

PETITION TO THE GOVERNOR

We, the undersigned citizens of New Mexico, request that Governor King declare an immediate moratorium on new start-ups of open pit cyanide heap leach mining or other chemical process mining until an effective regulatory and reclamation law is in place.

	NAME	STREET ADDRESS	CITY	TELEPHONE
1.				
2.				
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7.				
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9.				
10.				
11.				
12.				

Clip and send to: Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club
c/o Gwen Wardwell
945 Camino de Chelly
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Thanks for your support!

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Sierra Club
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El Paso, TX 79983

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1872 Reform Efforts Picking Up Steam

Senate Field Hearing Scheduled for New Mexico

by Gwen Wardwell



Long-regarded as the major piece of unfinished business in the public land reforms of the last 20 years, the outdated 1872 Mining Law now appears on the verge of major change.

Nationwide, the clamor is growing to reform the last throwback to the official "giveaway era" of public land disposition and access. Elected officials all over the country are feeling the heat to end the mining industry's special subsidy and to make it follow rules similar to those governing all other resource extraction industries on the public lands.

New Mexico Senator Jeff Bingaman is tentatively scheduling a field hearing on the 1872 Law in mid-February for Silver City or nearby. Bingaman has thus far been reluctant to support any significant reforms of the law and this year provided a critical vote to keep the "claim" and "patenting" system going for another year.

Feeling threatened, the mining industry has dedicated nearly \$2 million to creating the appearance of grassroots opposition to reform through the industry frontgroup People for the West!

Senator Bingaman's refusal to support

fundamental reforms thus far has been attributed to People for the West! organizing tactics, which need a strong and effective counter from the vast majority of citizens who support reform. In a recent poll released by Rep. Bill

How You Can Help

- ✓ Sign and circulate the petition to Governor King on the back page. When it's filled or you can't get more names, clip it off and mail it in. *We will present these petitions to Governor King before the Legislature convenes in mid-January.*
- ✓ Call or write to legislators as requested by your group chair or telephone tree. Sierra Club members in rural areas are particularly important to this effort.
- ✓ Be prepared to travel to Silver City (on 2 weeks' notice) to attend hearings on the Senate bill to reform the 1872 Mining Law. Car pools and vans will leave the day before the hearings which will begin at 9:00 a.m.
- ✓ Display the enclosed bumpersticker. We have to let politicians know that there is widespread interest in mining law reform. If you can't use it, please give to someone who can, or return to: Sierra Club, 945 Camino de Chelly, Santa Fe, NM 87501.
- ✓ It takes money. To help defray the costs of bumperstickers, etc., please send a check earmarked for mining law reform to: "Sierra Club-Rio Grande Chapter", c/o Jana Oyler, 322 Montezuma, Suite A, Santa Fe, 87501.

Richardson, he found that 90 percent of his constituents favor reform!

The Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club has made reform of the 1872 Mining Law its top priority and encourages all members to write to our Congressional delegation urging comprehensive overhaul of the law and to attend the February hearing if possible. Plan to spend one full day in Silver City, from 1:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. the next day. Reform advocates may again be outnumbered by those paid by the mining industry to attend, as they were at last spring's House hearing in Santa Fe.

The basic law covering hard-rock mining on Federal lands, the 1872 Act

Dan Jones Remembered
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allows individuals or corporations to "claim" public land for mining purposes. If the "patent" process is pursued, public land can be withdrawn from the public estate and title given to the claimant for \$2.50-5.00 per acre.

Environmental and taxpayer groups, along with community organizations in affected mining areas, are pushing for fundamental reforms to the law, including:

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Submissions are welcomed from members and non-members. Send to the Rio Grande Sierran at above address. Articles should be typed, E-mailed (SIE426), or submitted on computer disk (3.5", Macintosh or DOS, Microsoft Word or ASCII text only format.) Only very short handwritten or faxed submissions can be accepted.

MEMBERS: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO THE SIERRA CLUB, 730 POLK ST., SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94109.

LETTERS

Editor:

Regarding the article in the November/December Sierran on junk mail, I've found an even more effective way to curtail junk mail.

Most solicitations include postage pre-paid envelopes. I take the entire mailing (outside envelope too) and put it in the pre-paid envelope. I include a note that says "Please remove my name/address from your list. I hate junk mail." Then I mail it all back to the solicitor. Apparently the cost of paying pre-paid postage is prohibitive, as I now receive very few solicitations. This method also helps me feel I'm more actively expressing my views.

M. Rudd

Robert N. (Tito) Meyer
Las Cruces

alienate so many of the people who elected him that he will be defeated. We will then end up with another Republican or conservative Democrat who hardly ever supports Sierra Club positions.

Jeff Bingaman does a great job for New Mexico, and he works hard for the things most Sierra Club members believe in. But demanding that he do everything we want, every time we want, and the way we want it, is immature and unrealistic. We should thank Jeff Bingaman for what he does for us, while reminding him of our positions and why he should agree with us in the future.

Editor:

I am a member of the Sierra Club. I am also a strong supporter of Senator Jeff Bingaman. One of the reasons I am a strong supporter of Senator Bingaman is because he is on our side. The editorial in the November/December issue entitled "Who is Jeff Bingaman?" is unfair and unrealistic.

Some people in the Sierra Club seem to take an "all or nothing" approach to things. That is fine for their personal beliefs, but it is an unreasonable standard to apply to a publicly elected official. Jeff does not always agree with us, but he almost always agrees with us. On the other hand, we cannot expect him to commit political suicide by coming out publicly in favor of the Sierra Club's position on an issue when there is no chance of it succeeding in that form, when doing so will enrage large blocks of the people who elected him.

If we demand this 100 percent purity of Jeff Bingaman's public positions, even where it is of no practical effect in advancing environmental issues, he will

Editor,

Although it was painful to read, I did appreciate the "Who Is Jeff Bingaman?" editorial in the last issue of the Sierran. It does reflect the frustration of many people I have talked to, both in and outside of the organization. It was highly critical of Senator Bingaman, and justifiably so. The Senator had delivered a series of votes that can only be described as body blows to the New Mexico environmental movement.

No constituency can expect perfection from an elected official. The world doesn't work that way, but the perception of abandonment without any particular reason is embittering. One can only conclude that Senator Bingaman and his advisors view his environmental constituency as expendable, after serving as the foot soldiers in his come from behind victory over incumbent Jack Schmitt all those years ago.

Bob Easton
Pecos

Special thanks to Lisa LaRocque, Steve Lueker, David Morrison, and Pat Wolff for their help with this issue.

DEADLINE
for Mar./Apr. Sierran
is Feb. 14, 1992.

OPINION

Senator Jeff Bingaman Responds

I am glad to respond to your recent editorial regarding my environment and public lands record, and to have the opportunity to discuss several issues that are of great importance to all New Mexicans.

Let me begin with a discussion of mining law reform, an issue of great concern in the West. After 120 years, the Mining Law should be examined in light of current land use issues and mining operations. Where the law permits abuses to take place, it simply must be amended.

It is true that I did not support the amendment proposed to the Interior Appropriations bill, placing a one-year moratorium on mining claims. I feel strongly that an issue of such importance to New Mexico should be handled through authorizing legislation, which calls for public hearings and citizen input, and demands rigorous analysis of any proposed changes. Tacking on an amendment to the appropriations bill, without any public participation, is not the way to make good public policy.

As Chairman of the Mineral Resources Development and Production subcommittee of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, I held a field hearing in Salt Lake City, Utah on December 18th, and plan to hold another one next year in New Mexico, on legislation to reform the 1872 Mining Law.

I believe that the issue of mining law reform can be handled in a responsible manner, ultimately resulting in an improved regime that meets the varying needs of the nation.

Establishment of new wilderness areas on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land is another issue of great concern to New Mexicans. I feel that we need to move forward with BLM, in consultation with the citizens of New Mexico, on wilderness legislation. I firmly believe that we should work on legislation that is realistic and responsible, and that stands a good chance of being reported favorably out of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. There is still a long road to travel to reach agreement on this issue.

I would also like to comment on the concern that has been expressed about energy legislation in the 102nd Congress. I would like to

explain why I voted to limit debate on S. 1220, the National Energy Strategy, which would have allowed the Senate to consider the legislation.

First, I agree with you that opening the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) cannot and should not be the centerpiece of a U.S. energy policy. That is why I voted against entry into the refuge when S. 1220 was considered by the Senate Energy Committee in this Congress, just as I had voted against entry into ANWR during the 101st Congress. I also supported, in Committee, a substitute amendment to set higher standards for Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE). Unfortunately, this language was not part of S. 1220 as it was reported out of Committee.

Nonetheless, I do believe that this country needs an energy strategy, and that closing off debate by the Senate also closes off our opportunity to craft a national policy. I believe it is important to bring an energy bill to the floor for full debate, title by title, to ensure that Congress and the Administration attend to the task of establishing an energy strategy.

I would also like to take this opportunity to discuss my work in Congress on public lands and environment legislation. During the first session of the 102nd Congress, I introduced and cosponsored numerous bills which will have positive and lasting effects on natural and cultural resources in New Mexico.

■ The Mimbres National Monument bill establishes a new national monument to research, commemorate and interpret the prehistoric Mimbres culture of New Mexico - a culture which flourished in an arid and challenging environment. This legislation, which has passed in the Senate and is awaiting action in the House of Representatives, ensures that the artifacts of the Mimbreno Indians, which are threatened with vandalism and neglect, will be preserved for future generations.

■ A bill to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act will add an additional twelve miles of the Rio Grande to the Wild and Scenic Rivers System. It assures that the

river along that stretch will remain free-flowing, with constant or improved water quality, and that resource activities there will be tailored to preserve the values of the river.

■ The Zuni River Watershed Management Plan bill (S. 1350) will produce a plan for the management of the watershed which will prevent further degradation, and identify means for rehabilitation for the watershed areas. It reflects a comprehensive approach to resource management, fostering resource partnerships among all affected parties to accomplish these goals. S. 1350 encourages land managers to look beyond their administrative boundaries to tackle the problems of an entire watershed. I hope that this bill will serve as a model for tackling future natural and cultural resource challenges.

■ The Federal Facilities Compliance Act, which I cosponsored, requires all federal facilities to comply with current and future environmental laws and regulations. This legislation has particular importance to New Mexico, with its abundance of federal installations, because it gives the Environmental Protection Agency the authority to hold these entities accountable to the most stringent environmental laws on the books. This bill also clarifies states' authority to enforce their laws at federal facilities, thereby overturning recent rulings by courts that federal agencies are immune from state enforcement.

In the 101st Congress, I guided the following legislation, all important to New Mexico public lands and the environment, to final passage:

■ Enchanted National Forests Information and Education Study Act of 1990;
■ the Jemez and Pecos Rivers Scenic Addition Act;
■ a bill to enlarge the time in which a leasehold interest could be included in the Zuni-Cibola National Historical Park;
■ expansion of the Pecos National Historical Park;
■ the Cave Research Institute Act of 1990;
■ a bill to establish a national park at the site

(continued on page 14)

Chapter Joins Effort to Reform State Mining Law

The Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club opened its campaign for New Mexico state mining legislation by delivering the letter printed below to Governor King on December 12, 1991. Members of the 29 groups who signed the letter then met with the Governor six days later.

At the meeting, the viewpoint of communities affected by the current lack of adequate mining regulation was presented by Jeanie Cragin, Friends of Santa Fe County; Wilfred Rael, Concerned Citizens Del Norte; and Janice Varela, Upper Pecos Valley Association.

Bob Salter, Rio Grande Chapter consultant and former Mineral Policy Center field representative, described the environmental dangers of new mining technologies. He explained how provisions in the New Mexico

Coal Surface Mining Act could be applied to non-coal mining, and noted that about 200 jobs in reclamation had resulted from passage of the coal mining legislation.

Mary Feldblum, lobbyist for the New Mexico Conservation Voters Alliance, stressed the importance of comprehensive legislation, the dangers of a piecemeal approach, and asked that Governor King declare a moratorium on all new mining starts until appropriate legislation can be passed.

After listening sympathetically to the arguments, the governor indicated he was amenable to expanding the scope of the New Mexico Surface Coal Mining Act.

Ken Hughes, lobbyist for the Rio Grande Chapter, will be working during the next session of the New Mexico Legislature for comprehensive mining legislation.

Dear Governor King:

The undersigned represent citizens and organizations from across the State of New Mexico who believe that New Mexico urgently needs a hardrock mining law as strong and effective as the Surface Mining Act that currently applies to coal.

New Mexico and Arizona are the only two mining states that do not have specific legislation regulating non-coal mining and reclamation. This lack of mining legislation and regulation has led to many of the problems that exist today in communities around the state, including Cerrillos, the Upper Pecos Valley, Questa, Silver City, and the Jemez.

As you have said in meetings with some of us, non-coal mining should have been included in New Mexico's original Surface Mining Act, enacted during your previous term. We agree with you that all mining should follow the same basic standards that have governed the coal fields for more than ten years.

Accordingly, the undersigned advocate legislation to either amend or replicate through new legislation the New Mexico Coal Surface Mining Act to address non-coal mining operations, taking into consideration the differences between coal and hardrock minerals.

Key provisions of that Act are:

- Siting and land use suitability criteria
- Protection of native wildlife and habitat, plant life, surface and groundwater, air and soils
- Reclamation requirements
- Public participation, including citizen suits
- Pre-permit disclosure
- Financial assurance for operational and post-operational activities and corrective action
- Prompt implementation
- Enforcement provisions.

We look forward to meeting with you and your staff next Wednesday the 18th to discuss these important matters.

For the undersigned,

Gwen Wardwell, Chair
Rio Grande Chapter, Sierra Club

Signatories to Mining Letter to Governor King:

- RIO GRANDE FLYFISHERS
- MEXICANO/CHICANO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (GRANT COUNTY)
- SOUTHWEST ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER (LAS CRUCES)
- CARLSBAD CITIZENS FOR RESPONSIBLE LAND MANAGEMENT
- RIO GRANDE CHAPTER OF THE SIERRA CLUB
- THE GI FORUM (GRANT COUNTY)
- FRIENDS OF SANTA FE COUNTY
- THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY
- NEW MEXICO WILDERNESS COALITION
- CONCERNED CITIZENS DEL NORTE
- EAST FORK PRESERVATION COALITION
- WATER INFORMATION NETWORK
- NEW MEXICO CONSERVATION VOTERS ALLIANCE
- PROJECT LIGHTHAWK
- NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY, NEW MEXICO STATE OFFICE
- NEW MEXICO ENVIRONMENTAL LAW CENTER
- TAOS ENVIRONMENTAL ASSOCIATES
- AMIGOS BRAVOS
- NEW MEXICO WILDERNESS STUDY COMMITTEE
- THE FOREST TRUST
- SOUTHWEST RESEARCH AND INFORMATION CENTER
- NEW MEXICO LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
- GILA CONSERVATION COALITION
- SAVE THE JEMEZ
- CONCERNED CITIZENS FOR NUCLEAR SAFETY
- NEW MEXICO PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP
- UPPER PECOS ASSOCIATION
- FOREST GUARDIANS
- COOPERATIVE OWNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (GRANT COUNTY)
- FRED GROSS

Fire Destroys Home of Environmental Activist

Janice Varela, who has bravely spoken out for the environment as president of the Upper Pecos Association, suffered a tragedy in November when her house burned to the ground. Janice, a single mother with a 5-year old girl and a 10-year old boy, lost everything. She had no insurance of any kind.

Janice and her children need financial support as well as household items, particularly: lamps, dressers, kitchen chairs, blankets, pots and pans, etc.

All donations and gifts to Janice are tax deductible. Checks should be made out to: The Varela Family Fund, c/o Linda Velarde, the Burnett Law Firm, Route 1, Box 9A, Glorieta, NM 87535. To arrange for pickup of household goods, or to inquire further about Janice's needs, call Linda Velarde at (505) 757-8408.

Janice has come through time and time again for the New Mexico environmental community on ancient forest protection, mining reform, and a whole host of other issues. It is now time to come through for her.

1872 Reform

(continued from front page)

■ ending the practice of giving public minerals away for free by beginning to charge royalties, rentals, and bonus payments similar to those paid for oil, coal, and gas;

■ ending the practice of public land divestiture through the claim and patent system, currently at 1872 land rates of \$2.50-5.00 per acre;

■ ending the automatic entry provisions of the law which allow mining companies to enter and control areas of public land not already withdrawn from mining (the vast majority of public land) and allowing discretion on the part of land managers to deny applications for environmental or other reasons;

■ strong new reclamation requirements similar to those already in effect for coal and establishment of an abandoned mine cleanup fund to address the toxic legacy of mining already done.

Two reform bills have been introduced in Congress, H.R. 918 by Rep. Nick Joe Rahall II of West Virginia, and S. 433 by Sen. Dale Bumpers of Arkansas. Both bills make substantial strides toward reform; neither provides the whole solution that environmentalists and others have called for. New Mexico reform advocates will be asking Sen. Bingaman to support legislation at least as strong as the Bumpers approach at the field hearing in February.

For more information about the 1872 Law and reform efforts, call or write the Mineral Policy Center at (202) 737-1872; or Gwen Wardwell of the Sierra Club at (505) 473-9664.



Industry Groups Squelch Biodiversity Bills

adapted from Public Lands News and Sierra Club sources

Pressured by commodity interests, Congressional leaders have deferred until next year any attempt to move biological diversity legislation.

House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee leaders had been trying to put together compromise legislation that commodity groups would not oppose. But those groups objected to the legislation on the table on the grounds that it would give priority to a single use—protection of a diversity of flora and fauna on the public lands.

Two very similar bills began to move in two House Committees in July, then became becalmed. The measures would require impacts on biodiversity to be considered in every federal EIS and would order the President's Council on Environmental Quality to write a national strategy to preserve biodiversity.

One of the bills (H.R. 585) was approved July 30 by the House Science Committee. It is sponsored chiefly by Rep. James Scheuer (D-NY). A second bill (H.R. 2082) was approved July 18 by the House subcommittee on Fisheries and Wildlife, which is in the House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee. It is chiefly sponsored by subcommittee chair Jerry Studds (D-MA).

The principal difference between the two is that the Studds bill would authorize federal land acquisition under the Land and Water Conservation Fund to protect a diversity of species.

Studds and Rep. Billy Tauzin (D-LA) attempted to revise the Studds bill to make it less objectionable to commodity groups. They didn't succeed and decided to postpone until next year action on the legislation.

To make sure that Studds and Tauzin got the point, commodity groups hit all members of the Merchant Marine Committee with several letters this month.

One such missive from the Nevada Mining Association argued that H.R. 2082 would "encourage Federal agencies to withdraw more land from any commodity production..." and mandate "continued land condemnation when the Federal budget is already strained by existing debt and when one-third of the Nation's land is Federally owned."

The letter, signed by NMA president Michael J. Doyle, went on to say that the bill would "withdraw land without consideration of, or compensation, for preexisting private property rights in Federal land such as mineral rights, grazing rights, roads and trails, water rights and capital improvements." Doyle concluded by saying that an "acceptable" strategy to conserve biological diversity must "not be to the exclusion of mankind."

Another letter written by a timber industry group argued that the bills were objectionable because they did not recognize other national priorities and would lead to additional land withdrawals.

1992 Legislative Eco-Preview

Ken Hughes

Mining regulation, adequate funding of the state Environment Department, and strengthening existing environmental laws will be the focus of the Sierra Club during the 1992 session of the New Mexico Legislature. Other issues which are likely to be discussed and voted on include energy policy, recycling incentives, Pecos River water rights and eradication of salt cedar trees along its banks, and power plant economics. Many of these issues are highlighted in this article, beginning with mining, the Rio Grande Chapter's top priority.

Responsible Mining

Disseminated (i.e. non-localized) mining for gold, molybdenum, and copper has reached New Mexico, courtesy of foreign firms who see the state as if it were a Third World nation. It is little coincidence that there are virtually no state laws in place to handle it.

Legislation, whether comprehensive in nature or amendments to current laws on mining and hazardous waste production, will be introduced to focus on what's to be done before, during and after mining:

- establishment of siting and mining methods criteria, so the public and mining companies alike know up front where it's appropriate to put a mine or if chemicals like cyanide can be used to leach out gold;
- reclamation of lands affected by exploration, mining or extraction of non-coal minerals;
- setting up accountability measures such as public hearings, ability of citizens to sue, enforcement and disclosure requirements for companies;
- regulating hard rock mining the same way as coal mining has been done for the last twelve years.

Environment Department

Born last year out of the Health Department, the state Environment Department does not have the budget to adequately enforce laws protecting our environment. And it may get worse: one idea legislators have is to revert to the general fund \$1.2 million in fees that now go into running ED programs. That means that monies collected to clean up underground storage tanks, inspect restaurants and monitor effluent discharges would have to

compete every year with a myriad of other programs.

Energy

1991 saw the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department put together a voluminous state energy policy document, with many interesting and useful figures and suggestions. Legislation may be introduced to set the state on a course to become energy efficient, use more natural gas and turn towards renewable sources of energy.

Water Quality

The Environment Department is seeking \$484,000 for nine new staff positions to increase enforcement of septage, sludge and liquid waste disposal. Penalties would be increased up to \$100,000, with daily fines up to \$15,000.

Air Quality

Legislation is contemplated to increase the Environment Department's enforcement and permitting capabilities, in compliance with the federal clean air act. Civil penalties would be upped to \$1000-5000 per day.

Hazardous Waste

Authorizes spending for more Environmental Department staff and contractors to review permits, take corrective actions at contamination sites, groundwater monitoring systems, and closure plans and inspections.

Recycling

Rep. Danice Picraux (D- Albuquerque), with the active support of the New Mexico Public Interest Research Group, is pushing legislation to promote an expanded market for recycled products, thereby helping to meet the goals of the state's Solid Waste Act.

Power Plant Externalities

The California Public Utilities Commission (PUC) has wisely ruled that companies seeking to sell power to California must include air emissions in their cost equation. Thus the foreign-owned Four Corners Power Plant would have to absorb that externality instead of getting away with putting pollution into New Mexico's air. The utility wants the New Mexico legislature to pass a memorial protesting the PUC decision.

[The author is the lobbyist for the Rio Grande Chapter.]

Democrats to Run Against Skeen

Two Democrats have announced they will run in 1992 for Republican Joe Skeen's seat as representative from New Mexico's Second Congressional District. They are Bruce Wilson of Las Cruces and Patsy Reinard of Socorro.

Wilson declared that he will seek solutions to the District and the nation's problems that are "environmentally sound, fiscally responsible, and that will build the type of life opportunities we want our children and grandchildren to have."

Wilson currently serves on the New Mexico Game and Fish Commission where he is Chair of the Habitat, Environment, and Lands Council, Vice-Chair of the Habitat Act Committee, and Chair of the Share with Wildlife Committee. He recently cast the deciding vote against rescinding the requirement that trappers must check their leghold traps at least every 24 hours. He also voted to protect the state's black bear population by eliminating the spring hunting season.

Wilson graduated from the University of New Mexico, where he was captain of the basketball team. After receiving his Ph.D. in chemical engineering from Princeton in 1964, he joined the faculty of NMSU where he taught for more than 20 years. He currently works as a consulting engineer. Wilson and his wife Aleta have four children.

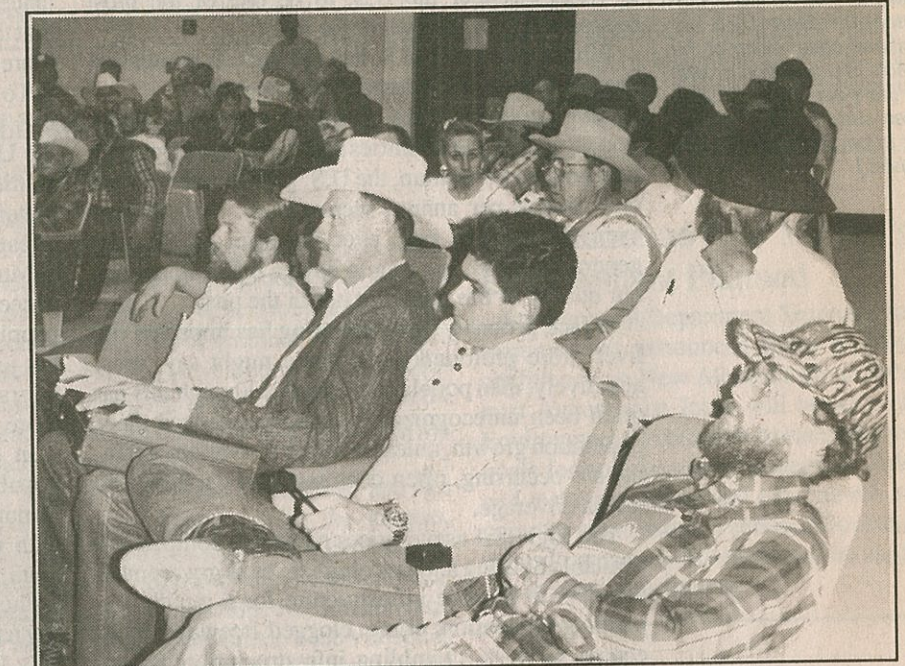
Reinard is an attorney and businesswoman. Her priorities are helping the ranching community and balancing the federal budget.

"We need someone with creative arguments in favor of the rancher," she was quoted as saying in a Las Cruces Sun-News report. "I don't see that right now ranchers are getting much assistance from Congress."

Reinard has practiced law in New Mexico for 12 years. She has a degree in economics, and a law degree from the University of Minnesota. She and her husband have seven children, with another on the way.

NM Game Commission Moves to Protect State's Bears

by Patricia Wolff



Hunters, trappers, and outfitters dominated the Nov. 22 State Game Commission meeting in Santa Fe. Photo by Pat Wolff.

The State Game Commission voted at a November 22 meeting to cancel New Mexico's 1992 spring bear hunting season. The Commission also voted to reduce the fall bear hunting season from four months to two months and to authorize a comprehensive study of the state's black bear population. The New Mexico Game and Fish Department had recommended the change because of a dramatic decrease in the state's bear population.

Game and Fish officials have noted an increase in the number of sows being killed by hunters, as well as an increase in the number of older bears being shot, and are concerned that fewer cubs are surviving to breeding age.

Bear hunters, guides, and outfitters voiced strong opposition to the proposal during a public comment session prior to

the vote. They outnumbered wildlife conservationists attending the meeting by at least 50 to 1.

Pat Wolff testified on behalf of the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club, offering support for the Department's recommendation. She also urged the bear hunters to speak out against the destruction of bear habitat in the national forests being caused by excessive large-scale logging. Others environmentalists testifying included Lani Moore, Sue Harrod and Gary Schiffmiller.

For more information on black bears and their status, please contact Jim Gonzales at the New Mexico Game and Fish Department, 827-7890.

[The author is Wildlife Issues Chair for the Rio Grande Chapter.]

'92

Is the U.S. Overpopulated?

by Kathleene Parker

[The author is a member of the Santa Fe Group, and a corresponding member of the National Population Committee of the Sierra Club. Her firsthand observation of the effects of population growth on the Four Corners area, where she grew up, prompted her to become a population activist.]

As a population activist, I don't know how many times I have heard the comment, "At least in the U.S., we have our population problems solved."

Quite the contrary, many scientists and population activists consider the U.S. to be one of the most overpopulated countries in the world.

What's more, the U.S. has the highest population growth rate of any industrialized country.

Admittedly, compared to the astronomical population growth rate of countries such as Kenya at roughly four percent per annum, the U.S. growth rate of about one percent per annum seems small. Nonetheless, even that growth rate, over the span of the next generation or so, is going to have a major impact on our quality of life, just as it has in the past.

In fact, probably no single thing has impacted our lives more profoundly and some might say, more negatively, than population growth, although this has often been unrecognized or unacknowledged since population growth, unless massive starvation of famine are occurring, often does not lend itself well to media coverage.

Yet, high real estate prices as people compete for available housing and land, high taxes as government attempts to provide infrastructure for a rapidly expanding population, crime, clogged freeways, inadequate services, crumbling infrastructure, environmental degradation, the break down in the educational system—all are often at least partially symptomatic of rapid population growth or outright over population.

By the standards of China, Bangladesh, or India with their teeming masses crammed into cities or competing for limited land, the U.S. may not seem overpopulated. However, the U.S. population of 250 million people is especially significant because of the extremely high U.S. standard of living and the result-

ing impact on the environment.

Most children born in Kenya, for example, will not grow up to drive cars, heat and cool large houses, own color televisions and VCRs, and commute vast distances to work or play. It is estimated, for example, that the average baby born in the U.S. will use 21 times more energy during its lifetime than an African baby.

To gain a perspective of the speed with which the U.S. population is expanding, it is important to look at the U.S. 25 years ago. In 1967, during the Johnson administration, the U.S. reached the demographic plateau of 200 million people. Yet, in 1992 it has already surpassed the 250 million mark.

Much of that growth occurs as the natural birth rate exceeds the death rate to add roughly 1.7 million people a year. Combined legal immigration (which has just been significantly increased) and illegal immigration now bring that gain to close to three million more people a year.

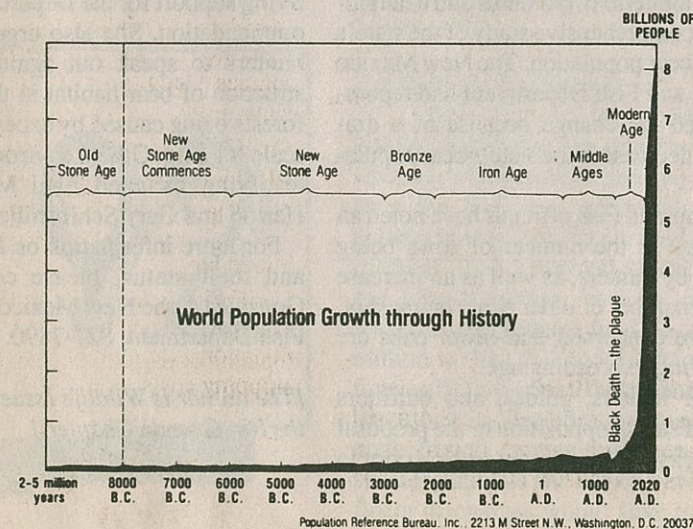
In contrast, most of Europe is at or near zero population growth. Hungary, Germany, Austria, and Denmark have all achieved zero population growth, with the United Kingdom, Sweden, Norway, Belgium, and Bulgaria close behind. Ironically, Roman Catholic Italy has the lowest population growth rate of any nation in the world, with an average family size of only 1.3 children—or negative population growth!

Many people wrongly assume that no country can have a healthy economy without population growth. A stable population is perceived as synonymous with economic stagnation. Yet, West Germany, prior to reunification, maintained a healthy economy even though it has experienced no significant population growth in years.

Some years ago, the U.S. Census Bureau drafted population projections extending into the next century. The "high-range scenario" predicted that the U.S. population might reach half-a-billion people by the year 2050 and would still be growing. Most people didn't consider that high-range scenario to be probable because it was believed that as those of the "baby boom" generation died off, the population would slowly decline.

Unfortunately, if current trends continue, it is not unrealistic to expect the U.S. population to reach 430 million or more by 2050, nearing the high-range scenario. That's nearly double our current population and the population will continue to grow from there.

Many of our ancient forests, much of our wildlife, our air quality, our water quality, and our quality of life are already imperiled with current-day population pressures. The prospect of that population nearly doubling within our children's lifetimes is very frightening to many of us.



Mexican Wolf EIS to Begin in January

The preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement on the reintroduction of Mexican wolves to sites in Arizona and New Mexico is scheduled to begin in early January, according to Mexican Wolf Coordinator, David Parsons. The initiation of the EIS should coincide with the completion of site evaluations in Arizona that will aid Fish and Wildlife Service officials in preparing the EIS document.

The decision to conduct an EIS instead of a less involved Environmental Assessment (EA) was apparently made in response to concerns voiced by both wolf proponents and opponents that an EA would fail to fully address certain biological and socioeconomic impacts associated with reintroduction. A schedule for completing the EIS has yet to be announced, but Congress' failure to appropriate funds for the Mexican wolf program in the FY92 budget is likely to leave the EIS on the "slow track."

To receive a copy of the draft EIS, write to: Regional Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, P.O. Box 1306, Albuquerque, NM 87102.

Scoping Process Reveals Support for Mexican Wolf

Scoping comments solicited by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service last winter have recently been compiled and demonstrate strong support for Mexican wolf reintroduction. Of the 492 comments received by the FWS, 70 percent favored Mexican wolf reintroduction, 27 percent opposed the idea and the remaining 3 percent were undecided. These results will be incorporated into the EIS.

Rare Plant Conference Scheduled

A conference on Rare and Endangered Plants of the Southwest will be held at the New Mexico State Land Office in Santa Fe, March 30-April 2, 1992. The conference is sponsored by the Native Plant Society of New Mexico, the Nature Conservancy, the

University of New Mexico, and several state and federal agencies. Topics will include rare plant surveys, habitat assessment, population biology, systematics, and protection strategies. Keynote speakers will be Faith Campbell of the Natural Resource Defense Council, and Manuel Lujan, Secretary of the Interior (invited.)

Environmentalists and Loggers Forge Historic Agreement

In a precedent-setting agreement, a coalition of environmental groups and loggers have asked the Forest Service not to log in a controversial area of northern New Mexico. Both sides on November 13 signed the agreement saying that a 73,000 acre area on the Carson National Forest had been overcut and mismanaged.

Sam Hitt, of Forest Guardians, and Ike DeVargas, spokesperson for the loggers, joined a broad coalition which includes the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club and others groups in calling for fundamental changes in the management of the Vallecitos Federal Sustained Yield Unit to preserve the area's remaining primary forests.

Both parties agreed to oppose the Felipito timber sale which contains the last remnant stands of primary forest in the Vallecitos area. Several rare top of the food chain raptors including the Mexican spotted owl, northern goshawk and flammulated owl are found in this area.

The Vallecitos unit was the first established under the 1944 Sustained Yield Forest Management Act. It is the last of six sustained yield units still in existence. The other units throughout the West have shut down because of over-cutting, the most recent being the Shelton Sustained Yield Unit in Washington state.

[Source: Forest Guardians]

Sierra Club National Awards Deadline

Nominations for national Sierra Club awards are due January 15. Twenty awards and honors are available, including the Sierra

Club's highest honor, the John Muir Award for distinguished record of achievement in national or international conservation causes. Other awards are given for service to the Sierra Club, international grassroots activism and courage, photography, mountaineering, contributions to the outings program, membership development, newsletters, etc. Award presentations are usually made in May. For more information, contact June Thompson, Chair, Sierra Club Honors and Awards Committee, (701) 223-1145.

Conference on New Mexico's Environment Planned

Environment Department Secretary Judy Espinosa has announced plans to hold a conference on New Mexico's environment next August. The focus will be on a state Environmental Protection Act and long term goals for environmental protection. Policy and technical papers and exhibits are welcome for submission. A series of Governor's Awards on the environment will be handed out to worthy recipients.

How Not to Be Cowed

Do you want to end chronic livestock grazing management problems on the public lands? Confused about how you can influence the decisions of the Bureau of Land Management on public land grazing?

Now there is help. It's a how-to manual for citizen grazing activists entitled *How Not to Be Cowed: Livestock Grazing on the Public Lands—An Owner's Manual*.

Written by Johanna Wald (Natural Resources Defense Council), Ken Rait (So. Utah Wilderness Alliance), Rose Strickland (Sierra Club), and Joe Feller (Arizona State University) and designed and edited by Fred Swanson, this is a clear, easy-to-use guide to citizen involvement in grazing issues on the public lands.

For your copy, write to the Sierra Club, P.O. Box 8409, Reno, NV 89507. A \$3 donation is requested to cover printing and shipping costs.



GATT Tuna Ruling Sparks Trade Debate

Spurred by a recent international trade ruling against a U.S. law protecting dolphins, environmental and labor groups are gathering support for congressional resolutions to reject any trade agreement that would jeopardize U.S. environmental, public health, or labor laws.

House Concurrent Res.246 and Senate Res.109 would send a message to the Bush administration and the U.S.' trade partners that Congress is concerned about how U.S. trade treaties, such as the U.S.-Mexico Free Trade Agreement, might affect current or future U.S. laws. The Senate resolution would also allow Congress to add environmental and labor protection amendments to the free-trade agreement.

Both resolutions stem from the August GATT decision to overturn part of the 1972 Marine Mammal Protection Act banning non-dolphin-safe tuna imported from Mexico. The GATT panel decreed that the law was a barrier to international trade and must be eliminated. The panel also decreed that no country may unilaterally maintain health or environmental laws with implications beyond a nation's geographic borders. [Source: *Sierra Club National News Report*]

Last Minute Loopholes Weaken Senate Cleanup Bill

The Senate finally approved a long-awaited bill to force federal facilities, some of the nation's worst polluters, to clean up their hazardous waste. But there was little cause for celebration by environmentalists.

The Federal Facilities Compliance Act, S.596, passed Oct. 22 by a vote of 94 to 3. But opposition from the Energy Department, the Defense Department, and President Bush convinced Republican senators to block consideration of the bill until several weakening amendments were added.

"The Bush administration added loopholes that could perpetuate the public health threat from poorly managed radioactive and hazardous waste at federal facilities," said Shira Flax, toxics specialist for the Sierra Club.

Federal facilities, such as nuclear weapons plants and munitions dumps, have long evaded the waste laws that apply to private

facilities by claiming rights of sovereign immunity—the doctrine that says one government agency cannot punish another.

The House unanimously passed the bill in June without any additional amendments. Members of the House and Senate will soon meet in a conference committee to iron out the differences and come up with a compromise bill.

Have an environmental success story?

Renew America, a non-profit organization, is a national clearinghouse for environmental solutions. It fosters the rapid, efficient expansion of successful environmental programs and encourages cooperation and consensus building among environmental interests.

Renew America's Searching for Success awards program identifies, verifies and honors programs that work towards solving America's environmental problems. All verified programs are published in the annual Environmental Success Index (ESI), which is distributed nationwide to policymakers, business leaders, industry and media as a valuable tool for locating a wide variety of programs that protect, restore and enhance the environment.

Renew America would like to add your success story to the Environmental Success Index. Write to Renew America for a Searching for Success application at: 1400 16th St., NW, Suite 710, Washington, D.C., 20036 or call (202) 232-2252. The deadline for applying is January 15, 1992.

Lack of U.S. Leadership Blamed for 'Era of Doubt'

Participants in a landmark symposium agreed that the lack of U.S. leadership in protecting the environment is a major cause of increased worldwide environmental degradation.

The gathering of scientists, authors, activists, and scholars declared that the world is entering "an era of unprecedented doubt" on the future of the environment, and that U.S. leadership is vital to ensure the survival of the planet.

"The precursor to the greenhouse effect is

the White House effect," said Dr. Arthur Rosenfeld, professor of physics at the University of California at Berkeley, about President Bush's refusal to take action on global warming and energy efficiency.

The symposium, "A Vision for the Future: Environmental Security in the Next 100 Years," was held in Berkeley, California and was co-hosted by the Sierra Club, Stanford University, and the University of California at Berkeley.

Nearly all of the participants agreed that America must lead the world toward environmental security, and that this will require large-scale social, economic, and political changes in this country.

For copies of the symposium transcript, contact Alita Paine, in the Sierra Club San Francisco office, at (415) 776-2211. [Source: *Sierra Club National News Report*]

U.S. Wetlands Officials See Huge Losses From Bush Plan

The Bush administration appears to be backing away from its proposal to redefine wetlands following the leak of a government report that called the changes "scientifically unsound" and "unworkable," and said they would leave millions of acres of valuable wetlands unprotected.

"The field testing data makes it clear we've got to go back to the drawing board," said William Reilly, Environmental Protection Agency administrator.

The report, suppressed by the White House since its completion in October, concludes the new wetland definition "does little, if anything, to improve upon the current policy, and actually deviates from accepted wetlands science."

The Bush administration first proposed altering the *Federal Manual for Identifying and Delineating Jurisdictional Wetlands* in August, in an attempt to appease business interests and landowners. Since then, the scientific and environmental communities, as well as numerous state agencies across the nation, have soundly condemned the proposed changes.

[Source: *Sierra Club Nat. News Report*]

The outings listed below are a compilation of the four groups' schedules, as of press time. It is hoped that this list will provide all members with the opportunity for the broadest hiking opportunities.

It is imperative to call the leader to confirm details of time and meeting place. Dogs are allowed only as noted. For everyone's

well being, leaders reserve the right to turn away anyone whose clothing or equipment or experience appears unsuitable for that particular trip. Carpooling is usually arranged at the meeting place. HAPPY HIKING!

Norma McCallan
Chapter Outings Chair

- Wed Jan 1 SOUTH FRANKLIN PEAK. Hangover cure moderate hike. Mike Episcopo 915-833-3770 (El Paso)
- Wed Jan 1 NUNS' CORNER LOOP, bottom of Santa Fe Ski Basin Road. Easy/moderate hike. Norma McCallan 471-0005 (Santa Fe)
- Sat Jan 4 BANDELIER NATIONAL MONUMENT. Moderate/strenuous hike. John McClure 473-1916 (Santa Fe)
- Sat Jan 4 CROSS COUNTRY SKI TOUR, NORTHERN NEW MEXICO. Moderate. Brian Johnson 438-2087 (Santa Fe)
- Sat Jan 4 FRANKLIN MOUNTAINS. Moderate hike. Claus Christiansen 915-532-4066 (El Paso)
- Sun Jan 5 CERRILLOS AREA. Easy hike. Arnold Keskulla 982-9570 (Santa Fe)
- Sat Jan 11 COCHITI DAM EAGLE WATCH. Watch the eagles fish in the Rio Grande below the spillway, and discuss eagle issues in the state. Short birding hike afterwards. Pre-dawn departure. Laura Jenkins 293-7527 (Albuquerque)
- Sat Jan 11 OJOCALIENTE AREA. Easy/moderate hike. Norrine Sanders 984-0386 (Santa Fe)
- Sat Jan 11 CROSS COUNTRY SKI INSTRUCTION FOR BEGINNERS, Santa Fe area. John Turnbull 982-9329 (Santa Fe)
- Sun Jan 12 SANTA FE SKI BASIN CROSS COUNTRY SKI LOOP. Moderate. Snow shoes also acceptable. Steven Merdler 988-4137 (Santa Fe)



Members of the Albuquerque Group on an outing to Rio Puerco Basin Wilderness Study Areas.
Photo by Ralph Genter.

- Sun Jan 12 JEMEZ CROSS COUNTRY SKI TRIP. Don Meaders 266-8823 (Albuquerque)
- Jan 11/12 MOUNT RILEY/EAST POTRILLOS CAR CAMP. Option of easy hiking, biking, climbing, artifact searching. Suitable for even very young children. Weldon & Betsy Fisbeck 915-581-0174 (El Paso)

- Sat Jan 18 PINE TREE TRAIL, ORGAN MOUNTAINS. Moderate hike, 4 1/2 miles, 1200' elev., warm clothes needed. Ed Macbeth 526-8060 (Las Cruces)
- Sat Jan 18 PETROGLYPH NAT. MONUMENT, RINCONADA CANYON. Leisure hike. Ike Eastvold 255-7679 (Albuquerque)
- Sat Jan 18 NORTHERN NEW MEXICO CROSS COUNTRY SKI TOUR. Moderate. Joe Whelan 984-0746 (Santa Fe)
- Sat Jan 18 TENT ROCKS. Leisure day hike. Ralph Genter 881-3147 (Albuquerque)
- Jan 18/19 PELONCILLO MOUNTAINS. Carcamp & short day hike to Black Water Hole; overview of Gray Ranch on way home. Rollin Wickenden 915-598-8042 (El Paso)
- Sun Jan 19 CERRILLOS HILLS. Easy hike. Victor Atyas 471-7545 (Santa Fe)
- Sat Jan 25 BANDELIER NATIONAL MONUMENT. Moderate/strenuous hike. Caroline Glick 984-3184 (Santa Fe)
- Sat Jan 25 GUADALUPE MOUNTAINS NAT'L PARK. 10 mile loop Pine Spring-Lone Pine-Bowl, moderate/strenuous. Jim Bell 915-581-8864 (El Paso)
- Sat Jan 25 CORRALES BOSQUE. Leisure hike. David Morrison 344-9693 (Albuquerque)
- Sun Jan 26 SANTA FE RIVER CANYON. Moderate/strenuous hike. Norbert Sperlich 9833-1962 (Santa Fe)
- Sat Feb 1 PAJARITO SKI AREA, LOS ALAMOS. Downhill skiing. David Morrison 344-8693 (Albuquerque)
- Feb. 1/2 TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES AREA. Moderate dayhikes, including Tortuga Peak. Spend night at leader's house or carcamp at nearby Elephant Butte State Park. Margo Wilson 744-5860 (T or C)
- Sat Feb 8 WEST MESA ESCARPMENT, NEAR RIOGRANDE. Easy/moderate day hike, 3 miles roundtrip, Ed Macbeth 526-8060 (Las Cruces)
- Feb ? Southern New Mexico & El Paso area. Call Carol Morrison for upcoming day hikes & car camps at 915-585-9077 (El Paso)

Hike the English Countryside

English Lakeland Ramblers, a division of Outdoor Bound, Inc., is offering guided hiking tours—with some sightseeing—in England's enchanting Lakeland, with its unsurpassed hiking opportunities, May thru October.

Lodging is in charming country inns offering sumptuous meals and friendly service. To enhance the experience, there are video presentations and talks by experts, plus assistance in arranging op-

tional side trips to Scotland, Yorkshire, the Isle of Man and London.

There is a \$50 discount for Sierra Club members. For each Rio Grande Chapter member who registers for one of these trips, Outdoor Bound will contribute \$25 to the Chapter.

For more information, contact the English Lakeland Ramblers at (800) 724-8801.



Santa Fe

Saturday Dec. 14 will be the annual group Christmas potluck, generally a very well attended event, with a lot of good socializing. Web Kitchell will be running a silent auction of white elephants and donated services as a part of our continuing series of fund raisers.

The conservation committee met Tuesday the 10th at Lani Moore's house, with the primary business the setting up of conservation priorities for the next year. An impressive number were named, including the 1872 Mining Law and the proposed amendment covering non-coal mining to the New Mexico surface coal mining act; national forest timber issues; the continued legal battle over the Ole power line; the Endangered Species Act; the proposed Jemez National Recreation area; BLM and Forest Service wilderness; rural community outreach, etc., etc.

Henry Oat will be representing the Club and his East Jemez Preservation Alliance at the 1872 Mining Law hearings in Salt Lake City next week.

We have a brand new coordinator for our phone tree—Martha Ann Freeman—who is taking on the important task of reactivating the tree in time for the legislature.

On Sat. Nov. 16th we put on our 2nd annual outing leaders training seminar. Of course we got a big snow storm that morning, but 20 participants braved the bad weather, including 3 from the Albuquerque Group.

Our general meeting on Nov. 19th, presented by Ken Hughes, featured the Audubon video on overpopulation, with a lively discussion afterwards. Pat Wolff is applying for a National Sierra Club Ethnic Diversity Grant to fund a project which would work with the public schools in northern New Mexico in an education program on the importance of the Endangered Species Act

Albuquerque

The last couple of months we've had some enlightening meetings. In the general meeting, concern was raised about ground water protection, and figures indicate that more water is being taken out of the water table than is being put back. On the 4th, we held a Mining Law panel discussion with panel-

ists from the land management office. Turn-out was good, and around fifty people listened to the input of Jim Baca, Bob Salter and Charlie Royball.

Some good news is that the solid waste department has changed its mind and is in support of a curb-side recycling bill. This city council bill is coming up in January and is most likely that it will pass. One of its provisions will include building a processing plant near Albuquerque for recycling materials that are picked up curb-side.

The Albuquerque Academy Boys Trust recently is planning to develop some of the land that it owns near the Sandia foothills. Members of the group have been active in working to turn some of the land in open space that could be accessible to the public.

You might remember an article talking about the Petroglyph National Monument. Currently a management plan is being drawn up to ensure its protection, and the group is giving its input in the drafting.

Sandia Labs Radioactive Dumping - an ordinance of heated debate that would have authorized the dumping of radioactive water into the Rio Grande was deferred until the results of a six months study are found. In addition, several members are meeting with the Southwest Organization Project and Sandia Labs to further educate themselves on the issue.

Southern New Mexico

To give a boost to efforts to establish an office/regional environmental center, the Group voted to commit \$100 per month towards the expense of operating a Southwest Environmental Center once it is opened. Local Sierra Club and Audubon Society members are still looking for a suitable site.

The group staffed a booth at the 3-day Forest Service centennial celebration held at NMSU in early November. Visitation was light. Our booth was adjacent to People for the West's.

We are planning to hold some sort of combined outreach event and outing soon in the eastern part of the state to strengthen the Club's presence there.

After taking the group's newsletter to new standards of excellence, Storm Sermay has stepped down as editor of the *Log*. The group voted to go ahead and consolidate our newsletter with the *Sierran*. Karen Fuller ex-

pressed an interest in taking over as group newsletter editor.

Group ExCom elections are underway. Votes will be tabulated after January 1.

A strategic planning meeting to discuss the Group's conservation priorities and fundraising needs for 1992 has been scheduled for Saturday, January 25, from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. at the Cox Ranch Visitor Center, Dripping Springs Recreation Area. All group members are encouraged to attend and participate. For more information, contact Kevin Bixby at 525-1532.

The Group named Karen Fuller as representative to the Franklin Mountain coalition.

Our Holiday Potluck, held on December 6 at Ann and Ed Macbeth's home, was well-attended and a lot of fun (and food.)

The NMSU student group is applying for a ethnic/cultural diversity grant to support some of their activities.

The Group is underwriting "Wildlines," a twice weekly 5-minute natural history program on our public radio station KRWG. Our sponsored spot is aired on Wednesdays at 3:55 p.m.

Upcoming programs: January 23—"Climate and Chaos" with Jack Zirker; February 27—"Venomous Animals of the Southwest" with Tom Townsend of Memorial Medical Center.

El Paso

New Officers Chosen. The new Group Executive Committee members are: Ted Mertig (Chairman), Joe Rodriguez (Vice-Chairman), Kathy Sunday (Treasurer), Fernando Dubove (Secretary), Betsy Julian, Carolina Greenfield, and Todd Daugherty. Carol Morrison is the new Outings Coordinator, and Ted Mertig is the Public Lands Director.

Recycling Center. The Recycling Center at 800 Piedras is still accepting newspaper, aluminum, steel cans, cardboard, and brown paper bags. The Center has recently begun to collect plastic grocery sacks, plastic packing "peanuts", and styrofoam egg cartons, as well. Unfortunately, they no longer accept glass.

El Paso city issues. The October general meeting served as a forum for input into the management plan for Franklin Mountains

State Park. Written comments may be submitted up to January 29, 1992, to: Carolina Ramos, Superintendent; Franklin Mountains State Park; PO Box 200; Canutillo, TX 79835.

Our January general meeting (January 29) will be a discussion with El Paso's mayor, Bill Tilney. Mayor Tilney's environmental policy will be the focus of the discussion; likely topics include curbside recycling, the effects of a free trade agreement, coordination of city planning with the Franklin Mountains State Park, water resources, and sewage treatment.

Conservation Committee. A meeting is scheduled for January 4, 1992 at 10am. The purpose of this meeting is to plan our conservation strategy for the coming year, to establish priorities, and to organize several specific projects.

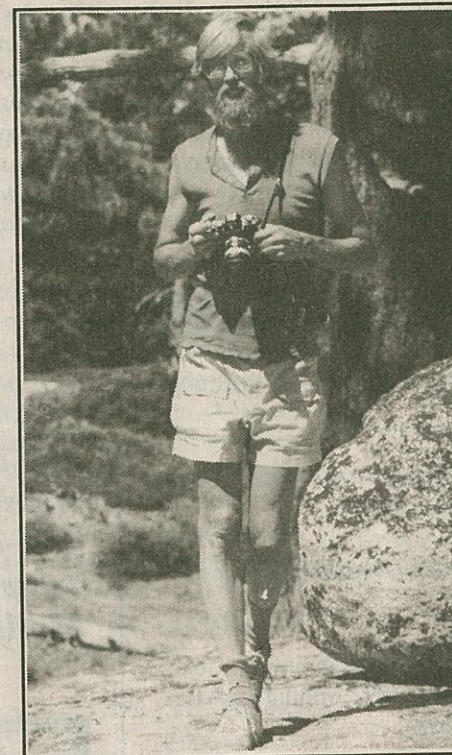
Lorax newsletter. The Group newsletter, The Lorax, will be substantially reduced in size during the coming year. A single page listing the month's outings, meeting schedule and program, and action items will be mailed to group members each month. More detailed articles and trip highlights will be published in the *Sierran* every other month.

Wine and Cheese Party. Our annual wine and cheese party and slide show is scheduled for January 10 at 7pm. It will be held at the Polly Harris Center, 650 Wallenberg Drive.



James Jordan (Dan) Jones

by Norma McCallan



Dan Jones, Chapter Executive Committee member and long-time Sierra Club volunteer, was killed by a hit and run driver on Friday night, November 15. He was enroute to Albuquerque to attend a concert of the New Mexico Symphony Orchestra with his lifemate, Rita Mozley.

A memorial service was held at Doc Long's campground in the Sandia Mountains, attended by many family and friends.

Dan lived in Socorro. An atmospheric research physicist at Langmuir Laboratory and a professor at New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology, he was an internationally recognized expert in the use of airplanes for measuring electricity inside thunderstorms. Dan had

recently won a grant for his work from the National Science Foundation.

Dan was born in Palo Alto, California, where he graduated from Stanford University. He studied one year at the University of Florence, Italy, before receiving his Master's degree and Ph.D from the University of Arizona, Tucson.

Dan had been a member of the Rio Grande Chapter Executive Committee for a number of years, and was always glad to lend a hand wherever needed. About once a year he led a hike in the BLM lands or Magdalena Mountains near Socorro, warning of the encroachment of new roads and threats to the natural landscape.

An avid bicyclist, Dan entered races in Europe, California, and the Southwest. He also loved photography, and had studied under Ansel Adams. Dan was a longtime member of the Socorro Optimist's Club, devoting much of his time to youth programs.

Dan's colleagues at New Mexico Tech are working with the State Police to find the driver of the hit and run car. Dan's 1959 VW was hit from behind by a vehicle traveling at a high rate of speed near milemarker 184, south of Belen. Police are looking for a 1991 or 1992 gray Chevrolet Cavalier with damage to the front left side.

Just 52, Dan's tragic death was a shock to his many friends and colleagues. He will long be remembered by those who knew him. He was, as one Sierra Club member remarked, a prince of a man.

The president of New Mexico Tech has established a scholarship in Dan's name. Contributions can be sent to the Sierra Club Foundation, Dan Jones Fund, c/o Jana Oyler, Treasurer, 411 Paseo de Peralta, Santa Fe, N.M. 87501.

Bingaman

(continued from page 3)

of Glorieta battlefield.

In closing, I'd like to respond to the question asked in last month's editorial: why I vote the way I do on the environment. I vote the way I do because I believe it is in the best interests of the state of New Mexico and the Nation. It is no secret that there is much conflict in New Mexico and across the U.S. on public lands and environmental issues. As a senator from a state where the stakes are extremely high, I am continually challenged by these issues. But while there exists great debate in our state and throughout the nation, I am convinced that we all share the goal of a safe, healthful, prosperous society in which to live and raise our children. It is the means by which we can best accomplish this goal on which we sometimes differ, and that challenges us to come together and forge a consensus by which we can all benefit.

CALENDAR

January 10-12	Chapter Conservation/ExCom Meeting, Hillsboro.
January 24-26	Southwest Regional Conservation Committee Meeting, Tucson.
February 14	Deadline for March/April <i>Rio Grande Sierran</i>
February 17?	Tentative date for Senate Energy Committee hearing on 1872 Mining Law Reform, Silver City.
March 6-8	Chapter Conservation/ExCom Meeting, Luna Park Campground, Cibola NF
April 4-5	Regional Mining Conference, Ft. Lewis College, Durango, Colorado. Topics: environmental impacts of mining, citizen action, regulation and legislation. Contact: David Mullon, Jr., P.O. Box 2998, Durango, CO 81302.
April 24-26	Southwest Regional Conservation Committee Meeting, Salt Lake City.
May 8-10	Chapter Conservation/ExCom Meeting, Springtime Canyon Cmpgrnd, Cibola NF
July 10-12	Chapter Conservation/ExCom Meeting, Springtime Canyon Cmpgrnd, Cibola NF
Sept. 11-13	Chapter Retreat/ExCom Meeting.
Sept. 18-20	Southwest Regional Conservation Committee Meeting, Santa Fe.
Nov. 13-15	Chapter Conservation/ExCom Meeting, Kingston.

Addresses

To write your senators:

The Honorable _____
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

To write your representative:

The Honorable _____
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

To telephone your senators or representatives, call the U.S. Capitol switchboard:
(202) 224-3121

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Las Cruces Residents Oppose BLM Land Trade

by Laura Meyer

On November 21, 1991, the Las Cruces Extra-territorial Zoning (ETZ) Commission approved a zoning request submitted by Las Cruces Transit Mix, Inc. for a Special Industry District of up to 235 acres of land located on the east mesa between the Organ Mountains and Las Cruces. The property is currently owned by BLM and is part of a land exchange between Las Cruces Transit Mix, Inc., and BLM. This land is intended to be used for a gravel pit, rock crusher, concrete batch plant, and asphalt plant.

The Soledad Landowners Association of Las Cruces is in the process of preparing an appeal of this zoning decision. We feel the area is an inappropriate site for a gravel pit, as it is open desert leading to the Organ Mountains, and is in full view from anywhere on the west face of the Organs, including the La Cueva/Dripping Springs Recreation Area.

The only access to the planned industrial area would be Dripping Springs Road, a two

lane road shared by tourists, residents, college students, and most of those going to Dripping Springs Recreational Area. According to the operator, the gravel pit would require 120 truck trips per day traveling over this narrow, winding dirt road, creating even more dust as well as a hazardous driving situation.

This location for a gravel pit is also completely inconsistent with the planned use of the area: open space and low density residential. Private property owners adjacent to the site had intended to develop this land for residential use. This obviously will be useless with a gravel pit next door.

However, it will make it easier for the adjacent landowners to get permission to rezone their own land for industrial use. Because these owners know their land is worth more as gravel pits and in other industrial uses, they are supporting the application for the gravel pit.

What You Can Do

Please write to: the Las Cruces Extra-Territorial Authority, c/o County Planning Department, Dona Ana County Annex, 430 South Main, Room 120, Las Cruces, NM 88001

If you are interested in attending the meeting in early February, please let us know and we will contact you as to the time and place, which will also be announced in the local newspapers. For further information, please contact: Bob or Kerry Calamusso at 521-4130, or Laura or Tito Meyer at 522-1259.

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