should be presented at the Conservation committee meetings for discussion and recommendation first. The next meeting is Tuesday, June 22, at 7:00 PM.

Martin Gray invites all Sierra Club members to a slide show Wednesday, June 16, beginning 7:30 PM at the Santuario de Guadalupe, 100 Guadalupe St. Admission \$10. For details, see ad on back page of this issue.



Thanks to:

**Ken Hughes and Jana Oyler** for setting up and staffing the Sierra Club booth at Earth Day festivities in April.

**Helen Moser** for arranging such terrific general meeting programs and for handling the publicity for Group events.

**Sue McIntosh** for coping with the bewildering variety of phone calls that the Group office receives. ("How long does it take to drive from Aspen to Albuquerque?" "How do you catch prairie dogs?" "Can you find me a good cheap place to rent for the summer?" etc., etc.)

**Carol Owens** for her faithful tee-shirt and book sales at our general meetings.

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

Sat Sun June

- 5 Bob McKee (672-3426) Strenuous Hike Guaje Canyon-Guaje Ridge Loop (near Los Alamos) 15 miles roundtrip. Call leader for time and meeting place & carpooling info from Santa Fe.
- 5 Victor Atyas (471-7545) Easy Hike on Chamisa Trail. Leave 9:30 AM. Call to confirm - leader may be out of town - or call Norma 471-0005 for status.
- 6 Norbert Sperlich (983-1962) Strenuous Hike in the Jemez. Call for information and reservations.
- 5 6 Brian Johnson (983-5672) Moderate Backpack on the Continental Divide Trail near the Rio Chama, west of Ghost Ranch. Dogs allowed. Call for reservations.
- 12 Steven Janus (988-4137) Strenuous, Exciting Hike in the Sangre de Cristos. Call for information and reservations.
- 13 Louise Leopold (988-4592) Easy but Steep Hike up Atalaya Peak. Dogs allowed. Leave 9:30 AM.
- 12 13 Norma McCallan (471-0005) Car camp and Easy to Moderate Hikes at Rio Grande National Wild & Scenic Rivers Recreation Area near Questa. Suitable for children. Dogs allowed. Leave Friday after work. Call for reservations or information.
- 19 Arnold Keskulla (982-9570) Easy Hike up Aspen Vista Road. Leave 9:30 AM.
- 19 Caroline Glick (984-3184) Strenuous Hike in the Pecos Wilderness. Call for information and reservations.
- 19 thru 26 Bill Donahue (983-3675) Weeklong trip into Pecos Wilderness high country. 12 miles in and out to remote base camp at 11,700'. All gear and equipment carried in by wranglers. Varying levels of Day Hikes out of base camp, depending on participants' abilities and weather. Gourmet meals provided by leader, a health-conscious vegetarian camp cook. Call for trip brochure, cost, and more information.

#### ★ ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE / ISSUE HIKE FOR JUNE ★

- 20 Ken Hughes (988-9297) Bike Ride up Aspen Vista Road to look at areas affected in proposed Ski Basin expansion. Exertive, but beginners can do. Need mountain bikes and helmets. Possible carpooling so those who wish can ride back down Ski Basin Road. Leave 8 AM.
- 20 Art Judd (982-3212) Moderate Hike in the high country. Leave 8 AM.
- 26 Joe Whelan (984-0746) Moderate Hike to Stewart Lake. Leave 8 AM.
- 27 Jeff Jones (984-2389) Strenuous Hike to Santa Fe Baldy. Leave 8 AM.
- 27 Doug Altschuler (471-1183) Easy Hike on Bear Wallow Trail. Leave 8 AM. Back by lunchtime.
- 27 David Brown (662-2185) Strenuous Loop Hike to Lobo Peak, 10 miles roundtrip, 3500' elevation gain. Call for details.

**Outings Notes** -- All outings, unless otherwise specified, 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 Patis Corbae). Carpooling will be arranged at the parking lot, and each hiker should come prepared to pay 5 cents 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 the 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 are not permitted on hikes unless noted otherwise. Telephone leader for details of the individual hike.

#### A DAY AT THE FLEA MARKET -- JULY 10

Turn your spring cleaning into money for the Santa Fe Group's coffers by collecting your sale-worthy items for our day at the flea market, Saturday, July 10, 1993. We welcome all items except clothing; anything left unsold will be donated to a local charity. We'll have two storage places to take your items: call Ken Hughes at 988-9297 or Norma McCallan at 471-0005 to arrange to drop items off. We'd like to have your items well in advance of the day of the sale so we can sort and price. Also, if you can help staff the sale anytime on the day, please call Jana Oyler at 984-2020 (weekdays).

## SANTA FE

Sat Sun July

- 3 Arnold Keskulla (982-9570) Moderate Hike w/ steep climb to Lake Peak to see the tundra flowers. Leave 8:30 AM.
- 4 Norbert Sperlich (983-1962) Moderate/Strenuous Hike to Lookout Rock above La Vega in Santa Fe Ski Basin. Call for details.
- 10 Lionel Soracco (983-6715) Moderate Hike to Atalaya Peak (steep climb) and environs. Boots required. Meet at St. John's College Visitors' Parking Lot off Camino de la Cruz Blanca. Leave 9:00 AM.
- 10 11 Bob McKee (672-3426) Moderate One-Night Backpack into the Pecos Wilderness, possibly up El Porvenir Canyon, no more than 8 miles each way. Call for reservations.
- 11 Art Judd (982-3212) Moderate Hike in the high country. Leave 8 AM.
- 17 Gary Enos (473-4463) Moderate/Strenuous Hike in the Pecos, probably with considerable uphill hiking. Leave 8 AM.
- 18 Elizabeth Altman (471-8490) Easy Hike on Bear Wallow Loop, 4 1/2 miles roundtrip. Leave 9 AM.

### ★ ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE / ISSUE HIKE FOR JULY ★

- 18 Ken Hughes (988-9297) Moderate Bike Trip to an area threatened by logging. Need mountain bike and helmet. Call for details.
- 24 John Jasper (982-8572) Strenuous Loop Hike (15 miles roundtrip) to Gold Hill near Taos Ski Basin. Leave 7:30 AM.
- 24 25 Joe Whelan (984-0746) Car Camp/Moderate Day Hikes probably at Elk Creek Campground/hikes in the Conejos River area on the Colorado/New Mexico border. Sunday's hike will be to Red Lake. Leave Saturday morning. Call for reservations.
- 25 Steven Janus (988-4137) Moderate Hike with Steep Ascents up Northwest Ridge to Lake Peak and return via Ravens Ridge. Leave 8 AM.
- 31 Brian Johnson (983-5672) Easy Hike up Chamisa Trail to the Tesuque River, 4 1/2 miles roundtrip, steep incline. Leave 8 AM.
- 23 thru 8/1 Norma McCallan (471-0005) Exploratory 10-Day Backpack on Continental Divide Trail, Cochetopa Hills Segment, Monarch Pass-Spring Creek Pass, Colorado. 100 miles. Leave Thursday afternoon, 7/22. Resupply point at mile 45. Would consider doing only the 55-mile lower segment if better for participants. Experienced backpackers only. Call for reservations.

### >> SANTA FE GROUP OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS <<

|  |          |   |          |
|--|----------|---|----------|
| Chair — Jana Oyler*                    | 984-2020 | Newsletter Editor — Kay Carlson               | 982-3926 |
| Vice-Chair — Coby Muckelroy*           | 983-5453 | Phone Tree — Martha Anne Freeman              | 438-0697 |
| Secretary/Treasurer — Lionel Soracco*  | 983-6715 | Membership — Pat Stevens                      | 982-5051 |
| Conservation — Van Perkins*            | 983-8801 | Kids' Sierra Club — Justine Freeman           | 988-9126 |
| Chapter Representative - Sue McIntosh* | 982-4146 | Education/Recycling/Office — Carolyn Keskulla | 982-9570 |
| Publicity & Programs — Helen Moser*    | 438-3365 | Fundraising — Mark Mortier*                   | 983-5870 |
| Outings — Norma McCallan*              | 471-0005 |   |          |
| Political Committee — Ken Hughes*      | 988-9297 |   |          |

\* Member of the SF Group Executive Committee

Terms expire 12/93: McCallan/Mortier/Muckelroy/Oyler/Soracco  
12/94: Hughes/McIntosh/Moser/Perkins

## SOUTHERN NM

# THE LOG

Southern New Mexico Group

Summer outings will be held on short notice. If you would like to find out what is happening and when, please call Steve Kalavity at 382-8419. Have a great summer!

### Southern New Mexico Conservation Tree:

**Hazardous Waste** - Karen Fuller and a committee of residents of Chaparral are concerned that Rinchem, a hazardous waste "transit station" located in Chaparral, which is only supposed to keep waste for a short time before being hauled to Albuquerque, may be in violation of its Doña Ana County Permit. Rinchem has applied for a permit to collect rags, cardboard, and sand contaminated with hazardous waste to be stored at the same facility. Karen is meeting with Doña Ana County Commissioners, and has spoken to the Mayor of Rio Rancho where another such facility exists or is planned.

**Border Health** - Senator Bingaman has announced the assignment of an epidemiologist to assess the preparedness and problems facing Southern New Mexico if cholera enters the U.S. from Mexico. This winter, numerous confirmed cases of cholera have been reported in Juarez during the off season. Cholera outbreaks usually occur during the hot humid months of summer.

**BLM Mimbres Plan Appeal** - Our efforts to effect changes in the BLM Mimbres Resource Management Plan (RMP) have failed. Last year we lodged an official protest, as did other environmental groups and individuals, with the head of the BLM. Basically BLM's reply was, "The review of your protest does not warrant change of the proposed plan."

**Lechuguilla Cave** - The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is in the works. A recent BLM briefing paper states, "all alternatives permit the three gas producing wells to continue to produce, but require special mitigation for plugging and abandonment of such wells. The final EIS will present an 'opinion of value' for the cost of implementing each alternative, so that the decision-maker may be aware of the economic impacts of the drilling rights 'taken'."

**BLM Caballo Resource Area** - We wrote a letter to Caballo in support of the Native Plant Society's position that endangered and threatened plants in a canyon in the Sacramento Escarpment need more protection. Our letter asked that a dumping area be moved, the gates be locked, a road be closed, and that development of a trail over the escarpment into the canyon by the Forest Service (FS) be stopped. Marianne received an oral response from BLM, stating they will do what they can administratively but some suggestions call for Plan changes.

**Grazing** - Two car loads of us attended the Babbitt Grazing Hearings. Marianne was chosen to give a public statement on behalf of the Southern New Mexico Group and was later interviewed for TV. Her statement capsuled the National Sierra Club policy with special emphasis from a Southern New Mexico perspective, where grazing is measured by numbers of acres per cow rather than the number of cows per acre.

**GAP Analysis Project** - Secretary Babbitt is considering a Biodiversity Mapping Project which will involve the GAP Analysis Project at NMSU. "GAP analysis provides a quick over view of the distribution and conservation status of biodiversity. It seeks to identify gaps (i.e. vegetation types and species that are not represented in the network of biodiversity management areas) that may be filled through establishment of new reserves or changes in land management practices." This program uses satellite imagery to create maps and some ground verification.

Send contributions for July/August Log to:

Karen Fuller  
651 Tumbleweed  
Chaparral, NM 88021

Quotable Quote: "President Clinton, scientifically sound, ecologically credible, and legally responsible."

### Group Directory

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| Tony Chiaviello, Conservation Chair  | 525-1802 |
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| Cheryl Blevins, Publicity Chair      | 524-4861 |
| Libby Hernandez, Populations Chair   | 527-1440 |
| Jim Winder, Agriculture Chair        | 267-4227 |
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## Pristine Grassland to be Invaded!

By Marianne Thaeler, SNM Chair

Otero Mesa is located on Ft. Bliss Texas/New Mexico McGregor Range south of Alamogordo. It is a southern extension of the Sacramento Mountains owned by BLM which was withdrawn in 1986 for military training and testing. Otero Mesa has a vestige of pristine, ungrazed, black grama grassland that represents what southern New Mexico was like before it was over grazed 100 years ago during the cattle drives. Otero Mesa has the most productive herd of trophy pronghorn antelope in New Mexico and the NM Department of Game and Fish allows only hunters using antique muzzle load guns to hunt there. Otero Mesa is prime habitat for endangered species, however, since the U.S. Army has not allowed public access to the area, and has not had an on-going biological monitoring program, it is difficult to document the existence of endangered and threatened species. Since 1977 when the first EIS was written for the withdrawal lands, Otero Mesa has been recognized as special, even by the military. BLM, which has program on the Mesa including a water line (repaired last year for wildlife), has ACECs (Areas of Critical Environmental Concern) in the area of Otero Mesa. When the federal legislation was written in 1986, Otero Mesa was not mentioned specifically as a sensitive area, but until now the military has not used Otero Mesa.

Over the years McGregor Range, with the exclusion of Otero Mesa, has been used for spring Reserves training exercises. Last summer when meetings held in Las Cruces, El Paso and Roswell were advertised in the Legal Notices no one from the public attended. What were once Reserve training exercises are now Joint Chiefs of Staff, Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine training exercises called *Roving Sands*. This change expands the training area to include Otero Mesa (3,544 acres) for Patriot Missile practice and extends the training period an additional month into the breeding season for migratory birds and fawning time for antelope. These exercises involve 10,000 troops, 2,700 vehicles, and 40 tracked vehicles. The Army claims tracked vehicles will not be used on Otero Mesa itself but patriot missiles are mounted on tracked vehicles. HOWEVER, environmental documents mention another program called TWET, Training Exercises Without Troops (this means tanks and other tracked vehicles), is planned 365 days per year on Otero Mesa. The Roving Sands exercises will use tear gas to simulate chemical warfare, and claims that missile "detonations will not cause soil disturbance".

The Southern New Mexico Group was able to obtain, with great difficulty, copies of "Final Environmental Assessment (FEA), Roving Sands 93", and "Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), Roving Sands Joint Training Exercises". The deadline for comments to the FEA was April 30, 1993. Troops were to be deployed two weeks prior to May 11, 1993. This means the deployment of troops was prior to the end of the comment period. The deadline for comments to the Programmatic DEIS was May 11th, the first day of the '93 exercises. The Southern New Mexico Group submitted separate comprehensive comments to each of the documents. Included in the comments were the obvious problems stated above, and the fact that all biologic findings were based on "qualitative judgments" (their words), not scientific fact, and that no baseline data exists to prove or disprove their findings, although this data has been promised in other documents for years.

The SNM Group received a reply from the Army to its FEA comments by Federal Express on April 30, 1993. The reply was not responsive, and the author did not seem to understand where Otero Mesa is located. The reply listed on-going studies in the Organ Mountains, not Otero Mesa, south of the Sacramento Mountains. Wrong mountain range and miles away! What is supposed to be a biological evaluation is a list of plants and animals which could have been obtained from a Guide Book!

The Draft EIS appears to be a copy of the FEA with some deletions and a very few additions (mostly general, sweeping statements about no significant or cumulative impacts), and a different

cover. One significant change made in the beginning of the DEIS says the document addresses Otero Mesa alone, not the larger area to be used, McGregor Range. The word "cumulative" was added throughout the document, and two words "tear gas" are added. An EIS for a five year program is supposed to be more inclusive, and detailed. The deletions in the five year program include all references and statements about "a comprehensive mitigation program" and the previously stated fact that "there is a lack of any baseline data" (their words). Hopefully the final EIS will correct the obvious errors of the Draft, but no one is holding their breath.

The area of Otero Mesa is important to all New Mexicans who care about the environment where we live since a great deal of important data can be collected there. The data may be the basis for all environmental documents dealing with southwest hot deserts and potential future impacts to them.

This first foray into the world of military compliance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), shows there is room for much improvement and the fact that the Army Corp. of Engineers is in charge of Environmental documentation seems incongruous.

## A Tour of the Gila River

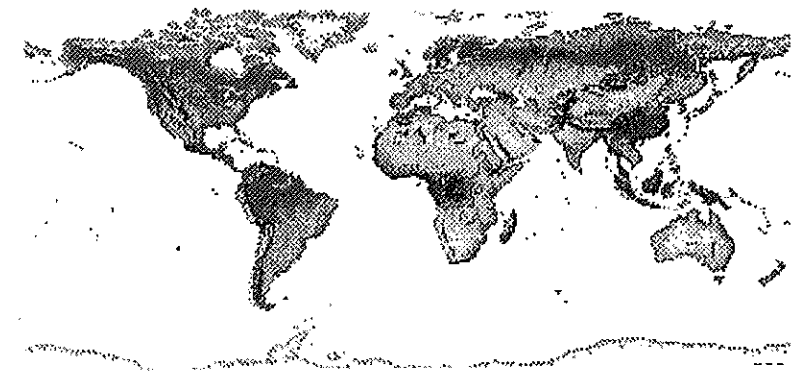
By Jim Winder

The New Mexico Riparian Council sponsored a tour of the Gila River near Silver City on May 8th. Everyone present, including an array of environmentalists, agency professionals and ranchers were witness to the immensely destructive capabilities of a denuded river. Mile upon mile of moonscape and hundreds of acres of lost farm land were the results of years of continuous livestock grazing.

The bright spots on the tour were two "managed" areas which resembled the natural riparian environment complete with beavers. The first was a bird habitat area which restricted grazing to a short interval in the spring. This area withstood the brunt of the huge flood and actually aggraded. Of significant importance was the fact that ranchers and environmentalists agreed on the management of this habitat. The area was obviously healthier than continuously grazed stretches of the river and the rancher benefited from the improvement, albeit for a much shorter time. Since a large portion of New Mexico's riparian areas lie on private lands the fact that they may be grazed with adequate recovery periods and still return to health is significant.

The second bright spot was an example of community involvement and cooperation. A group of small river front land owners began communicating with farmers and other users of the river water and the results were impressive. The goal was to allow beavers to colonize by mitigating their damage to the irrigation system instead of trapping them as was the tradition. This communication lead to a vastly improved habitat for host of plants and animals and more water for the farmers.

The undertone of the entire tour was that when properly managed, riparian areas may be very productive for agriculture, protect soil and still retain their wild flavor.



## From the desk of the Southern New Mexico Population Chair:

During the next 33 years, the population of less-developed countries will rise by an estimated three billion, from 4.2 billion to 7.2 billion. Between 1.15 and 1.45 million immigrants enter the United States each year. Our population is now growing by about 2.7 million per year, increasing faster than any other industrialized nation. Thus by the year 2050 (less than 60 years from today) our country's population will increase by 50%, to 383 million. A brief reflection on the numbers shows that immigration is responsible for approximately half of our increasing numbers. Thus, if we want to come to grips with our population growth, we must consider immigration.

Most environmentalists have not thought that seeking to reduce immigration is a "green" position. Such a position is often linked with right-wing demagogues (Patrick Buchanan) holding racist or xenophobic leanings. Those who advocate reduced immigration are often accused of lacking compassion, of being selfish and unethical. They are charged with being callused to the desperate problems of the poor and oppressed, as well as ethnically and racially insensitive. But those who reflect upon population numbers and their implications for the environment are increasingly, though reluctantly, aware that the immigration issue must be confronted.

In an interview last year, Senator Gaylord Nelson stated that "the population of the United States already exceeds its carrying capacity." He went further, arguing that "we can't handle a large population influx and still maintain a decent quality environment." He advocates severely reduced immigration, namely no more immigration than emigration. Consider who Gaylord Nelson is. He was a prime sponsor of the Wilderness Bill of 1964. He was father of the original Earth Day in 1970. He was the Chairman of Earth Day 1992. He is a serious environmentalist who has come to grips with the immigration problem.

Advocating reduced immigration does not divide Anglos from Hispanics. This is an important point for New Mexicans and West Texans. The Latino National Political Survey found that 79.4% of Mexican respondents and 75.2% of the Anglo respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "There are too many immigrants." Even non-citizens agreed with the statement, perhaps because they experience the greatest competition for jobs.

Advocating reduced immigration does not divide wealthy environmentalists (seeking to protect their wilderness "playgrounds") from America's poor, urban, or working class minorities. David North, a scholar specializing in the impact of immigration, found "widespread depression of wages and working conditions" where immigrants congregate, especially in cities like Miami, Los Angeles and New York. North concludes that competition from immigrants is "extremely hard on the resident working poor." Frank L. Morris, former executive of the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, states that "if all Americans were paying the price for immigration that African-Americans are, there would be a lot more attention to the issue and a lot more violence against immigrants."

Advocating reduced immigration does not divide environmentalists from humanitarians seeking to improve the quality of life for citizens of the Third World. There is no inconsistency in seeking to reduce immigration to the United States while also working to improve conditions abroad.

Open immigration may actually worsen conditions abroad. If the United States appears to have an unlimited capacity to accept immigrants, Third World governments have little real incentive to encourage small families or make contraception more widely available. In addition, those who are able to emigrate to the U.S. tend to be "the best and brightest" of the politically dissatisfied or economically unfulfilled. While their exodus improves their own life, it is their country's loss.

Although dealing with immigration is difficult, the Sierra Club is now attempting to formulate a policy. Frank Orem, the national Population Committee Chair, writes, "We North Americans feel ourselves caught between our history as immigrants and strong humanitarian tradition on the one hand, and a responsibility to our own environment, the American poor and their future on the other. While open borders or very large immigration appeals to the first, our reason recognizes that would not only lead to rapid destruction of our own environment, but would limit our ability to help others." Think about it.

Libby Hernandez