

A Word From the New Chair

by Van L. Perkins

Three years ago, the proposed Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act (NREPA) became a hot issue among environmentalists. The proposed Act moved away from traditional "small" wilderness bills and daringly proposed an 18 million acre, five state wilderness plan. For comparison, the Montana Wilderness Bill gave wilderness protection to 1.48 million acres.

The Sierra Club (along with most national environmental organizations) declined to support NREPA, on the grounds that it was not politically feasible and might jeopardize the Montana Wilderness Bill. David Brower, longtime head of the Sierra Club who led the fight to prevent the damming of the Colorado River in the Grand Canyon, disagreed. He reminded all of us that boldness, not timidity, led to success in enacting the Wilderness Act in 1964. Now, he argued, similar boldness, coupled with effective organization and activism, could lead to similar success.

Things change! In response to the Republican War on the Environment, the timidity of the Clinton

administration, and pressure from within, the Sierra Club is changing. We now support NREPA, and have stiffened our spine on other issues. David Brower and Dave Foreman now sit on our national board.

The message is clear. We must defend the environment with all the resources at our command. And we must stand firm. Foreman put it succinctly: Environmentalists have tended to be moderate. Anti-environmentalists have tended to be extreme. Anti-environmentalists have tended to win. Or, in Brower's words: "Compromise is

often necessary, but it ought not to originate with environmental leaders. Our role is to hold fast to what we believe is right . . . If we cannot find enough vigor in us or our friends to win, then let someone else propose the compromise, which we must then work hard to coax our way."

Our resources are, primarily, people. If, again in Brower's words, we are "to make it politically possible for elected officials, and the officials they appoint or condone, to care for the earth adequately," we need every concerned individual. We need to write letters, to make telephone calls,

to oppose bad legislation and support good initiatives, to do the myriad things that have brought us success in the past. Next issue, I will have something on how you can join the effort. In the meantime, if you cannot wait to get started, call me at (505) 983-8801, or write me at Route 19 Box 128H, Santa Fe, NM 87505.

Chapter Prepares for 1996 Legislative Session

by Doug Fraser, Sierra Club Lobbyist

The second session of the 42nd New Mexico State Legislature (the "short session") begins at noon Tuesday, January 16. Most of the Club's issues this year will hopefully involve only matters of adequate funding, i.e., Environment, Game and Fish, the Energy and Natural Resources Department will be seeking funding for their important programs.

We, unfortunately, have been hearing rumblings from within the Johnson administration that industry-backed weakening of the New Mexico Mining Act may be introduced by the Governor. Under the constitution, only funding bills are to be considered in the short session, unless the Governor, in his message to the Legislature, issues a special "call" for legislation on a specific issue. Let us hope mining will not receive this special attention.

Sue McIntosh will again be working on mining during the ses-

sion. Chapter Chair Van Perkins, Chapter Vice-Chair George Grossman, Santa Fe Group Conservation Chair Courtney White, and Santa Fe Group Mining Issues Chair Eleanor Eisenmenger will also be volunteering their time during the session.

I just attended the annual meeting of the state's Sierra Club activists/lobbyists, at which we reviewed some depressing reports from other states as to the roll back of important environmental legislation. The good news: we have been much more successful than most. The bad: we should fully expect a more concerted effort by industry here as we become more isolated.

Additionally, we received a report of voters' views of environmentalists. The public is in its historically foulest mood both towards politicians and special interest groups. Unfortunately, environmentalists are now viewed as a special interest group. Interestingly, the public views individuals working in the conservation and protection of our natural resources positively. Query: Do the terms "environmentalist" and "conservationist" indicate a real difference or only a semantic one?

In any event, and no matter what label you go by, anyone who is interested in getting involved as a Sierra Club volunteer, lobbyist or activist, please attend a legislative planning meeting in the new Santa Fe Group Office at 621 Old Santa Fe Trail, Suite 10, at 5:30 p.m. on January 11th.



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We Get Letters. . .

Dear Editor:

Our schools and lands are the big losers in the recent decision by New Mexico Land Commissioner Ray Powell, Jr. to reject bids by environmental groups to lease state lands. Whether you are a parent of a school-age child, a fiscal conservative, or simply care about our environment, you have a stake in this matter.

There are nearly 9 million acres of state trust lands in New Mexico--about 12 percent of the state. Although long the exclusive domain of ranching interests, these are not grazing lands. They were granted to New Mexico to support our schools and other public institutions. The duty of the Land Commissioner, as set forth in our state Enabling Act and Constitution, is to protect these lands and generate revenues, not to promote the interest of any particular industry or user group.

When Forest Guardians and the Southwest Environmental Center submitted competitive bids on nine leases encompassing over 4,000 acres this past September, we sought to use the marketplace to take advantage of dirt cheap prices to protect land instead of exploit it. We had three major objectives.

First and foremost, we wanted to give the land a rest. Streamside ecosystems are arteries of life in the arid Southwest, yet because they have been clogged with cattle for a century or more, they are in the "worst shape in history" according to the EPA. By fencing off cattle, we can restore streamside habitats so critical to wildlife and the health of our watersheds.

Second, we wanted to show that these lands are underpriced, and the Land Office is not maximizing revenues from grazing leases. Ranchers pay an average of 52 cents per acre annually--less than the cost of a cup of coffee. Our groups offered to pay double this amount. When ranchers begrudgingly matched our bids, we demonstrated that more money can be raised for our schools, as is required by New Mexico's constitution.

And third, we sought to raise public awareness of the stakes and issues involved in the management of these lands, particularly the inattention paid by the Land Office to irreplaceable elements of our state's natural heritage, such as streamside habitats and endangered species.

Under an outmoded system of "preferential rights," ranchers were able to hang on to their leases by matching our higher bids, which they did. But faced for the first time with a challenge by non-ranchers for state lands, they cried foul and demanded that the Land Office reject our bids altogether. Mr. Powell complied, thereby shutting us out of the bidding process and enabling ranchers to keep their stranglehold on state lands for the same low fees they had been paying.

Why were our bids invalidated? Powell was swayed by ranchers' complaints that we were "cherry picking" by bidding on certain parcels and not entire leases. Ranchers argued that we were going after the most valuable lands, the loss of which would cause them economic hardship and inconvenience. In a press release, Powell said he was worried that dividing leases into smaller pieces would lead to "chaos."

Chaos for whom? Certainly not for our schools, which would have benefitted from higher revenues, nor for our lands and wildlife, which would have been better protected. It is true that some of our bids were for partial leases, as expressly allowed under Land Office regulations. We targeted streamside habitats because the Land Office, which has only one biologist on staff, has yet to acknowledge the importance of these areas and hence does not protect them.

It was not our intention to harass ranchers or take land out of livestock production without cause. Had we obtained leases, ranchers might have had to do things differently, but that's a risk of doing business using someone else's property. And if the areas we bid on are more valuable to ranchers than other lands, shouldn't they be willing to pay more to lease them?

Powell's reluctance to "carve leases into

smaller and smaller pieces" rings somewhat hollow, considering the Land Office's willingness to carve land out of grazing leases for oil and gas development, mining and just about anything else that brings in more than four bits per acre annually, except, apparently, conservation.

The irony is that ranchers, generally considered staunch advocates of the free market and minimal government interference, seem willing to make an exception for their industry. Ranchers in Luna and Chaves Counties were quick to seek the assistance of their county commissions and state legislators in urging the Land Office to reject our bids.

The bottom line--Powell put the interests of ranchers ahead of school children and the environment. We played by the rules, we offered to pay more to protect the land, but the Land Office changed the rules in the middle of the game. An established competitive bidding process was suddenly found lacking when non-ranchers got involved. Ranchers may have won a temporary victory, but we intend to fight to ensure that our schools and the land ultimately prevail.

Sincerely,

Kevin Bixby
 John Horning

[Note: Kevin Bixby is the director of the Southwest Environmental Center in Las Cruces and former member of the Rio Grande Chapter Executive Committee. John Horning is Watershed Protection Program Director for Forest Guardians in Santa Fe.]

Dear Editor:

I appreciate the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club giving me this opportunity to talk about our recent agricultural lease renewals and the issues behind them.

I especially want to clear up some misstatements that have been made about my constitutional duties and the purpose of the state land trust grant.

The land grant trust generates nearly 20 percent of our public school budget. Without the revenues from the trust lands and the trust funds, every New Mexico income tax filer would have to pay an additional \$800 a year just to support our public schools, universities and hospitals.

Our job is to look after 13 million acres of land that is set aside to benefit you and future generations of New Mexicans.

It is only partially correct to say that I am constitutionally required to make the most money possible from the trust lands. In the late 1800s, when the sole motive was maximizing the dollar, little consideration was given to the long-term health and productivity of the land.

As a model of sustainability, the land trust helps our schools more by producing stable revenues in the long run, rather than unpredictable and irregular higher revenues in the short run.

All of my decisions were made in full accordance with the law and in the best interest of the trust, to encourage stability and good stewardship.

The best interest of the trust means something special to me, as a field biologist and veterinarian with a major interest in wildlife rehabilitation. I carry out my duties with two major purposes in mind:

—Utilize our natural resources to generate revenues for our school children and other beneficiaries in a manner that sustains healthy land for future generations; and

—Maintain an environment that provides our lessees with economic opportunities to help sustain healthy rural communities.

As a result of the grazing lease renewal process, I reached one fundamental decision: Issuing partial leases for tracts that are carved out of existing leases is not in the best interest of the trust. As we go about revising our rules, partial leasing will be discouraged.

I rejected many partial leases because the smaller tracts were integral to the utilization of

(con't on page 18)

Recently, I have been thinking about dwindling fish populations, bumper stickers, trash compactors, and the future of the environmental movement. And it's making me feel very uneasy.

Over the past year or so, a deluge of alarming stories have rained down on our heads concerning the precipitous decline of wild fish populations in the world's oceans. Fish stocks have dropped so rapidly that many governments have been forced to impose moratoria on the harvest of particular types of fish for fear that these populations might actually go extinct. Needless to say, these decisions have created havoc in the fishing industry, which is in jeopardy of collapsing altogether, especially along the north-eastern coast of Canada. Many fishermen, in turn, have pointed their fingers at the environmental community, saying, in effect, "get off our backs!"—a charge that baffles me entirely. It is, overall, a very distressing situation.

What alarms me most, however, is the lesson not being learned from this tragedy. The cause of the population decline—overfishing by humans—is beyond debate, and yet no one in the industry seems willing to admit fault, or share any responsibility. People would rather point fingers and swear oaths. But, the truth is, the fishing industry appears incapable of living within one simple rule: there must be a limit to the catch. Obviously, there are only so many fish in the sea; harvest them all and everyone suffers. Conversely, if the fishermen chose to live and work within certain limits, then they could have their fish and eat it too, so to speak. It really seems that simple: fish together in moderation, or die together in exploitation.

Living Within Limits

If I had to boil down environmentalism's central thesis into a bumper sticker I would write this: Learning to Live Within Limits. Everything we say and do as members of the movement, when we stop to think about it, comes back to this message. If we want to live in a healthy, attractive, and profitable world then we must abide by certain limitations to our wants and needs. We simply cannot have it all. This rule applies not only to Canadian fishermen, or to ranchers, loggers, and other commodity-based lifestyles, but to environmentalists too. A forest full of Spotted Owls, or a rangeland free of cattle, is, for a variety of reasons, simply an unrealistic goal. We must accept limitations to our dreams, and actions, as well. This is a lesson we can all share—living within limitations means striving for a balance of dreams and realities.

The trouble is nobody likes limits. Nobody likes to get their hand slapped when it is caught in the cookie jar. A stern parent, shaking a finger, saying "no, no, no" isn't anybody's idea of fun, or profit. For over a generation, the environmental movement has acted as this country's stern parent, shaking a finger at polluters and recalcitrant fed-

eral agencies (and occasionally striking them). It was a tough role to play, especially when the children threw noisier and more violent temper tantrums. But as any good parent knows, it is a job that must be done, if he or she intends for the child to grow into a healthy and productive citizen. If not liked, we were at least respected for what we were attempting to accomplish.

But something has changed in the last five years, or so. The tantrums by natural resource users, and others, have grown to deafening proportions, inciting some, on a national political level, to attempt to dismantle the very limitations that are considered reasonable by most people. The stern parent has suddenly become a bad person; someone to be reviled as a totalitarian bent on imposing his or her will on our playpen private rights. We seem, suddenly, and in a heat, to resent any and all limitations on our behavior—and damn the consequences.

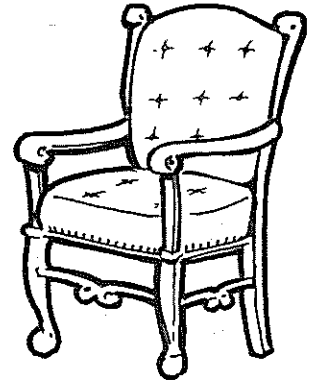
Life in a Trash Compactor

I'm not a sociologist but I will hazard one explanation for this dramatic turn of events: we act as if we lived in a trash compactor. It might be true; by all indications we are being squeezed on four sides: by a shrinking base of natural resources, by stagnant wages, by a breakdown in cultural norms and values, and by a complete loss of faith in the political process to make a constructive impact on our lives. Slowly, and inexorably, the compactor keeps squeez-

ing us, resulting in a great deal of anger. A convenient target for this rage is the stern environmental parent. A resentment has begun to build about our message, living within limits, because it is not what people want to hear when they are being compressed into a little ball of trash. It is still a good message, of course, and one, I believe, that will allow us ultimately to climb out of the compactor, but that may not be the point anymore.

Cynical attitudes about the corporate motives of the Republican leaders in Congress aside for the moment, I believe that the attack on environmental regulations at the state and federal level is rooted in this "compaction" of American life. The anger appears to be genuine, as does the resentment, and it would be a serious error on the part of the environmental community to dismiss them as the illogical rantings of a lunatic fringe. There is more substance to this complaint than we realize. People are hurting, frustration is mounting, and the environmental movement, as a consequence, runs the risk of irrelevancy. We must turn our attention to the noise in our midst; we must find a new way of articulating our message—to accept limits as a form of salvation—so that it means something to the majority of Americans. Right now, we're not doing that.

And it's making me very uneasy.



The Uneasy Chair

by

Courtney White

Sierra Club Calls for Boycott of Shell in Death of Nigerian Activist

On November 10, the military government of Nigeria executed Ogoniland writer Ken Saro-Wiwa and 8 other environmental and community activists, who had been tried and convicted without due process. The Sierra Club Board of Directors has condemned the Nigerian government's actions and has called for a boycott of Royal Dutch Shell for its complicity in Nigeria's human rights and environmental abuses.

Royal Dutch Shell has a documented record of polluting Ogoniland with its operations and of ignoring the Nigerian government's repression of environmental and other citizen activists, like Ken Saro-Wiwa, who have organized to oppose the pollution of their communities, their drinking water, and their farmland.

The boycott should continue until Royal Dutch Shell has:

—cleaned up existing pollution in Nigeria from its oil and gas development practices;

—agreed that future operations in Nigeria will conform to standards no weaker than those it would be required to meet in the U.S.; and

—paid fair compensation directly to the people adversely affected by its activities in Nigeria.

Royal Dutch Shell should

also suspend plans for any new construction in Nigeria which might contribute to additional pollution until it has met the above conditions.

The Sierra Club has also called upon all oil companies operating in Nigeria to use their obvious influence on the Nigerian government to stop the environmental and human abuses. In addition, the Sierra Club has called upon the United States government and all other governments to impose sanctions against the government of Nigeria, including asking the World Bank, the International Finance Corporation, and other lending agencies to withhold funding of all but humanitarian projects in Nigeria until:

—Nigerian dictator Sani Abacha resigns and steps are taken to restore a democratic government in Nigeria;

—the bodies of the 9 executed Ogonis are returned to their families for burial; and

—Royal Dutch Shell meets the conditions for ending the boycott against it.

Until these conditions are met, the Sierra Club urges that the following sanctions be applied:

1) International economic sanctions, including a boycott of Nigerian petroleum products.

2) Investigation by the The Hague's War Crimes Tribunal of the November 10 executions.

3) Barring of Nigerian national teams from participation in international sporting events.

4) Freezing of personal assets and bank accounts of Nigerians involved with the Nigerian military regime.

5) Denial of visas to Nigerians directly involved or closely associated with the Nigerian military regime.

6) Withholding of financial support by international lending agencies for any development in Nigeria, except for humanitarian projects.

The Sierra Club believes that international, national, and individual actions are necessary to stop Nigeria's assaults on environmental and human rights.

On December 22, the United Nations voted to condemn the Nigerian government for human rights violations stemming from the November executions.

See Sample Letter to the Editor on Page 15

Mining is Silly

by
Sue
McIntosh

Since this column last appeared, I have heard from a couple of people that perhaps the title is inappropriate. Well, is mining silly? Keep in mind that just being politically incorrect or annoying to fans of the industry does not make the title inaccurate. Is the truth inappropriate? Judge for yourself, and let me know what you think. If you can think of a better title, send it up to me. Only painfully humorous titles will be considered. In the meantime, let's talk about mining. By the way—if the truth scares you, do not read this column.

In the last issue, we talked about Copar Pumice Company's demand to be allowed to mine pumice in San Juan Canyon in the Jemez Mountains at the cost of a high quality perennial headwaters creek and watershed, so that Levi Strauss can stonewash jeans. On December 9th, we took about a dozen interested folks up to look at San Juan Canyon where Richard Cook—oops, Copar Pumice Company—plans to dig up our pumice. *[As of December 19, 1995, according to the State of New Mexico Corporation Commission, Richard P. Cook remains the President and Director of Copar Pumice Company. Mr. Cook valiantly denies that he has anything further to do with Copar.]* We talked about how the Canyon would change if mining was allowed as proposed. It was a very successful trip and we will offer another field inspection of the Copar proposed mines this spring. Stay tuned.

Perhaps some folks might argue that Copar's plans are not silly. One thing that the proposed Copar South Pit is NOT however, is a minimal impact mine. According to a decision of the state Mining and Minerals Division, Copar does not qualify for this less rigorous permit review process under the New Mexico Mining Act (NMMA), because the min-

ing will occur in critical habitat for the Mexican Spotted Owl, and because the mine, including its haul route, will directly and adversely impact the headwaters of San Juan Canyon. Minimal impact status would have enabled Copar to proceed without gathering baseline data, and therefore without analyzing the impact the mine and haul route will have on the Canyon and without public notice and comment. For obvious reasons, this privileged provision is offered only to mines which are certain to have but a "minimal impact" on the environment. Copar's mine is not one of those.

So, the jig's up for Copar, and now they will have to come back into the permitting process as a regular new mine. This requires increased permitting review, baseline data collection and analysis, full public notice and opportunity for a public hearing and other necessary prerequisites to permit approval.

Copar's initial comments to the press regarding denial of their coveted minimal impact status might give the impression that Copar was being less than forthright in its initial submittal of a 9.7 acre mine, which is conveniently below the 10 acre limit for minimal impact consideration. Following the denial, Copar's mine proposal swelled to 60+ acres in the press. Hmmm.

Take a Trip To Coparland

Copar has other irons in the fire in the Jemez Mountains, including the proposed new 135 acre El Cajete mine, also to be located in the Santa Fe National Forest in the Jemez Mountains. Before we talk about this new mine, though, we must all escape reality and step into the fantasy world of *Coparland*, where Pumice is king, Copar runs the show and the state Mining and Minerals Division does as it is told.

You see, Copar says that the new El Cajete mine isn't a new mine at all. Instead, it is nothing but a "logical extension" of Copar's existing Los Conchas mine *[which happens to be almost two miles away from the currently undisturbed site of the proposed El Cajete mine.]* And so, Copar has advised the Mining and Minerals Division that El Cajete is, in Coparland, actually an "existing mine," which should be "grandfathered" in under less protective provisions of the mining act.

Never mind that El Cajete is a NEW proposal to mine 135 acres of previously unmined land that is almost two miles distant from any other mine. Nevermind that the United States Forest Service has determined that permitting El Cajete would be a **major federal action** which is likely to significantly affect the human environment, and is now producing a full Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for their consideration of this NEW mine. The New Mexico Mining and Minerals Division is about to treat El Cajete as **only an addition** to Copar's existing mine, two miles away. And with no further ado, sidestep reality, and give Copar a sweet grandfathered deal.

The thing that troubles me is that El Cajete is not proposed in

Coparland, it is proposed in the Santa Fe National Forest, and it is a new mine, with new disturbance and new decisions to be made. It should be held to the standards of today's modern technology and understanding as required by the mining act, not grandfathered in by back room politics.

Mining and Minerals Division needs to hear from its real constituents on this El Cajete business. Call them at 505-827-5970. Let them know whether you live in the real world where water and wildlife are important and the government works for all the people, or in Coparland, where government runs from the truth and where water and wildlife are sacrificed for the profit of a few individuals. Call me for more information.

Copper--A Man's Mineral

Well, there I go talking about that goofy little pumice rock again, when last time, I promised you Copper--A Man's Mineral. Alright, here it is.

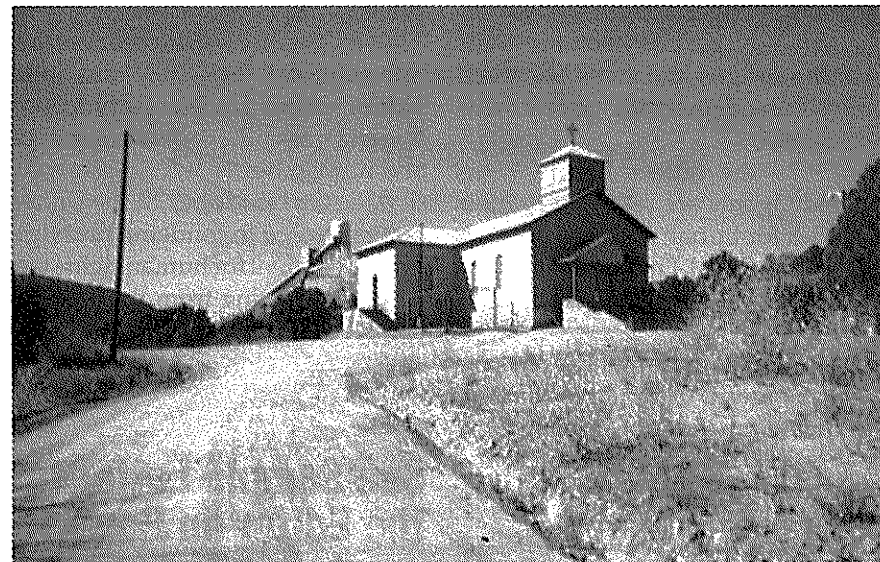
Hold on a minute. I must preface the following remarks with the grave news that the Sierra Club, the Rio Grande Chapter and our fine former chairperson, Gwen Wardwell, have all been sued by Cobre Mining Company. The cause, as far as I can tell, is this: the Sierra Club filed a Notice of Intent to file a civil action (lawsuit) against Cobre Mining Company and against the Mining and Minerals Division. Really, that is it. The reader should be aware that I have tempered my remarks due to debilitating fear of further punishment by Cobre's legion of attorneys. Having said that, let us proceed.

[Note: Cobre is in violation of the NMMA for failing to file an adequate site assessment as required by the NMMA. Because the Mining and Minerals Division has done nothing to cause Cobre to abate its violation, that agency is itself in violation of the act. That is our theory, supported, we believe, by the weight of evidence. The NMMA provides a perfect right to file such litigation, and mandates a responsibility to provide 60 days worth of notice to Cobre, MMD and others, so that perhaps, something short of litigation may resolve the outstanding issues. The Sierra Club complied with its duties by filing the Notice of Intent to sue. In response, Cobre has sued the Sierra Club and Ms. Wardwell personally, for the act of doing what we are required to and have an absolute right to do, under the New Mexico Mining Act.]

[Cobre's lawsuit was filed in Grant County, an obviously more favorable forum for a mining company who is seeking the easiest audience to hear exactly what it has done. It is a "declaratory judgement action," which seeks to preempt Sierra Club's ability to bring suit against Cobre in the future, in the Santa Fe forum allowed by the Mining Act, and instead give the matter over to a hometown court for a nice warm pat on the back for the mining company. The Sierra Club has launched a vigorous defense, and is now well aware of the kind of mining company Cobre Mining Company is. We already had a pretty good idea.]

Top: A view of the Continental Mine near Fierro in Grant County, showing waste dump on the left, pit in the center and tailings facilities on the right.

Bottom: Fierro Church, which is surrounded by the existing mine and threatened by the proposed expansion.



While ads on the T.V. assure us all that the copper of Phelps Dodge surrounds us, the copper of Cobre Mining Company seems to be flowing down Hanover Creek, east of Silver City. Of course, the law says Cobre is supposed to keep a closer eye on the metals and other contaminants generated at their big old copper mine, but, you know how those things go. Now, it is becoming increasingly apparent that those pesky heavy metals are getting away from Cobre at their Continental Mine, fouling local water resources both on and off site. And it's not only copper, but preliminary evidence exists of unruly mercury, cadmium, cobalt and zinc as well.

So what is the Continental Mine, and who is Cobre Mining Company, and why can't they keep their heavy metals to themselves? Glad you asked. Cobre's Continental Mine is located approximately 3 miles north of the town of Hanover in Grant County, New Mexico. The mine produces copper ore from underground workings and an open pit. The ore is crushed and milled on site, with the resulting copper concentrate shipped to an off-site smelter. Tailings from the milling process are discharged to tailings ponds via slurry pipelines. Waste rock is deposited on site, and profits are used to line the pockets of a small handful of appreciative mine owners.

The mine is situated on both public (BLM) and private lands. Establishment of the Continental Mine has been dated at 1964, although historic underground mining has occurred in the area since the middle 19th century. The mine shut down in 1982, when the operator, Sharon Steel, fell into bankruptcy troubles, laying off about 400 miners. Around 1990, Bayard Mining Company began to smell cash in the Continental copper reserves, and reinitiated development at the mine. In 1992, Cobre Mining Company came off the bench and is currently in the hot seat.

NEPA in the Hands of Miners

The first issue is a NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) question. NEPA requires investigation and disclosure of environmental and health-based impacts on projects involving BLM land, among other things. Typically, we see this investigation in the form of an "environmental assessment" (EA) or and "environmental impact statement" (EIS). One purpose of NEPA is to provide an unbiased and honest assessment of the true impacts to public land of proposed management actions, prior to approving such actions.

According to federal law, mining operations which disturb public lands can occur only after compliance with the mandates of NEPA and after approval of a Plan of Operations (POO) by the land management agency, here, the BLM. We should only approve and allow that which we fully understand. Reasonable.

So what NEPA investigation has occurred at the Continental

Mine and when was a POO approved? Cobre finally got around to filing a Plan of Operations on June 21, 1993, despite the fact that they had been mining for some time. The POO was prepared entirely by Cobre consultants, and Cobre's lawyer. Although Cobre claims their proposed POO was approved by the BLM in January 1995, BLM officials don't believe that is quite right. BLM's best guess is that maybe the POO was approved sometime in 1993, but no one at BLM has been able to lay their hands on that darned approval document.

Is there currently an approved POO for the Continental Mine? BLM cannot say for sure right now. We have yet to see evidence of any approval. BLM has called in an "adjudicator" to sort out their troubles, and the Sierra Club has requested a copy of the entire Continental Mine file so we can see for ourselves.

Is it possible that the BLM does not know whether or when the POO for the Continental Mine was approved? The whole thing is kind of like a three ring circus with dancing elephants and bears going on in the Vatican chapel, and nary a single cardinal nor the pope actually knowing if or when such activity was approved. We will keep you updated.

Also on June 21, 1993, the NEPA document, which is intended to provide an honest, thorough and unbiased investigation of the impacts of the mining activity, was issued. According to the list of preparers included in the EA, that document was also authored by Cobre's consultants and lawyers, and it was all given to the BLM, authored and prepackaged for convenience, by the mining company, who has the most profit to gain.

Trespass and Violations on Your Land

Next, note that during the period 1992-1994 at least, Cobre mined copper, processed it on site, slurried the tailings to ponds on unpatented BLM claims and deposited waste on unpatented BLM claims, all without an approved Plan of Operations. There are laws against that. BLM regulations call it trespass. What has BLM done about it? Nothing. We are trying to figure out why.

Going right ahead, it looks like Cobre is in significant violation of their approved/unapproved POO. We are in the process of nailing this down, and no, BLM has not officially determined that violations of the POO are occurring, but then again, the BLM never bothered to stop Cobre from operating in trespass during the first half of this decade, either.

The POO includes no site specific standards for the Continental Mine. There are, however, several "measures to prevent unnecessary and undue degradation" included at Section 5.0 of the POO. Based upon research conducted thus far, Cobre Mining Co. appears to be in violation of 9 of the 9 measures which have been identified. The Sierra Club is currently taking steps to further verify and characterize these potential violations through discussions with BLM and the New Mexico Environ-

ment Department. We have compiled a preliminary report regarding these potential violations as well as other issues having to do with the EA and POO. Call 983-2703 for more information.

Until next time, ponder this question: If you robbed banks from 1992-1994, and you finally got caught in 1995, would the cops let you go if you promised that you would try never to rob banks again? I say probably not. So, if a mine operates in trespass on our public lands from 1992 - 1994 ...

As John Prine is apt to exclaim, "OOoh baby! Its a big ole goofy world."

Mining is Silly

(con't)

TO MAKE A MINE YOU'VE GOT TO BREAK A FEW ROCKS

A Workshop on Mining and Its Effects on Public and Private Land

Sponsored by the Conservation Committee of the Santa Fe Group of the Rio Grande Sierra Club;
Support Provided by Mineral Policy Center

Saturday, January 13, 1996, 9am to 4:30pm
Main Hall, Unitarian Church, 107 W. Barcelona Street, Santa Fe

- 9:00 - 10:30am **MINING 101.** Everything you always wanted to know about modern mining but were afraid to ask.
Speakers: Dr. Art Montana, Chairman of the New Mexico Mining Commission, and Dr. Val Green, mining engineer and consultant, formerly on the NM Mining Commission.
- 10:30 - 10:45 **Break**
- 10:45 - Noon **THE RULES OF THE GAME.** A review of the significant Federal and State laws that govern mining activity, including New Mexico's Hard Rock Mining and Reclamation Act and the infamous 1872 Mining Law.
Speakers: Aimee Boulanger of the Mineral Policy Center in Washington, D.C., Sue McIntosh, Rio Grande Sierra Club
- Noon - 1:15 **Lunch** (provided by the Sierra Club—donations accepted)
- 1:15 - 2:15 **CLIMBING IN THE RING.** The basics of mining activism—what one needs to know to start the fight, where to fight, and how to keep from being knocked out.
Speaker: Jeanie Cragin, Santa Fe County mining activist extraordinaire
- 2:15 - 2:30 **Break**
- 2:30 - 3:30 **WHAT'S HOT.** A panel discussion of the most pressing mining issues in New Mexico, including attempts to weaken the mining law in the upcoming legislative session, new mines, bad mines, and the role for the State in reform of the 1872 Mining Law.
Speakers: Doug Fraser, Sierra Club lobbyist, Sue McIntosh, Aimee Boulanger, and Courtney White, moderator
- 3:30 - 4:30 **LET'S TALK!** A wrap-up discussion based on questions from the audience.

For further information and registration, call Sue McIntosh (466-2001) or Courtney White (982-5502).

Ski Report

Guessing the Weather. For most of December, skiers have been wondering if it will ever snow this year. Finally, we've received the first significant delivery, and temperatures have dropped so that what we have is staying. My guess is that, from Christmas on, skiable snow will be available, especially at higher elevations. Last season, by comparison, we were skiing in very good conditions in early November.

On 20 December, Chama, a perennial favorite, had skiable snow cover only on the north slopes and shaded areas, with bare southern exposures. The Tres Piedras area, a high plateau about 30 miles east of Taos, had a more or less complete cover averaging about six inches, and very skiable. This cover probably will form a good base for future snow.

Some of the Alpine lift-served areas, at least in the northern part of New Mexico, are now open, at least in part. Santa Fe reports about 18 to 24 compacted inches and packed powder surface; Ski Rio, near Costilla, is about the same. Taos Ski Valley, surprisingly, reports only 14 inches.

Skimming the Surface. Skiing on thin snow always poses a bit of risk. It's frequently impossible to see shallowly covered rocks. To get the most out of seasons like this, a skier will do well to have an old, junk pair of skis available. The ski swaps are long past, but check the thrift stores and garage sales. Prices in the range of \$10 aren't uncommon.

Ski classes. With the shortage of snow, all of the scheduled Sierra Club ski classes have had to be cancelled. I'm now investigating the possibility of a couple of introductory on-snow classes in January, probably in either Chama or Tres Piedras, which will require a couple of hours of travel time. I'm attempting to gauge the extent of interest, so if you would like to participate and don't mind the commute, give me a call (466-9329).

Thoughts on Advancement. For the skier with a season or two of beginner-level touring behind them, the question always is how to escape the shuffling mode and advance to more sophisticated technique. You, the aspiring intermediate, know there are things to learn, and the obvious answer is to sign up for a class. And having learned perfect skills in the class, you subsequently discover that nothing you learned in the class works. Feelings of gross incompetence. Confusion. You wish you hadn't told all your friends how good you were. The boyfriend or girlfriend you wanted to impress now knows the truth: you're a complete fool.

Advancing from beginner to intermediate level involves new skills, for sure, but probably more importantly it is in the judgment of what technique is suitable for the particular snow conditions. This you will rarely learn in a class, because, unbeknownst to you, the instructor has selected optimum snow conditions for you. The perfect wedge, executed on a firm, smooth surface, is impossible in deep snow. And few classes ever deal with how to manage downhill acceleration in a set of tracks a foot or two deep. Or breakable crust. Or a dozen other circumstances typical in the backcountry.

With a background of about 16 years of instruction, I've concluded that the best way to advance from backcountry beginner to backcountry intermediate is to spend time skiing with people who possess solid intermediate or advanced skills, and who don't mind sharing their knowledge and helping you out. Be nice to these people. The Sierra Club outings program is particularly valuable in this respect. It gets the beginning skier out on the trail in the company of a more experienced leader. As changing terrain and snow conditions present themselves, there is someone to suggest how you, with your individual level of skill, should manage them. Talk to the leader in advance. Describe to them what your skill level is, determine if the trip is appropriate to you, and most importantly, inquire if the leader is willing to help you master what you will encounter. Some will. Some, unfortunately, won't be bothered. Stick with the former.

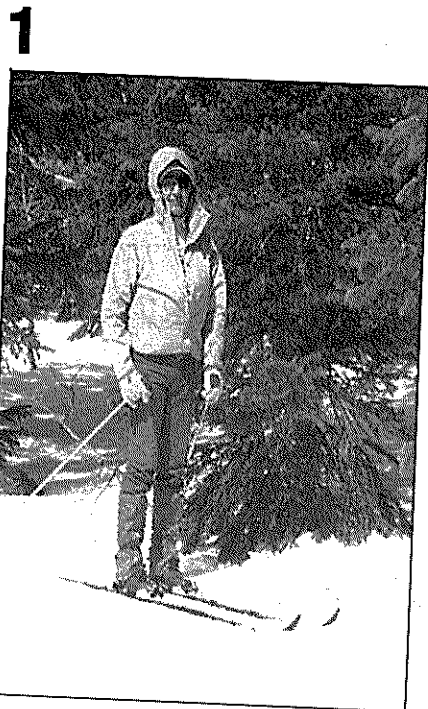
Beginning skiers frequently are misguided into thinking that there is one specific skill applicable to a specific challenge. In fact, there are many ways to handle a situation. The advanced skier may blast straight down the hill. The intermediate may execute a series of stem turns or stemmed christies. The beginner may select an unthreatening zig-zag traverse back and forth across the slope, changing direction with kick turns or

snowplows. Ultimately, all get to the bottom successfully. Short of descending the Matterhorn, or a Taos chute, there usually is a way, often simple if not elegant, for managing any hill, up or down.

And should a person feel inferior with the less-than-elegant back and forth traverses, take a cue from mountaineers whose lives may depend on avoiding a fall. There is no showing off or fancy technique when lives are at risk. That's for the Alpine "downhill" crowd, with the Ski Patrol standing by to save them. The most common turning techniques in severe conditions on the high peaks, where the skier's fate is in his/her own hands alone, are the humble stem turn and the stemmed christy. What confronts the mountaineer on the peak and the beginner on the hill is essentially the same. Each on his own skill level. The safe, controlled technique they utilize is, surprisingly, almost identical--and as old as skiing itself.

Thinking about it. Perhaps more than any other sport, skiing is a matter of getting out and doing it--at whatever skill level you possess. Technique follows need. Until you challenge yourself, you probably won't need much more technique than you have already. But, in looking up from the golf course to the ridges and peaks above, it's enticing, and a challenge, and those achievements will require new techniques. And many years and many ridges later, when you're old and gray, you'll relinquish such challenges and be happy and satisfied skiing across the golf course as you did decades before. Ask any Norwegian or Swede. Skiing is a mirror of one's life.

(The author is a former chairman of the Santa Fe Group; a long-time NordicWest instructor; editor of NordicWest, a backcountry ski magazine published in Bend, Oregon; and has conducted ski classes and ski tours for the Rio Grande Chapter for many years.)



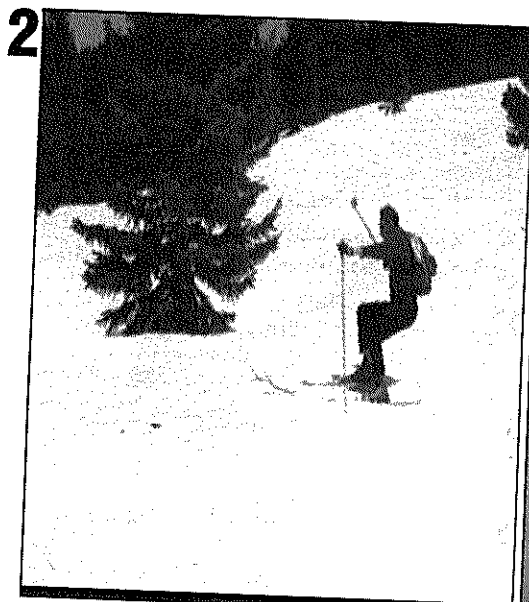
1. Author, demonstrating that discretion (and paralysis) is often the better part of valor. West of Tres Piedras, near Vallecitos overlook.

2. A two-point landing off a cornice near Chama. Challenge determines need for technique. Other skiers elected to go around cornice.

3. A nice Telemark turn on firm snow surface, near Brazos Cliffs. Thirty feet away breakable crust would make this technique very difficult, requiring a conservative stemmed christy.

4. A group of intermediate and advanced skiers on easy terrain near Cloudcroft. Having a good time on a moonlight trip, while heading for breathtaking overlook of Tularosa Basin. Challenge isn't everything in skiing.

5. A fun trip on scenic and easy touring terrain on the East Fork, Jemez River. The same year Copar Pumice Mine, with consent of U.S. Forest Service, destroyed much of the ridge to the left of this spot. On the upbeat side, two skiers in this picture fell in love and were married. It does happen!



New Subcommittee Forming on Transportation, Air Quality, Land Use and Growth Management

The Albuquerque Group invites our members to a discussion group on Transportation and Land Use Issues. The intent is to form a core group of people from Los Lunas/Belen, East Mountain, West Side, East Side, the Valley Communities, Rio Rancho and Bernalillo to focus public attention on the Environment/Quality of Life elements that make up livable communities.

We are concerned about the mobility choices being made that can either preserve our air quality or contribute to its deterioration. We are concerned that the methods we use to accommodate growth directly impact transportation, air quality and land use.

Our January meeting will review some possible initiatives we may take, including but not limited to:

- creating a community preference survey to identify our common visions of development,
- creating an alternative transportation analysis to Paseo De Norte through Petroglyph National Monument, focusing on light-rail, transit, ridepool and bicycle alternatives,
- adopting an urban bike trail section and creating a dialogue with businesses to support bike commuting and parking,
- mapping out and analyzing the trends in open space and farmland losses due to sprawl growth,
- disseminating to all community decisionmakers critical information on successful projects elsewhere in the country.

Please call Ralph Wrons 275-0856 (Energy) or Stefan Verchinski 888-1370 (Transportation) if you wish to attend our first meeting on Wed. January 10, 1996 at 7:00 pm, at 2700 Espanola NE, corner of Espanola and Phoenix NE, North of Menaul and East of Louisiana NE.

What a Year! A Report from the Chair

by Susan Gorman

It's that time of year when looking back to see where you've been and looking forward to see where you're going is appropriate. It's the Janus thing, I guess. So, I looked back through minutes of Excom meetings and checked out other records of the past year and just sat and thought.... What have we accomplished and what's next??

The year began with a news report that Bruce Babbitt and Pete Domenici had teamed up to pass legislation to enable construction of Paseo Del Norte Freeway through Petroglyph National Monument. We mobilized the phone tree and letter writers and asked Sierra Club President Robbie Cox to present the Club's position. The resulting citizen outcry caused Babbitt to make a strong statement in opposition to the road and the bill evaporated.

This was only the first of a continuing barrage of assaults against preservation of the Monument. This campaign has continued for 10 years and isn't over yet. Ike Eastvold continues to lead us with persistence and courage and we need to assist him whenever possible.

We're trying to emulate to Los Angeles...a bleak prospect! The debate over the Westside Strategic Plan has continued through the year and will require sustained efforts in the future. This plan, as presently drafted, sets the stage for rampant development of the vast West Mesa of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County. During the year, Bruce Batson lead our participation in the process by giving testimony and writing comments. But it is clear that this alone will not convince the Mayor and the developers to stop large-scale development, with little concern for the cost of the infrastructure and the water supply. As they look out to the West Mesa, they see dollars, not sprawl.

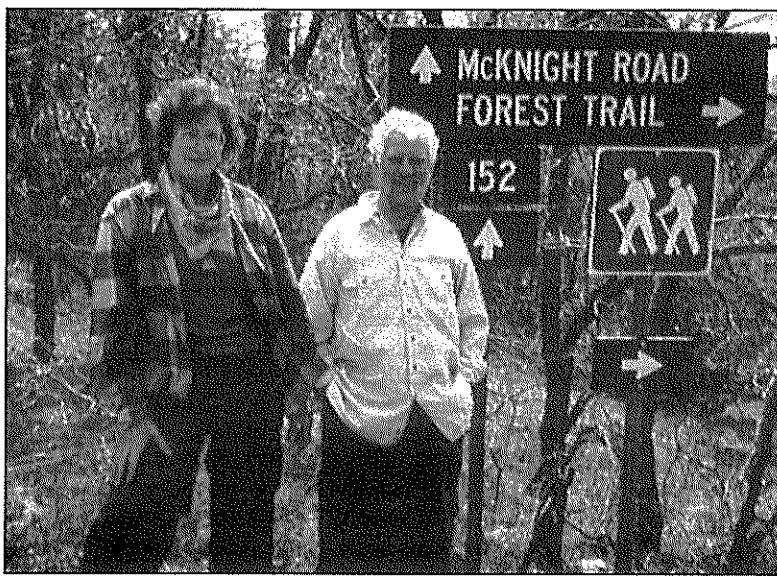
To seek a more effective way to bring sanity to development in Albuquerque, the Sustainable Albuquerque Campaign was conceived. We have collected a list of folks who want to help and we will be having workshops to share ideas and educate ourselves about the alternatives to sprawl. Everyone is invited to participate.

We lost a major campaign when the bulldozers began clearing cottonwoods in preparation for the construction of Montano Bridge in spite of untiring efforts lead by Richard Barish. We won one with the decision that the paved road up Las Huertas Canyon will not be built. We are still hopeful that the money will be found to purchase the land at Tres Pisos Trailhead.

We joined a dozen other environmental organizations to turn out supporters for the Lobo. At a hearing before the US Fish & Wildlife Service, over 100 people spoke passionately for reintroduction of the Lobo, amid wolf howls of approval. This was a great event because we dominated the hearing and because we demonstrated that environmentalists can unite and work together. We need to do much more of this.

The success of the Wolf hearing was due in part to the Wildlands Conference, which brought together environmentalists from New Mexico, Colorado, Utah and Arizona to share information and techniques. We hope this is the first of many such conferences. We plan to initiate another one in 1996.

Through the year, we continued to fight the War on the Environment being waged in Washington DC. Supported by the National Club, we have waged a continuous war of words....letters, calls, faxes and EMail to Senators Domenici and Bingaman and Congressman Schiff, letters to the Editor, alerts to distribute on Earth Day and recently at Wild Oats, articles in the *Sierra* to let members know what's going on in Congress. There have been some clear victories but, as I write this, we are hoping for Presidential vetoes to prevent disasters like oil drilling in Alaska, EPA and Department of the Interior budget cuts, construction of the Animas La Plata water diversion project. The bad Utah Wilderness bill is still alive and will be coming to the Senate floor for a vote soon. Domenici's Grazing bill, the Exotic Herbivore Munching Act, is set for a



Karl and Doris Brammer in the Gila Wilderness

A Backpacking Vacation in the Gila

by Susan Gorman and Blair Brown

Back in the Spring, the Albuquerque Group received a letter from Germany requesting information on places to spend a vacation hiking in untouched wilderness areas such as the Gila Wilderness. We supplied them with maps and a guidebook and as their planning progressed, specific information on sources of food and water and the towns in the Gila area.

They called us to report that they had completed their hike and had a wonderful time. We asked them if they would write an article for the *Sierra*, which is printed below.

As you read their article, reflect on their comment, "and this, we can only find in the USA." We have very special places such as the Gila Wilderness here in New Mexico, along with others in the U.S., that people such as the Brammers will travel thousands of miles to see. We need to be sure that these national treasures are protected for us and our children—forever!

by Doris and Karl Brammer

Longing for wilderness which we couldn't find here in Europe, we came up with the Gila in New Mexico. With the aid of the Albuquerque Sierra Club, we were able to realize our plans during late Spring of this year.

We started on May 15 on Emory Pass, hiking north along the Crest Trail of the Black Range in partially strong winds, freezing temperatures at Mimbres Lake, and across Reeds Peak to Squeaky Spring. We had some problems finding water, which was unusual for us coming from the Alps, where clear cold mountain rivers provide water in abundance. Yet with some detours and plenty of canteens, we survived.

From Squeaky Spring, we descended down to the Black Canyon, following the river westbound until it merges with the Gila East Fork. In the Lower Black Canyon, we had to do some bushwacking, since there was only a partial cow trail and lots of damage from the winter floods. We had never hiked Canyons before, so it was kind of challenging. The upper Canyon was very beautiful, the lower part rather frustrating. Here, position fixing along the river was difficult, because neither the altimeter, nor trail intersections, nor landmarks provided reliable clues. But we could rely on the river to take us to our destination. It did work out, and after about a week of mostly enjoyable and scenic highlights we reached the Gila Visitors Center and Ranger Station, where we had deposited our supplies for the following 10 days.

We spent a night at the Lodge in Gila Hot Springs, before we started out hiking up the Gila West Fork. We were absolutely fascinated by the beautiful scenery and the botanical diversity. Here the water was clear, the cliffs were steeper, and nowhere a trace of civilization. Of course, there was flood damage as the ranger had warned us, but we had no problem finding the trail and cairns at the river crossings. We took our time hiking, made camp early and one day before we started for the Mogollons, we didn't move camp at all.

It took us two days across the the Mogollon Mountains with extensive snowcovered stretches. That we did not expect to come across in New Mexico, but the ranger at Gila Cliff had told us. We were relieved after reaching Red Stone Park on the Whitewater, a beautiful spot, where we stayed another day. We very much enjoyed the creek, sitting on the rocks in the warm sunshine watching numerous butterflies, and bathing in the ice cold fastflowing Whitewater.

The end of our vacation closed in. Now that we were in better physical condition, we enjoyed every hiking mile. Placidly, we returned into civilization across the Catwalk, had a siesta at the picnic ground and walked the 5 miles to Glenwood rather timidly--did we really want to return into the neon world?

Now, three months afterwards, we know that we will come back to the Gila Wilderness. It is the contrast and diversity in canyon and mountain scenery that has fascinated us, something we had not experienced so far, and this we can only find in the USA.

We are grateful for the help by Susan Gorman (of the Albuquerque Group) and the Forest Rangers at the Gila Visitors Center. We'll certainly pass on our positive experience to fellow hikers here in Bavaria.

comeback, with only cosmetic improvements....The War continues!!

The Wildlands Conference was just one part of a comprehensive effort to develop more activists. During the year, we put a Homepage for the Rio Grande Chapter on the World Wide Web, initiated a discussion list for folks on EMail, expanded the phone tree from 40 to over 100 folks and initiated a letter writers group. These efforts will continue during 1996 and everyone is invited, no, urged, to participate. WE NEED YOU!!

It's a Railvolution!!!!

There is good news on the transportation front. Stefan Verchinski, yGroup Transportation Chair, recently attended a national conference on Light Rail and Commuter Train systems in Portland, Oregon. He learned that cities in some areas have invested in moving people instead of moving cars. Virtually all of these "rubber wheeled" trolleys have a few distinguishing characteristics. They move people quickly and quietly to major destinations and urban centers, freeing up land for significant community investment by all sorts of businesses. They are all subsidized by the communities that install them, but the lifespans are two to three times greater than costly buses and roads trying to accomplish the same movement of people. They generally are still cheaper by a factor of two than building even car pool lanes on urban freeways. They work extremely well as a focus of an integrated transit system and cities that have taken such an approach have seen significant increases in system use from the date of first installation.

The best part? Being in a community where you can, if you want, decide not to own a car! Portland will have three light rail routes installed and operating by 2005, covering some 45-50 miles! Some of the conference materials are already impacting both the proposed revisions to the City master plan and the State of New Mexico's Mesa del Sol Project. And then there was this neat free train whistle. Woo!! Woo!!

Notes from the Transportation Chair

by Stefan Verchinski

Winning some more! Bicycle Issues

-Money has been allocated to build the bicycle path connection from the Paseo del Norte/New North Diversion Channel Trail under I-25 and Montgomery to hook up to the Paseo del Norte bike trail that goes to Sandia High School and UNM. Construction to begin in 1996.

-A new extension of the Bosque Trail will begin in 1996 to go south of Tingley Beach and Central to Rio Bravo. This has currently been a great mountain bike loop, using the levee road on both sides of the river.

-The City bicycle committee has agreed to send a letter requesting our Congressional delegation to support the continuation of a critical federal transportation act known as ISTEA. This act allows for a great deal of local say in how funds are allocated and has allowed for significant funding of transportation alternatives. Without it, the road lobby wins.

-The I-40 Bikeway Environmental Impact Review has been funded for 1996! This bikeway was initially proposed and supported through our Conservation Program. Right-of-way is being set aside.

-The City bicycle committee has agreed to review city ordinances on bicycle parking and employer shower and locker requirements. If you have a good story or photos of bad facilities, please call me at 888-1370.

Road Issues

-We helped cancel a study of unnecessary freeway style interchanges on Paseo del Norte last year (saving about \$500,000), and this year, we were able to get the Alameda Corridor Study east of I-25 significantly reduced in scope despite the standard mantra, "But we need it! It's in the Long Range Street Plan!" Analysis showed that traffic volume did not justify ramming a major arterial design past schools and low-density residential areas. This will discourage sprawl and focus housing back toward the urban centers.

-We were unsuccessful at stopping the Urban Transportation Policy and Planning Board from including in the Federal National Highway System bill the Paseo del Norte extension through the Petroglyph National Monument. This will place additional pressure on the National Park Service to bend to a "Higher Federal Need."

-The investigation of the underfunding of our local street systems for maintenance and reconstruction continues through our sole insistence. Albuquerque currently is underfunding by about \$15 million a year. This will spiral within the decade to over \$25 million a year. It appears that the

(con't on page 9)

CALENDAR

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

Jan 3	Mexican Wolf Coalition, 7:30 PM
Jan 3	Deadline for agenda items for Group ExCom. Call Susan Gorman at 265-3231
Jan 8	Group Excom, 7:00 PM
Jan 9	Sustainable Albuquerque Meeting, 7:00 PM. See story on page 9
Jan 15	General Meeting, UNM Law School, Rm 2401, 7:30 PM
Jan 17	Deadline for agenda items for Conservation Committee. Call Richard Barish, 247-8079
Jan 22	Conservation Committee Meeting, 7:00 PM
Feb 7	Mexican Wolf Coalition, 7:30 PM
Feb 7	Deadline for agenda items for Group ExCom. Call Susan Gorman at 265-3231
Feb 12	Group ExCom, 7:00 PM
Feb 15	Deadline for articles for March/April Rio Grande Sierran
Feb 21	Deadline for agenda items for Conservation Committee. Call Richard Barish, 247-8079
Feb 26	Conservation Committee Meeting, 7:00 PM
Mar 2-3	Chapter ExCom Meeting, Black Range Lodge, Kingston

January 15th - General Meeting

Our January guest, Jim Bones, is a photographer, naturalist and writer who teaches natural history photographic workshops throughout North America. Jim will present a slide show and discussion on biodiversity of North America, and sustainable agriculture as a way to take the pressure off of our limited wild lands.

His home is in Tesuque, New Mexico, but for the last 25 years he has spent a large part of his time at home in the watersheds of the Rio Grande.

February 19th - General Meeting

To be announced. The February General Meeting topic announcement will be available by calling the Albuquerque group office at 265-5506.

General meetings are on the third Monday of every month at 7:30 pm and are held at the UNM Law School, room 2401, on the corner of Mountain Rd. and Stanford N.E.

BRING YOUR OWN CUPS FOR REFRESHMENTS DURING THE BREAK Alternative Transportation Meeting

Attention: alternative transportation advocates!

People in the Albuquerque Metro area drive over 11 million vehicle miles every day! These same vehicles contribute over 70% of the carbon monoxide brown haze that hangs over the Middle Rio Grande Valley. Some think more bridges or oxygenated fuels or fuel efficiency are the answers. What we really need is radical land use policy reform, making all forms of alternative transportation viable. The ad hoc Land Use and Transportation Group will start meeting in January, the third Wednesday of the month—January 17 for the first meeting—at 7 pm at the Sierra Club Office.

Every month that goes by, we fall deeper into debt. Be a part of the solution.

Group Directory

1996 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Office Telephone: 265-5506
Fax: 256-0373

Group Chair	Susan Gorman	265-3231
Vice Chair	Nick Persampieri	281-7845
Secretary	Blair Brown	265-3231
Treasurer	Richard Barish	247-8079
	Ron Grotbeck	296-0944
	Julie Hicks	345-7832
	Jack Humphrey	243-5319
	Barbara Leonard	862-7915
	Kathy Love	243-5319

The Albuquerque Group of the Sierra Club depends entirely on the efforts of volunteers. To help, call any of us!

ADMINISTRATION

Office Organizer	Leslie Lazaga	296-0944
Books/Calendars	Larry Compton	899-0679
Information Technology	Bruce Batson	828-2570
	bbatson@ni.net	
	Blair Brown	265-3231
	bblairb@aol.com	
Media Coordinator	Julie Hicks	345-7832
Membership	Barbara Stone	265-5304
Newsletter	OPEN	
Outings	Stan Kauchak	839-4301
Phone Tree	Jean Valentine	869-2090
	Jack Humphrey	243-5319
Political Chair	Ron Grotbeck	296-0944
Programs	Leslie Lazaga	296-0944

CONSERVATION

Conservation Chair	Richard Barish	247-8079
Air Quality	Heidi Fleischmann	260-1217
Bosque	Richard Barish	247-8079
East Mountain	Nick Persampieri	281-7845
Education	Ann Beyke	265-3087
	Teresa Adams	880-0737
Energy	Ralph Wrons	275-0856
Mining	OPEN	
Petroglyphs/Westside	Ike Eastvold	255-7679
Population	Michelle Meaders	266-8823
Public Lands	OPEN	
Transportation	Stefan Verchinski	888-1370
Waste/Recycling	OPEN	
Water	Jack Pinney	293-3405
Wildlife/	OPEN	
Endangered Species		
Wildlife/Mexican Wolf	Susan Larsen	897-2527

Outings may be cancelled or changed due to weather or other reasons, please call leader before outing. You must bring appropriate shoes, clothes, pack, rain gear, and water.

Sun Jan 7, 14, 21, 28, Feb 4, 11, 25, Mar 3
Taos Downhill Ski Lessons for Locals Program
 Offering one of the best ski schools in the country, this program is tailored for those of us who are in the area all season. The program runs for eight consecutive Sundays, with the exception of Feb. 18. Price includes a full day lift ticket and a 2 hour afternoon group class. Contact Stan for details at 839-4301.

Sun Jan 14 Moderate
 Miles: 1-2 Car: TBD
Beginning X/C Ski Outdoor Lesson
 Introduction to the fundamentals of Nordic skiing, classical style, emphasizing backcountry needs. Equipment can be rented from most sports shops. This class hopefully can be conducted at Los Alamos Golf Course, snow permitting. If so, we'll leave Albuquerque at 7:30 AM to meet the Santa Fe Group by 9:00 AM. Class will continue on to the Jemez Mts. for some beginning ski touring. Bring lunch, plenty to drink, and dress in layers. Phone leader for information on clothing & equipment.
 Leader: Georgia 881-9365

Sat Jan 20 Leisure

Creating the Strategy for a Sustainable Albuquerque

by Susan Gorman

We can do it! We can create the Grand Strategy for a Sustainable Albuquerque!

The components are falling into place. Shared Vision's Transportation and Land Use Town Hall started us talking together, the Sustainable Community Committee has been appointed, the Middle Rio Grande Council of Governments is initiating a visioning process for the region. These are hopeful signs and indicate that many folks in Albuquerque and the surrounding areas are concerned about our future and are willing to work together to find alternatives to becoming like Las Vegas or Los Angeles.

To quote from my story in the September/October *Sierran*, "We must recreate the Grand Coalition like we had before to develop the Grand Strategy for a Sustainable Albuquerque. This strategy must reflect the reality that we live in a fragile desert with a limited water supply and carrying capacity. It must acknowledge the strong pressures for development of the Westside and support a responsible set of policies to keep growth from destroying the unique beauty of this place. It must prevent development from endangering our single source aquifer, our airshed, the sweeping solidity of the Sandias, the intimate calm of the Bosque, the expansive landscape of the west mesa with its silent volcanoes and the spiritual richness of the Petroglyphs and the healthy social fabric of neighborhoods. It must respect and preserve our connection to our diverse religious and cultural heritages and the expectations of all residents and the hopes of future generations. After all, it is these qualities that make Albuquerque the special place that it is."

In that story, I asked for volunteers who are willing to work to help create this Grand Strategy. The following Sierrans came forward: Richard Barish, Bruce Batson, Blair Brown, Jeanette & Ralph DeVries, Ian Ford, Jack Humphrey, Rich Kommsrusch, Kathy Love, Nick Persampieri, Donna Sanders, Kathryn Taylor, Aija Thacher, Stefan Verchinski, Vallie Weingarten and Ralph Wrons.

Now we need to begin to talk, to share ideas and expertise, to develop goals and an action plan. Let's explore concepts like the Linear City from Michael Lipkin, Transit Oriented Development from Ian Ford, ecotecture from Jasper Hardesty. Let's learn about Community Gardening from Master Gardeners Ralph and Jeanette DeVries. Let's consider other successes (Portland) and failures (Las Vegas) and learn from both.

We can do it! Come to the first Campaign Planning meeting on January 9, 7:00 PM, Sierra Club office. This will be a great opportunity to meet the other committee members and to exchange ideas and special interests. Everyone is invited!

Miles: 3 Car: 3
Rinconada Canyon w/ Volcanoes Option Hike, Petroglyph National Monument
 We will hike up Rinconada Canyon to view thousands of petroglyphs. Hikers can return to their cars, or take the option of continuing to the volcanoes. Bring sack lunch for the volcano option. Meet at 8:00 AM. Bring camera, binoculars and sturdy shoes. RSVP.
 Leader: Ike Eastvold 255-7679

Sat Jan 20 Leisure-Moderate
 Miles: 6-8 Car: 240
Astronomy Car Camp, Magdalena Mountains
 Attempt to see the thinnest crescent moon ever! Expect invigorating temperatures. Contact Tom for more information.
 Leader: Tom Leck 256-7217

Sun Jan 28 Leisure
 Miles: 3 Car: 3
Geological Windows Hike Petroglyph National Monument
 The petroglyphs were first created about 1000 BC. The age of petroglyphs can be estimated from the darkness of the patina; comparison of style, content, and execution to the rock art of other areas; comparison of pottery design to petroglyph design; and the superimposition of one petroglyph on top of another. This area of the park is secluded in a near wilderness-like setting. Meet at 9:00 AM. Bring camera, binoculars and sturdy shoes. RSVP.
 Leader: Ike Eastvold 255-7679

Sat Feb 3 Leisure
 Miles: 3 Car: 3
Boca Negra Arroyo Hike Petroglyph National Monument
 Agricultural terraces were built along the escarpment to catch water and hold soil. Exciting flute and parrot figures together with some of the oldest petroglyphs in the Monument. Meet at 9:00 AM. Bring camera, binoculars and sturdy shoes. RSVP.
 Leader: Ike Eastvold 255-7679

Sun Feb 4 Moderate
 Miles: 4-6 Car: 360
Advanced Beginners X/C Ski Tour, Tres Piedras
 Probably about six miles, on rolling hills, with marvelous views. We'll ski a portion of the newly designated Tony Marquez Trail, and gather up insights and suggestions for the Forest Service. This is a new area for most skiers, and worth seeing. Bring lunch items that can be shared, and water. Leave Albuquerque at 7:00 AM to meet the Santa Fe group by 8:30 AM. Possible stop at Ojo Caliente for a soak in the mineral baths. Phone leader for information.
 Leader: Georgia 881-9365

Sat Feb 17 Moderate
 Miles: 5-7 Car: 180
Chijiuilla Mesa Exploratory Hike
 Check the wildlife drinker installed in August and look at the sandstone bluffs and canyons. This will be a joint hike with Outdoor Adventures for Singles. Contact Tom for meeting place and details.
 Leader: Tom Pentencin 255-1497

Sat Feb 24 Moderate
 Miles: 3 Car: 150
Cave of El Malpais
 We will go to Skylight Cave and Four Windows Cave. Bring flashlight and sturdy warm clothes. Contact Tom for details.
 Leader: Tom Leck 256-7217

Sun Feb 25 Leisure
 Miles: 3 Car:
Piedras Marcadas Hike Petroglyph National Monument
 Tremendous variety and unique petroglyphs not found elsewhere in the Monument. Meet at 9:00 AM. Bring camera, binoculars and sturdy shoes. RSVP.
 Leader: Ike Eastvold 255-7679

Transportation Notes

(con't from page 8)

County has been doing the same and we are checking the numbers. This is a direct result of killing gas taxes and promoting sprawl with what little money is collected. The car just is not paying its direct costs much less its significant social costs.

Rail Issues

-Mayor Debbie Jaramillo and the Santa Fe City Council have purchased the Cattellus railyard site near downtown Santa Fe. For Albuquerque to Santa Fe commuter rail to take place, this property would need to be developed in a coordinated fashion.

-Kudos to the Albuquerque City Council Land Use Planning and Zoning Committee, who moved a "do pass" on the recommendation for a continued Light Rail Study. Call your councillor and request that two initial corridors be examined, in detail (Downtown, UNM North Campus, Uptown, Wyoming, Central and Tramway to Tijeras)(Downtown, 2nd and Montano, Montano and Coors, Seven Bar/Cottonwood/Callabacitas,

Western New Mexico Section

All Sierra Club members and friends from Cibola and McKinley Counties are invited to join us at our meetings. Come and help us plan our goals and outings for 1996. If you have questions or suggestions, call the Co-chairs, Barbara Brandt (488-5233) or Barbara Leonard (862-7915).

Sunday, January 7—Short hike from 1-3 p.m., followed by a meeting from 3-4 p.m. Barbara Brandt's home in Jamestown. Call 488-5233 for directions.

Sunday, February 11—Short hike from 1-3 p.m., followed by a meeting from 3-4 p.m. Barbara Leonard's home in Continental Divide. Call 862-7915 for directions.

Announcing February Grand Opening of **Earthwares** Natural Goods & Clothing

El Dorado Square, 11200 Montgomery NE

Bedding, bath, casual wear, recycled papers
 & many other earth friendly items

10% off recycled office supplies with this ad thru February 28
 Bring your Sierra Club card for additional discounts!

January 31--GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
"Our Public Lands--What is at Stake?"

KevinBixby, Director of the Southwestern Environmental Center in Las Cruces, will provide an overview of critical issues concerning public lands in southern New Mexico. He will focus on the unanchoring movement. This is a great opportunity to learn about some of the conservation issues of importance in our area. Come to this meeting and learn how you can influence the future use of nearby public lands. Many members meet at Jaxons on Airway for dinner before the meeting to discuss conservation issues and talk with the evenings speaker; please join us at around 5:30 or 6.

Friday, February 2--WINE AND CHEESE SLIDE SHOW
6:30 til ????? Polly Harris Center, 650Wallenberg Drive, off Mesa Hills, southeast of Sunland Park Mall.

Bring 10 or so of your favorite slides, a bottle of wine and some cheese to our annual Wine and Cheese Slide Show. This is a purely social event featuring lots of good conversation and a captive audience as you show slides from last summer's vacation. New members are particularly encouraged to attend since it provides an opportunity to meet "old" members in an informal atmosphere. Although we call this a "Wine and Cheese" party, don't let the name limit the type of beverage or snack food that you choose to bring. There is a \$3 charge. For further information, call Bill Phillips, 772-6503.

UPCOMING OUTINGS

January 6-7, 1996 - Blue Dog Loop Backpack
Place: Guadalupe Mountains Nat'l Park
Class: Strenuous
Limit: 12--Leader Approval Required
Leader: Mike Bromka, (505) 885-3029
Please call leader for specific trip details and information.

January 13-14, 1996 - Bosque Del Apache Wildlife Refuge Carcamp
Place: Bosque Del Apache Wildlife Refuge, San Antonio, NM
Class: Easy
Limit: 15--Leader Approval Required
Leader: Dale Harris, 544-7149
Please call leader for specific trip details and information.

January 12-15, 1996 - Rancherias Loop Trail Backpack
Place: Bobecillo Mountains, Big Bend State Natural Area, near Presidio, Tx.
Class: Moderately Strenuous
Limit: 8--Reservations and Leader Approval Required
Leader: Rollin Wickenden, 855-6836(H), 534-6594(WK)
We will depart El Paso Friday evening and drive through Presidio, Texas to Ft. Leaton State Park. We hope to get a permit to do this trip on Saturday. There is no reservation system. The hike is a 3 day, 19 mile backpack loop trip into the heart of the Big Bend Ranch State Natural Area. We will camp near water sources each night. There are no fires allowed. Most recent information indicates a backcountry use fee of \$16 per day. Holders of the Texas Conservation passport pay \$3 per vehicle, over one per reservation. First day elevation gain is 1,500 ft. Second day elevation loss is 300 ft. Third day elevation loss is 1400 ft. Please call Rollin early for reservations and details.

January 20, 1996 - North Franklin Peak Dayhike
Place: Franklin Mountain State Park
Class: Moderately Strenuous
Limit: 15--Reservations and Leader Approval Required
Leader: Kathy Sunday, 584-9301
Beginning early Sunday morning at Tom Mays Park, we will hike up to the 7192' summit via the ridge line. The approximate roundtrip mileage is 8 miles with a 2,500' elevation gain. Come view the surrounding Franklin Mountains State Park from an unequalled vantage point. Call Kathy early for reservations.

January 28 - Magdalena Peak dayhike
Place: Las Uvas Mountains
Class: Moderate
Limit: 12--Reservations and Leader Approval Required
Leader: Kathy Sunday, 581-2696
The Magdalena Mountains are located about 20 miles Northwest of Las Cruces. Magdalena Peak is the highest point and boasts an observatory on top. Please call Kathy to phone the leader for specific trip details and information.

February 1 - Canyon Dayhike
Place: Mt. Franklin
Class: Moderate
Limit: 12--Reservations and Leader Approval Required
Leader: Kathy Sunday, 581-2696
We will depart El Paso early Saturday morning for the 150 mile roundtrip to the summit of the Peak. Our hike involves 1500' of elevation gain and approximately 4 miles of trail. All water must be carried and no campfires are permitted. We will dayhike to the Grotto and see some of the most unusual piñon-juniper scrub in Southwest, and then return to our vehicles via the same route. Call Wesley for more details.

Feb.
Feb 7

Feb 12
Feb 15

Feb 21

Feb 26
Mar 2-3

GROUP DIRECTORY

Chairman	Wesley Leonard	74
Vice Chair	Gary Williams	
Secretary	Mike Seidensticker	54
Treasurer	Kathy Sunday	58
Member	Ted Mertig	88
Member	Bill Phillips	77
Member	Richard Rheder	54
Inner City Outings	Richard Rheder	54
Env. Quality	OPEN	
Franklin Mtns	John Sproul	54
LORAX	Betsy Julian	54
Political Action	Jim Bell	58
Population	OPEN	
Public Lands	Ted Mertig	85
Env Center	OPEN	
Mail	Bill Phillips	77
Hospitality	Barbara Mertig	85
Membership	Patricia Wood	54
Office Rep.	Neil O'Hara	56

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

Membership: LORAX in
SIERRA CLUB Betsy Julia
409 Robinson Rd 615 E. Balti
El Paso, TX 79902 El Paso, TX

security numbers of all participants, two weeks in advance. Bring warm clothes, a hat, and sun protection. Call early for reservations.

Feb. 10 - 11 - Middle Fork of the Gila backpack
Place: Gila Wilderness
Class: Moderate
Limit: 8--Reservations and Leader Approval Required
Leader: Kathy Sunday, 584 -9301 (H), 778-8030 (WK)
We will leave the trailhead at T.J. Corral in the Gila and hike approximately 42 miles to our campsite on the Middle Fork of the Gila. Be prepared for wet conditions with the possibility of snow. Call early for details.

Feb. 17 - El Capitan Dayhike
Place: Guadalupe Mountains
Class: Moderate
Limit: 12--Reservations and Leader Approval Required
Leader: Jim Bell, 581-8864
This hike will cover the El Capitan Trail for 8 - 10 miles with moderate gain. Call leader for details.

Feb 17-18 - Upper Painted Grotto Backpack
Place: Carlsbad Caverns N.P.
Class: Moderate
Limit: 10--Reservations and Leader Approval Required
Leader: Wesley Leonard, 747-6649 (days)
We will depart El Paso early Saturday morning for the 150 mile roundtrip to the Grotto. Our hike involves 1500' of elevation gain and approximately 4 miles of trail. All water must be carried and no campfires are permitted. We will dayhike to the Grotto and see some of the most unusual piñon-juniper scrub in Southwest, and then return to our vehicles via the same route. Call Wesley for more details.

Feb. 24 & 25 - OK Canyon Dayhike and Carcamp
Place: Cookes Range, New Mexico
Class: moderate
Limit: 12--Reservations and Leader Approval Required
Leader: Alice Anderson, (505) 523-5179; Joe Rodriguez
We will leave town early Saturday morning and drive to the rugged Cookes Range near Deming, NM. After walking a mile or so across a thorn-filled flat, we will pick up a mule trail near the canyon mouth and hike the mule trail up the canyon as far as it goes or as far as we can come first. The trail is very rocky, so good boots are necessary. We can stay over for the carcamp and climb of Cookes Peak on Sunday.

March 1 - Mt Riley Dayhike
Place: Mt Riley, southern NM
Class: Moderate
Limit: 12--Reservations and Leader Approval Required
Leader: Wesley Leonard, 747-6649 (days)
We will drive the 40 miles from west El Paso early Saturday morning and hike approximately 4 miles off trail to the summit of the Peak. The desert west of El Paso from this vantage are some of the most unusual. Be prepared for loose rock and rough footing. Carry water and call Wesley for more details.

March 16 - 21 - Grand Canyon Backpack

Place: Grand Canyon National Park

Class: Moderate +

Limit: 11--Leader Approval and Reservations Required

Leader: Mike Episcopo, 833-3770

The Grand Canyon is an awesome spectacle of nature's grandeur. The multi-hued cliffs and slopes of the tremendous chasm descend in a timeless panorama. Join me over spring break on a journey through 2 billion years of Earth's history. Call early for details and reservations.

OUTINGS REPORTS

Three Rivers Trip (Roy McCloud)

Eight of us had perfect weather for our easy backpack up Three Rivers trail. We walked up a good trail about 27 miles with several tricky stream crossings. The campsite is a good one by the noisy stream with plenty of water. We enjoyed campfires in the evening and morning and had a full moon to make it even more perfect. The happy hikers were Barbara Richardson, Pat Wood, Wes Watson, Bill and Shirley Phillips, and Roy McCloud. We hoped to attract more new hikers, but only Wes hadn't been with us before. People missed a good trip.

Rabb Park Dayhike--October 14, 1995 (Carl G. Horkowitz)

Our small but enthusiastic group made its way to the trailhead in Noonday Canyon to begin the steep, rocky climb into Rabb Park. Our hike was facilitated by the lack of flowing water, and the warm, pleasant weather. After reaching our destination, we broke for lunch, visited the eerie rock gardens nearby, looked for moonstones and saw some horseback riders. On the way back we detoured for a look down Rabb Canyon. Those participating were Linda Groetken, Ted and Barbara Mertig, Gary Deder, Toby Young, and Alice Chornesky.

McKittrick Canyon Dayhike, Guadalupe Mtns--Oct. 21, 1995 (Rae Hamilton)

Unseasonably warm weather has caused the usual Fall foliage to be late this year. But the brilliant array of reds, yellows, golds, and rusts did not disappoint the Sierrans who traveled to see this annual spectacular nestled in a desert canyon just 2 hours drive from El Paso. The Park Service continues their high-profile presence to manage the crowds that return yearly to see the true signs of approaching winter. We stopped frequently along the 7 mile trek to observe brook trout, tarantulas and lingering wildflowers. Lunch at the Grotto offered cool shade and interesting limestone formations to explore. On the return home, the traditional stop at the Cornudas Cafe to savor their famous burgers was enjoyed by hikers Monica Zabolotney, Rae Hamilton, and leader Dale Harris.

Early Winter Little Creek Backpack--December 1-3, 1995 (Rollin Wickenden)

While December often brings rain, snow, and freezing temperatures to the Gila, the Early Winter Gila backpack found mild weather conditions and very little water in Little Creek. The advance party drove up Friday night and camped at Woody's Corral. The Saturday crowd drove up the next morning, eating lunch en route. The climb up Thousand Mile Hill was pleasant in the warm sun. After gaining the ridge and descending into Little Creek, we found the creek to be bone dry. Searching for water downstream, Kathy and Alice found an exceptional campsite with a flowing stream not far away. The nighttime chill made us appreciate the Gila, in that we were free to build a campfire and had tons of firewood. Next morning, my temperature gauge registered 15F. But, once the sun came out, everything warmed up. We had a pleasant journey down EE Canyon and the crossing of the West Fork was easily achieved on a log. Participants included Alice Anderson, Kathy Sunday, Rafaela Schuller, Laurence Gibson, Mark Post, and Rollin Wickenden.

I.C.O. CELEBRATES 25TH ANNIVERSARY

New Mexico Volunteers Sought

by Richard Rheder, El Paso ICO Coordinator

The El Paso Inner City Outings group celebrated the national program's silver anniversary year with a slide show featuring recent outings at the El Paso Sierra Club December general meeting.

As of this writing, the El Paso Group has conducted 30 events with underprivileged children in 1995, with three more scheduled before year's end. ICO provides environmental activities for those who normally would not have access to them (children, disabled, etc.). Many ICO volunteers, leaders, and participants attended and joined in cooperative environmental games after the formal presentation. Although the "regular crowd" was reduced (the holiday schedule changed the dates), attendance was still good thanks to "veteran," new, and future Sierra Club members who came out. New members who have joined through ICO included Mario Ruiz, Didi Duncan, and Trish Puente. Veteran Sierra Club members attending who led or co-led ICO trips in 1995 included Ann Faulknor, Jim Flores, Ted and Barbara Mertig, Mary Lou Parker, John Sproul, and Chuck Turner. Potential new recruits included a large contingent from Tim Dillon's ecology class at Hanks High School.

Didi Duncan represented the YWCA's Transitional Living Center and Trish Puente spoke on behalf of the CHAMPS students at Guillen Middle School. Ann Roscoe of SAFE 2000 Community Partnership, a substance abuse prevention program, thanked the ICO/Sierra Club for its work on behalf of "at-risk" children and announced the award of the a \$3,000 "mini-grant" to support ICO activities through 1996. Most of the money received in 1996 through SAFE 2000 was spent on equipment such as backpacks, jackets, gloves, hats, hiking boots and other items typically not owned by ICO participants.

Upcoming 1996 ICO Events

Twenty-nine ICO events have already been scheduled and approved by the ExCom for 1996, and requests from other groups total more than 100. Fortunately, the national ICO program has received a major, anonymous donation of \$285,000 to support transportation grants for an expanded outing program. This will allow for van rentals and other outings expenses. To receive a share of this windfall, we must develop a proposal by March. Already four of us (Ted, myself, Ann, and Trish) held one preliminary meeting with the Central El Paso Community Organization (CEPCO) to discuss how to help them get a wilderness program going for children they serve through three centers, two of which are at public housing projects.

Volunteer Events

Anyone interested in becoming involved with ICO is invited to a Hueco Tanks retreat/workshop on the weekend of Jan. 12-14. Those short on time can come out just for the day on Saturday to get the "essentials" required for becoming a certified ICO leader. You can also enjoy a relaxed winter camping weekend with all the amenities that Hueco Tanks has to offer -- well-maintained rest rooms with hot showers, picnic tables, electrical hook-ups, and an easy drive from El Paso. Bring your own breakfast and lunch. Ann Faulknor will coordinate a "pot luck" supper on Jan. 13. In addition to the basics of ICO leadership, there will be a hike and plenty of time to socialize informally. To reserve a slot, or for further information, call Ann at 833-9162.

Also, the El Paso ICO group is spearheading a regional retreat the weekend of March 16-17 at the American Museum of Natural History's Southwest Research Station at Portal, AZ. The Schaeffer House "crew" passed through en route back to El Paso from an ICO backpack trip Thanksgiving weekend and can testify that the setting is spectacular. This will be an opportunity to meet with counterparts throughout the region: Tucson, Los Angeles, Phoenix, and San Geronimo. New Mexico Sierra Club groups interested in getting an ICO program started are especially encouraged to attend. The cost for the weekend is \$98 and includes lodging and meals, but space is limited. Reservations for accommodations in cabins can be made on a first-come, first-served basis with overflow camping nearby in the Coronado National Forest. For further information call Richard Rheder at (915) 544-5659.

Recent ICO Events

Six Schaeffer House Residents took off after Thanksgiving dinner under the leadership of Mario Ruiz and Richard Rheder to see the Chiricahua National Monument in Arizona. They broke in some new hiking boots purchased with the SAFE 2000 grant during a 10-mile hike through the rock formations. Later they moved on to carcamp at Rustler Park in the Coronado National Forest. Since it was cold, everyone appreciated the warm clothing purchased with the grant money. Saturday they hiked about four miles into a base camp at Round Park and then enjoyed spectacular views from Centilla Point just two miles away. They could see the valley and the American Museum of Natural History's Southwest Research Station, the site for our spring ICO regional.

The El Paso County Juvenile Probation Department's First Time Offender Program has held four of its planned 30 outings in conjunction with the Life Management Center's Children's and Adolescent's Program Services unit. The group cleaned graffiti at Hueco Tanks State Historical Park on Nov. 4 in conjunction with Friends of Hueco Tanks. They took in the fall colors at McKittrick Canyon in the Guadalupe Mts. on Nov. 11, and studied geology with Mike Seidensticker on a climb to South Franklin Peak on Nov. 13. Ann Faulknor led them to Aguirre Springs on Dec. 9, and Trish Puente led them to collect a Christmas Tree near Cloudcroft on Dec. 21. The tree was donated to a needy family.

Children attending the Juvenile Probation Department hikes are particularly at risk for antisocial behavior and in need of positive adult models; interested volunteers are urged to help out. Some of these children come out for the 7 a.m. departures without having eaten. One 15-year-old boy's mother fortified her son for the South Franklin Peak hike with nothing more than a cigarette and a cup of coffee. However, thanks to a generous \$5,000 grant from the El Paso Community Foundation, most outings in the series will start with breakfast. Part of this funding to Life Management Center will support photo-documentation of events by the children. A significant portion will support gang intervention specialists' attendance.

Personnel News

Ted Mertig accepted the position of Regional ICO Coordinator for the Rio Grande Chapter Excom and is inviting all interested parties to help him develop an "ICO Roadshow" to explain the concept to groups in Las Cruces, Albuquerque, and Santa Fe. Call him at (915) 852-3011. Although this region has many wonderful places to visit and plenty of underserved children, there are no active ICO programs in New Mexico.

I will represent the Southwestern ICO Region at the National Steering Committee Meeting at Sierra Club headquarters in San Francisco on Jan. 27. I welcome input about issues our local group wants discussed at that meeting.

It is now official policy that certified ICO leaders pass a state police screening starting in March. We are developing guidelines for implementing this while safeguarding the confidentiality of applicants. We would appreciate any assistance with this procedure from a pro-bono attorney or paralegal. We are negotiating with law enforcement agencies to waive the fee for processing background checks.

Finally, Nancy Green, our national ICO steering committee chair from Ohio, was elected to the national Sierra Club's Outdoor Activities Governance Committee representing ICO. A formal proposal will be presented to the Sierra Club Board of Directors to officially approve this change. If all goes well, ICO will take a step up in the organization to share equal footing with the National Outings Committee and the Group and Chapter Outings Committee.

SANTA FE GROUP MEETINGS

RALLY AGAINST
THE SKI AREA EXPANSION

Tuesday, January 16, 7 PM

Victor Martinez Jr., Coordinator of the Ski Area Containment Coalition will be our featured speaker. You all know that the Forest Service has chosen Alternative #4, which means a great deal of expansion for the ski area, including a ski run and lift in the Big Tesuque. Here's a quote from *The New Mexican*:

Defler said the Forest Service believes that as many as 50,000 people visit the Big Tesuque during this time period [spring, summer and early fall].

"How come it's OK to have all those folks up there in the summer but it's not OK to have the ski area in there in the winter?" Defler asked.

When we hike the Big Tesuque we follow a two-foot-wide trail. Picture what it will look like with one-third of its trees gone and a ski lift up the center.

Help us help the Coalition overturn the recent Forest Service decision to expand skiing into the Big Tesuque basin!

There will also be a discussion about the upcoming Legislative Session and possible environmental bills.

IS THE SPOTTED OWL JUST A PAWN?

What do New Mexicans want from their National Forests Anyway?

Tuesday, February 20, 7 PM

Speakers have been invited from the Environmental Community, National Forest Service, and Community Activists.

This panel discussion will inaugurate the Santa Fe Group's dialogue project entitled *Searching for Common Ground*. In this meeting, and others to follow, we will try to find common areas of agreement between traditional adversaries in an attempt to create dialogue and resolve disputes. Active public participation by Sierra Club members and friends is encouraged.

Membership Meetings are held at the Unitarian Church on Barcelona Street (between Galisteo and Don Gaspar).

PLEASE NOTE NEW STARTING TIME OF 7 PM FOR THE MEETINGS

♦ ♦ SANTA FE GROUP OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS ♦ ♦

Chair — Don Goldman*
Vice-Chair — Jerry Bober*
Secretary/Treas — Lionel Soracco*
Answering Machine — L. Soracco*
Chapter Representative —
Barbara Johnson*
(alt.) Norma McCallan*
Conservation — Courtney White*
Membership — Gwen Wardwell*
Newsletter Editor — Kay Carlson
Office — Carolyn Keskulla
Publicity — Kay Carlson

473-2821
827-2385
983-6715
983-6715
466-4935
471-0005
982-5502
984-8860
982-3926
982-9570
982-3926

Outings — Norbert Sperlich
— Norma McCallan*
Political Committee — Ken Hughes
Welcomer — Susan Banks
Phone Tree — Norma McCallan*
Fundraising — Education open

983-1962
471-0005
474-0550
757-2284
471-0005

Martha Anne Freeman *
John Buchser *

438-0697
474-7044

* Member of the SF Group Executive Committee

Terms expire
12/96: Bober/Freeman/Johnson/Wardwell
12/97: Buchser/Goldman/McCallan/Soracco/White/

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



COMMITTEE MEETINGS

January
23 — Conservation Committee (Courtney White, 982-5502)
February
6 — Executive Committee (Don Goldman, 473-2821)
27 — Conservation Committee (Courtney White, 982-5502)
March
5 — Executive Committee (Don Goldman, 473-2821)

The Executive and Conservation Committee meetings are held at our new office at 621 Old Santa Fe Trail, Suite 10 (Plaza Desira)

SANTA FE GROUP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
ELECTION RESULTS

Congratulations to incumbent members Don Goldman, Norma McCallan, Lionel Soracco and Courtney White on their reelection and to John Buchser on his election to the Santa Fe Group Executive Committee. Please give these members your support and be sure to let them know how you feel about issues and how you think they can serve the membership better.

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

The newly revitalized Conservation Committee of the Santa Fe Group is seeking volunteers to help with mining, wildlife, water, wilderness, forest, grazing, and other conservation activities.

Meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 7 PM in the Sierra Club office and open to all members. Any level of participation, from mild curiosity to all-out activism, is encouraged.

A mining workshop is planned for Saturday, January 13, 9 AM to 4:30 PM, at the Unitarian Church. Mining and its effects on public and private land will be discussed. See page 5 for details.

For more information, call Courtney White at 982-5502, or come to one of our meetings. Thanks!

PHONE TREE PARTY
Sunday, January 20, 3-5 PM

All Sierrans are encouraged to attend our annual Phone Tree gathering, learn more about the legislative process and likely state legislative issues from our lobbyist Doug Fraser, and meet phone tree members.

Jo Kenney will host the event at her lovely home at 954 Santo Nino Place. Beverages and munchies will be served. (continued →)

Santa Fe Group of the Sierra Club
621 Old Santa Fe Trail · Suite 10 · Plaza Desira
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501
505 · 983-2703

SANTA FE GROUP OUTINGS

Sat Sun January 1996 — Happy New Year !!!

- 6 Bob McKee (672-3426) Moderate Hike Red Dot-Blue Dot Trail near White Rock. Call for time and place.
- 7 Julie Montoya King (438-7197) Easy Hike down Diablo Canyon. Leave 9 AM.
- 7 Outdoor Ski Class for Beginners has been moved to January 14.
- 13 Lionel Soracco (983-6715) Moderate X-Country Ski Tour to wherever the snow is best. Call first.
- 13 Mining Workshop See page 5 for details.
- 13 Arnold and Caroline Keskulla (982-9570) Easy Hike near Galisteo Dam. Leave 9 AM. *Call leader! They will not meet at PERA but at a spot south of town.*
- 14 John Turnbull (466-9329) Beginning X-Country Outdoor Ski Class Basic techniques and intro to the fundamentals of Nordic skiing, classical style, emphasizing backcountry needs. Snow permitting at Los Alamos golf course. Leave at 9 AM from Osco Drug Store on Cordova Road in SF. Call John prior to hike.
- 14 Norrine Sanders (984-0386) Moderate/Strenuous Hike to Tetilla Peak from La Bajada. Leave 8 AM.
- 20 Steven Janus (988-4137) Strenuous X-Country Ski (or snowshoes or telemark) tour — a "high mountain adventure." Call for time of departure and reservation.
- 20 Phone Tree Party — See details elsewhere.
- 21 Norma McCallan (471-0005) Easy/Moderate Hike up La Bajada. Dogs allowed. Leave 9:30 AM.
- 21 John Buchser (474-7044) Strenuous X-Country Ski Tour to wherever there is deep powder. Call first.
- 27 Joe Whelan (984-0746) Moderate X-Country Ski Tour to good snow area, probably Brazos Cliffs. Leave 8:30 AM.
- 27 Jeff Jones (466-2389) Easy Hike Tsankavi Ruins area, near Los Alamos. Leave 9:30 AM.
- 28 Norbert Sperlich (983-1962) Moderate Hike in the La Bajada area, some off-trail walking. Call leader if not familiar with area. Leave 9 AM.

Sat Sun February

- 3 Arnold and Carolyn Keskulla (982-9570) Easy Hike near Waldo. Call leaders for time and meeting place.
- 3 Joe Whelan (984-0746) Strenuous X-Country Ski Trip (hike if no snow) Call leader. Leave 8:30 AM.
- 4 Norma McCallan (471-0005) Easy/Moderate Hike along railroad tracks near Lamy (north from Hwy 285). Dogs allowed. Leave 8:30 AM.
- 4 John Turnbull (466-9329) Advanced Beginners X-Country Ski Tour Tres Piedras area. About 6 miles on rolling hills, with marvelous views on a portion of the newly-designated Tony Marquez Trail. Bring lunch to be shared. Leave 8:30 AM from Osco drugstore parking lot on Cordova Road in SF. Return about 7 PM or stop at Ojo Caliente for a soak in the mineral baths. Call leader for reservation.
- 10 Bob McKee (672-3426) Moderate Hike in Bandelier. Call leader for details.
- 10 Lionel Soracco (983-6715) Moderate X-Country Ski Trip (or hike, if no snow). Call leader for information.
- 11 Lee Sullivan (662-6185) Easy/Moderate Hike near Santa Cruz Lake, 5 miles RT. Leave Pojoaque Dairy Queen at 9:30 AM or carpool from SF, leaving at 9 AM.
- 17 Norrine Sanders (984-0386) Moderate Hike to Ancho Rapids (White Rock Canyon) 6 miles RT, 1,000' elevation gain. Leave 8:30 AM.
- 17 John and Linda Buchser (474-7044) Strenuous X-Country Ski Trip Call leader for destination. Lve 8 AM.
- 18 Easy/Moderate Hike in Tent Rocks. Leave 9 AM. Call 471-7575 for more information.
- 24 Steven Janus (988-4137) Telemark Ski and/or Snowshoe Trip Call leader for details.
- 25 Jeff Jones (466-2389) Easy Hike on Falls Trail (Bandelier) to Rio Grande. 5 miles RT, 600' elevation gain. Kids welcome. Leave 9 AM.

Outings Notes — Unless otherwise noted, all outings leave from the PERA parking lot at the corner of Paseo de Peralta and Old Santa Fe Trail (across the street from the State Capitol). Carpooling will be arranged at the parking lot, and each hiker should come prepared to pay 5¢ a mile to the driver of the car in which hiker rides. Hikers should bring a lunch, water, sturdy hiking boots or shoes, and clothing suitable for the weather — leader reserves the right to turn away anyone whose equipment or experience appears unsuitable. Leader has right to alter destination of hike or cancel the trip due to weather, unfavorable conditions, or insufficient numbers of participants. Unaccompanied minors must have written

January 27 and 28 ★ CHAPTER ISSUE OUTING AND DAY HIKE / CAMPOUT ★

- Sat **ISSUE OUTING** with Jim Winder (1-505-267-4227), rancher and environmental activist, at his model ranch near Nutt. Easy Walking. Meet at his house at noon.
- Sun Margo Wilson (1-505-744-5860) Moderate Hike up Turtleback Mountain, near T or C. Dogs allowed. Note: Participants can stay at Margo's house Sat night and have a potluck supper. Call Norma McCallan (471-0005) to arrange carpooling from Santa Fe on Sat morning.



Phone Tree Party — Continued

This is a time of extraordinary political ferment and grave threats to our environment. Even if you've never written a letter or called a senator's office, now is the time to take that first step and join our Santa Fe Group phone tree. The "Tree" is a mechanism for getting out an alert fast on a critical environmental issue when there is no time to place it in the newsletter. The more members we can get on the Tree, the more calls will be made to our elected officials, and those calls can make a critical impact.

Yes, you can make a difference! For more information on the party or the tree, call Norma McCallan (471-0005) or Dorothy Grossman (982-1024).

Sat Sun March

- 2 Norma McCallan (471-0005) Easy/Moderate Hike Waldo-Madrid Loop. Dogs allowed. Leave 9 AM.
- 3 Arnold and Carolyn Keskulla (982-9570) Easy Hike up Arroyo Chamisa, with extensions. Leave 9 AM.
- 9 Lionel Soracco (983-6715) Moderate X-Country Ski Tour to an area where snow is good. Leave 8 AM. Call for details.
- 9 Jeff Jones (466-2389) Easy Hike to Kitchen Mesa (near Ghost Ranch). 5 miles RT, one major rock scramble. Leave 8:30 AM. Small children (with parents) encouraged).
- 10 Norbert Sperlich (983-1962) Strenuous Hike near Diablo Canyon and Sagebrush Flats. Mostly off-trail. Call leader if not familiar with area. Leave 8 AM.
- 16 Bob McKee (672-3426) Moderate Hike to Ancho Rapids/Ancho Canyon. Call leader for time and meeting place.
- 17 John McClure (986-1949) Easy Hike from Bandelier Visitor Center down Frijoles Canyon to Rio Grande. Leave 9 AM.
- Saturday and Sunday, March 16/17
- ★ **ISSUE TRIP** ★ Margo Wilson (1-505-744-5860) Exploratory trip into one or two of the more southerly BLM wilderness study areas, overnight camping. More details next issue. Norma McCallan (471-0005) will handle carpooling from Santa Fe.
- 23 Joe Whelan (984-0746) Moderate/Strenuous X-Country Ski Tour into Jemez or Brazos Cliffs area. Moderate in length, but will have some steep turns. Leave 8:30 AM. Call for details.
- 23 Steven Janus (988-4137) Strenuous Hike Sanchez Canyon to Cerro Picacho (west of Bandelier). Leave 8 AM.
- 24 Easy/Moderate Hike to Tent Rocks. Leave 9 AM. Call 471-7575.
- 30 ★ **ISSUE OUTING** ★ Sue McIntosh (466-2001) All Day Tour of a large working mine in the southern part of the state. More details next issue.
- 30 Norrine Sanders (984-0386) Easy/Moderate Hike in the BLM land behind Ojo Caliente. Leave 8 AM.
- 31 Caroline Glick (984-3184) Moderate/Strenuous Hike to Otowi Ruins and Bayo Canyon. Leave 9 AM. Call leader for reservations and time of departure.

- April 13 **All Day Outing Leaders Training Workshop** including a session on wilderness medicine. Outings leaders are expected to attend; anyone interested in the outings program or becoming a leader is invited. Norma, 471-0005 or Norbert, 983-1962.

permission from parents or guardians to participate; permission forms are available at the Sierra Club office. Dogs not permitted on hikes unless noted otherwise. Telephone leader for details of the individual hike.

GROUP DIRECTORY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Marianne Thaeler, Chair	522-34221
Subhankar Banerjee, Vice Chair and NMSU Student SC Advisor	521-3022(H) 646-6232(W)
Margot Wilson, Warm Springs Section and Chapter Delegate	744-5860(H) 894-7152(W)
Jim Winder, Secretary	267-4227
Elizabeth Hernandez, Treasurer	521-1606
Cheryll Blevins, Publicity	526-6220(W) 524-4822(H)
Jim Basler, Outings	521-4822
Margaret Katze	524-4815

FROM THE CHAIR:

In January, the election of new Executive Committee will be certified and the new ExCom members will elect new officers. I have enjoyed my two years as the Chair of the Southern New Mexico Group. It has been a lot of work, and I do not regret it. But, there will be a new Chair elected from amongst the ExCom members at the January 11 meeting. Therefore, I want to thank everyone who has helped and supported me. Without you, I could not have survived. I am an environmental activist, so Conservation took most of my time and will in the future. I am not leaving the Sierra Club. Presently I serve on the National Lands Management Policy Committee, the Southwest Deserts Ecoregion Task Force representing the Chihuahuan Desert, am the Rio Grande Chapter's Military Issues Chair, and, if that wasn't enough, I represent the National Sierra Club on the Western Governors Association's Military Munitions Waste Working Group for Innovative Technology Transfer (a mouth full that mean clean-up, quicker and cheaper.) Personally, I am the Affected Interest on 14 grazing units on BLM Caballo Resource Area's joint management area of McGregor Range. So, you see, it is time for me leave the Chair, and give others the chance to take the reins.

ANNOUNCING THE SOUTHERN NEW MEXICO GROUP'S RURAL FORUM

The Southern New Mexico Group can be proud of its successes. Most notable was the formation of the Warm Springs Section in Sierra County. This could not have been done without the initiative of Margot Wilson and James Wells. (They had 40 people at their December General Meeting on Mining!!)

Building on the successes of the Warm Springs Section, a proposal was written to fund an outreach program to give members who live in rural southern New Mexico a voice. Partial funding has already been secured.

Based on the concept that rural people (members) know best how to bring a voice of reason to the discussion of environmental issues generated in their areas, the Rural Forum will provide opportunities for identified rural environmental leaders to communicate with each other, the media, and governmental land management agencies, to travel to meetings, and to gain courage and support from each other. This Forum is rural people talking to rural people about environmental issues and solutions.

So, in the year to come, expect to hear more about this effort. The Rural Forum will organize after the first of the year, and some of you may be hearing from them.

HAPPY NEW YEAR! SCHEDULED EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

The Southern New Mexico Group operates on a semester basis, following the New Mexico State University calendar year. SO, the annual Spring Kick-off Picnic is the first event!

PICNIC (Pot luck) - bad weather or no. **JANUARY 13, 1996, Saturday.** Students invited, free food, the rest of us bring a little extra. **PLACE:** Dripping Springs - all the way out Las Cruces' University Avenue east to the Organ Mountains, go straight all the way. **SITE:** Behind the Visitors Center. **TIME:** Cars with room for students meet at Pan Am north parking lot at 10:30 AM. We'll meet the rest of you at the Picnic Site at 11 AM. Hopefully the weather will be good enough to hike to the ruins before lunch, others may want to hike up Filmore Canyon. **SEE YOU AT THE SITE!!**

TOUR OF THE WINDER RANCH--Easy walking. January 27, 1996, Saturday. Tour begins at noon. Meet at North Pan Am parking lot at 10:45 AM to

caravan. Or, since this is a Chapter Tour, meet at the ranch house. Directions from Las Cruces: I-25 north to Hatch exit. Take Highway 26 towards Deming. Drive 18 miles to Nutt, watch carefully-- the sign is on the right and small and turn north on Hwy. 27. In LESS than 1/2 mile, you will see a house off the road to the left, the first house, the only house. (Beck on mailbox.) Drive to the house. Driving time 1 hour from Las Cruces. Overnight camping available on the property for those who wish to stay over for Turtleneck Mountain Hike. Bring lunch and water and wear hiking boots or sturdy shoes.

HIKE, January 28, 1996, Sunday, a climb to Turtleneck Mountain. If you are interested, you must call Margot Wilson, Elephant Butte, at 267-4227.

Other hikes and meetings will be announced in the Las Cruces papers.

NMSU STUDENT CONTACTS

S. Raghavan (Raghu)	522-4595
Tony Garcia	524-7301

See NMSU Roundup for announcement of spring organizational meeting. Or check Web home page at: <http://taipan.nmsu.edu/sierra/ssc.html> (Make sure you get the address exactly as above.)

LET'S GIVE RANCHERS WHAT THEY WANT

by Karl Hess, Jr. and Jerry L. Holechek

Here's a trick question. What do public-land ranchers fear most on federal ranges?

If you guess more government and more regulation, you are thinking pre-Republican revolution. Back then, when Vice President Al Gore still spoke the "e" word and Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt still spoke for environmentalists, ranchers were fighting for their economic and political lives. Now the tables are turned, what western stockmen fear most on federal rangelands is not big government, but green demands for free market reform of public land grazing. Last month the Natural Resources Defense Council, the Wilderness Society, Friends of the Earth, the National Wildlife Federation, and the National Audubon Society teamed up with over 50 western environmental groups, including New Mexico's Forest Guardians, to issue a statement on range reform. They agreed to three principles, all based on letting markets, no government regulation, fix an ailing federal livestock program.

In brief, the principles called for 1) letting ranchers voluntarily rest public lands from livestock grazing. (Today, ranchers face loss of their rangeland permits if they fail to make substantial grazing use of them.) 2) Giving all Americans equal opportunity to acquire, hold and use rangeland permits. (Today people who want to buy permits on the open market and voluntarily devote them to wildlife, fisheries, endangered species and wilderness, can't.) Cutting the federal grazing deficit by trimming costs, not raising grazing fees. (Today taxpayers pay almost \$500 million a year to keep the Forest Service and BLM grazing programs afloat.)

These principles, we thought, were tailor-made for ranchers. After all, voluntarism, free markets and cutting federal spending are not just environmental slogans; they are core American values. But we were wrong. Where we imagined stockman support, we found fear.

In part, it was a fear of green motives. When Sen. Domenici, R-NM, met with members of the Forest Guardians this past summer in the wake of his range reform fiasco, he accused them of using the free market as a Trojan Horse for more land regulation. He called them hypocrites, false fiscal conservatives whose true agenda was and is inimical to the livestock industry. His fear was dead wrong, but to him it was prudent and understandable given the angry, embattled history between environmentalists and ranchers.

Mostly, though, it was a fear of the free market voiced by people who represent western stockmen and who, by inclination or training, should know better. Alan Schenberger, executive director of the New Mexico Cattle Growers, is prone to chide government for intruding into ranchers' lives. Yet, when it comes to range reform on federal lands he rarely misses a chance to label free markets "pie-in-the-sky" and to fight the right of The Nature Conservancy "to buy up grazing permits."

John Fowler, economics professor and head of the New Mexico State University Range Improvement Task Force, couldn't agree more. He dismisses market-based range reform because markets only work "in a perfect society, and we don't have a perfect society." Presumably, only government is perfect in an imperfect world.

Something is topsy-turvy on the western range. Environmentalists are acting out of character. They are talking about--taking to heart--free markets, deregulation and fiscal responsibility. They are sounding a lot like the Republican class of '94, but that can't be so.

Ranchers are also acting out of character. They are willing to say no to self-reliance and no to a heritage of independence, and yes to a federal umbrella shielding them from market forces and yes to sticking taxpayers with the bill for their chosen lifestyle. They shout like ghosts from Lyndon Johnson's Great Society, but that can't be so.

We are puzzled by this upside down world. Could it be that greens just don't understand free markets? We doubt it. It was the Environmental Defense Fund--not industry--that pioneered America's successful free-market strategy to curb air pollution. It was greens--not irrigators--who pioneered the use of water markets to conserve water in California's Central Valley for farmers, urban dwellers and rural wildlife. And it was groups like The Nature Conservancy--not private property rights organizations--that pioneered the practice of making free markets the handmaiden of land conservation.

A more likely answer rests with ranchers. They--or at least those who

speaking for them--are the very ones now betting on a better way than free markets to give the ranching community what it wants. If this is true, stockmen need to think twice about what they really want, for the kindly government and friendly regulators they are betting on are two-sided daggers that can cut both for and against their favor.

Take grazing permits on federal lands. Ranchers sell them to other ranchers all the time. That's a market transaction, one that stockmen defend because it validates their historic claim to grazing rights on public lands. They're right, of course, for it is precisely the ability--or right--to market a grazing permit to another rancher that gives permits value, tenure and stability. But ranches are walking on thin ice when they deny the same right to the 250 million Americans who don't give a whit about growing red meat. So if markets are truly "pie-in-the-sky," let's do what is right and consistent. Let's outlaw them; let's erase their scourge from federal ranges and end the pretense--and the hypocrisy--of private grazing claims to public lands.

While we are at it, let's also purge grazing policy of all free market biases. Let's revoke private water rights and private ownership of range improvements on public lands and put them firmly under federal control. Doing so makes sense and simplicity in a revamped grazing system where permits are revocable privileges, not ironclad rights. And if ranchers want community stability, let's give them exactly what they want. Let's send in massive federal dollars and legions of federal experts to plan their lives and welfare from cradle to the grave. That's the non-market way.

It's also the way of nonsense. Greens know this, and this is why they are pushing for a market revolution on federal grazing lands. Pete Domenici should support them, public-land ranchers should join them, and all of us should applaud them for their courage and daring.

Reprinted here with the consent of the authors. (Karl Hess, Jr is senior fellow in environmental studies at the Cato Institute in Washington, D.C., and Jerry L. Holechek is professor of range management at NMSU.)

FORESTS LOSE MONEY

According to the Southwest Center for Biodiversity in Phoenix, U.S. Forest Service subsidy losses totaled \$54.6 million for fiscal 1992-4 in the Southwest!

A September 1995 U.S. General Accounting Office Report is titled, "Forest Service Distribution of Timber Sales Receipts Fiscal Years 1992 - 1994." In Arizona, the losses for the period by individual National Forests were \$22,655,287. In New Mexico, the losses for the period were \$25,162,399. Additionally, the Regional Office in Albuquerque lost \$6,782,314 for the period to provide for timber sale support.

Losses for individual National Forests for the period include:

Apache/Sitgreaves:	\$8,274,812;
Carson:	\$5,531,864;
Coconino:	\$3,690,264;
Cibola:	\$2,322,878;
Coronado:	\$ 562,907;
Gila:	\$7,291,767;
Kaibab:	\$6,491,759;
Lincoln:	\$2,975,480;
Prescott:	\$1,104,357;
Santa Fe:	\$7,040,410; and
Tonto:	\$2,531,188.

These subsidies allow for the continuance of the 450 logging jobs in Arizona dependent on wood from National Forests in Arizona (ASU Center for Business Research) and 200 logging jobs in New Mexico dependent on wood from National Forests in New Mexico (N.M. Labor Department). The subsidy losses amount to \$71,936.76 per logging job for the period 1992-1994 or \$23,978.92 per logging job per year in Arizona and New Mexico.

Warm Springs Section Report

Phil McClelland from the Caballo State Park spoke at our November General Meeting on the various programs to provide habitat for Bald Eagles, and improved habitat and forage for birds at Percha State Park.

The Percha, though a relatively small area, is renowned for its "good birding," and draws about 60 birders a week. One wonders what would become of this small park under the jurisdiction of the EBID.

On November 19, there was a great trip to visit the Hermosa and North Palomas Allotments in response to the Forest Service request for public input. Many thanks to Jerry Payne of the Black Range District of the U.S. Forest Service for a wonderful look at New Mexico grasses, and a good study in riparian restoration.

On the same date, James Wells and Bill Bussmann met Tim Murphy, BLM Caballo Resource Area Manager, and toured Copper Flats, site of the proposed Alta Gold mine.

The December General Meeting brought a record turnout hear Sue McIntosh speak on the effects of reopening the Copper Flats Mine. The most serious concern is the enormous amount of water needed to operate the mine and the resulting draw-down in the water table that would continue for 200 years! Over 40 were at the meeting including Gwen Wardwell and Van Perkins from the Chapter. Chet Warwick said he thought he'd never see the day when so many people would show up for a Sierra Club meeting in Sierra County. Pretty amazing! After Sue's presentation, while consuming brownies and ice tea, people stayed and discussed the issues on both sides.

Outings:

01/26/96....Chapter outing to visit Jim Winder's riparian restoration.

Evening pot luck supper at Margot Wilson's at 7:30. Call 744-5860.

01/27/96....Meet on the east side of the Third Street Bridge at 8:00 to climb Turtle Back. Bring a sack lunch to eat at the top. Margot Wilson leader.

02/03/96....Meet at 9:00 at the KOA on the Hillsboro turn off to visit Bill Bussmann (743-3841) at the Gopher Broke Ranch and tour Animas Creek Canyon. Lunch at a Mimbres site.

2/17/96 James Wells will be leading a hike in the Southern Caballo Mt. to look at the proposed site for the introduction of Desert Big Sheep. Good views for people, too! Bring a sack lunch. Leave from the Furr's parking lot 8:00 A.M.

03/09/96....Join Chet Warwick (894-6427) for a trip to the Mud Caves north of Kingston. Leave the Furr's parking lot at 8:00 A.M.

General Meeting:

On January 16th Russ (BL)....will be speaking at our General Meeting on the geology of the Copper Flats area.

General Membership Meeting
New Mexico Wilderness Coalition,
Sunday, January 21, 1996, 10 am.

New Mexico Tech Library, Library Conference Room 212,
Socorro, New Mexico

(corner of Leroy and Bullock, NE corner of campus)

Agenda: Election of Board of Directors, Updates on Coalition BLM
Wilderness Proposal, Report on Wildlands Book and more.

Contact John Wright, Coordinator, at 247-4353, for more information.

☐ **Yes, I want to join!** I want to help safeguard our nation's precious natural heritage. My payment is enclosed.

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CONTRIBUTING	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100	<input type="checkbox"/> \$108
LIFE	<input type="checkbox"/> \$750	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000
SENIOR	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15	<input type="checkbox"/> \$23
STUDENT	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15	<input type="checkbox"/> \$23
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One Earth, One Chance®

Sample Letter to the Editor about Shell Boycott

Dear Editor:

What a tragic world we live in, where oil profits and political power win over human rights. In November, Nigeria's military government executed activist Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight of his colleagues for allegedly "inciting" murder during a protest against the tremendous environmental damage done by Royal Dutch Shell in the Ogoni region of Nigeria.

Mr. Saro-Wiwa and his organization, the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People, have fought for fairness—for restitution to an area that has seen all of the damage associated with oil development and none of the financial benefit. But fairness has been set aside for greed, restitution for grief.

Royal Dutch Shell accused Mr. Saro-Wiwa of supporting violence, even though Saro-Wiwa's organization supported only non-violent campaigns. The Nigerian government convicted Mr. Saro-Wiwa of murder, even though the true murder is at the hands of the government and Royal Dutch Shell—for the death of this great leader and for the destruction of Nigeria's land by the ravages of oil development.

It is too late to save Ken Saro-Wiwa—but it is not too late to preserve his legacy. We must urge the U.S. and other countries around the world to act on their condemnations of the Nigerian government's action. And, in the name of fairness and in the name of human rights, we must strive to ensure that Shell and other oil companies are held accountable for the damage they create. I don't intend to buy Shell gasoline ever again. I hope you will join me.

Sincerely,

FALLING DEBRIS OUTSIDE WSMR!

by

Marianne Thaeler,
Military Issues Chair

The Theater Missile Defense (TMD) Extended Test Range program is presently fully funded by Congress.

The Theater Missile Defense (TMD) Flight Test Environmental Assessment (EA), which resulted in a Finding of No Significant Environmental Impact from TMD flight test activities at White Sands Missile Range (WSMR), determined that all debris would be contained within WSMR-controlled areas, including the extension areas. However, recent analyses by WSMR and U.S. Space and Strategic Defense Command show that there is a probability that debris could exceed WSMR-controlled areas and existing airspace for Theater High Altitude Areas Defense intercept missions. These missiles are to be lobbed at targets.

Therefore, a TMD Supplemental EA (SEA) was prepared and released Nov. 15, 1995. Again, there was a Finding of No Significant Environmental Impact.

BUT, this SEA does include a map showing required additional restricted airspace needed for aircraft safety due to falling debris. See "Proposed Temporary Restricted Airspace" below.

This SEA also shows maps for six Scenarios and Risk to Population. In each Scenario, there are areas north of Tularosa and south of Hwy. 380 (east of WSMR's existing boundary) that are considered "Debris containment contour for risk to population." The risks to houses, cars, livestock, etc. are not delineated.

Examples of the force of the falling debris are given as a baseball thrown at 75 miles per hour, or a bowling ball dropped from 4 feet. At SEA page 3-11, it states, "Under the proposed activities, debris could fall on land subject to the existing agricultural, recreational, and residential uses. However, the current land use would not be restricted, and activities associated with the land use would con-

tinue uninterrupted." This statement is considered by this author to mean that the public will not be notified. To continue the quote, "In addition, the proposed activities would not change the goals and objectives of the Federal, regional, state, and local plans, policies, and controls that have been used to create the current land uses." Again, no public notices or evacuations or coordination with other government land management agencies, and no WSMR changes.

The temporary restricted airspace for falling debris is planned for a 4-hour period in the early morning and late evening for 2 days per month. No mention is made as to how many years this would be in effect.

The TMD program may contend that there are No Significant Environmental Impacts, but it is easy to conclude that there is risk to public safety both to humans and

their belongings from US Space and Strategic Defense Command planned activities at WSMR.

It is our fervent hope that some action will be taken to stop these activities as presently designed. Calls to Congress and the President would be appropriate.

Also, future uses of the space shown on the Map are envisioned—SEA pg. 1-2: "Recent analyses by the National Range Operations Directorate at WSMR and independent analyses conducted by USASDC have shown the probability that some of the debris from future missions could exceed WSMR-controlled areas." Again, call or write Congress.

(Note: The Sierra Club, to date, has no policy on Military Issues. This report is made for informational purposes.)

Forest Service Decides to Expand Santa Fe Ski Area

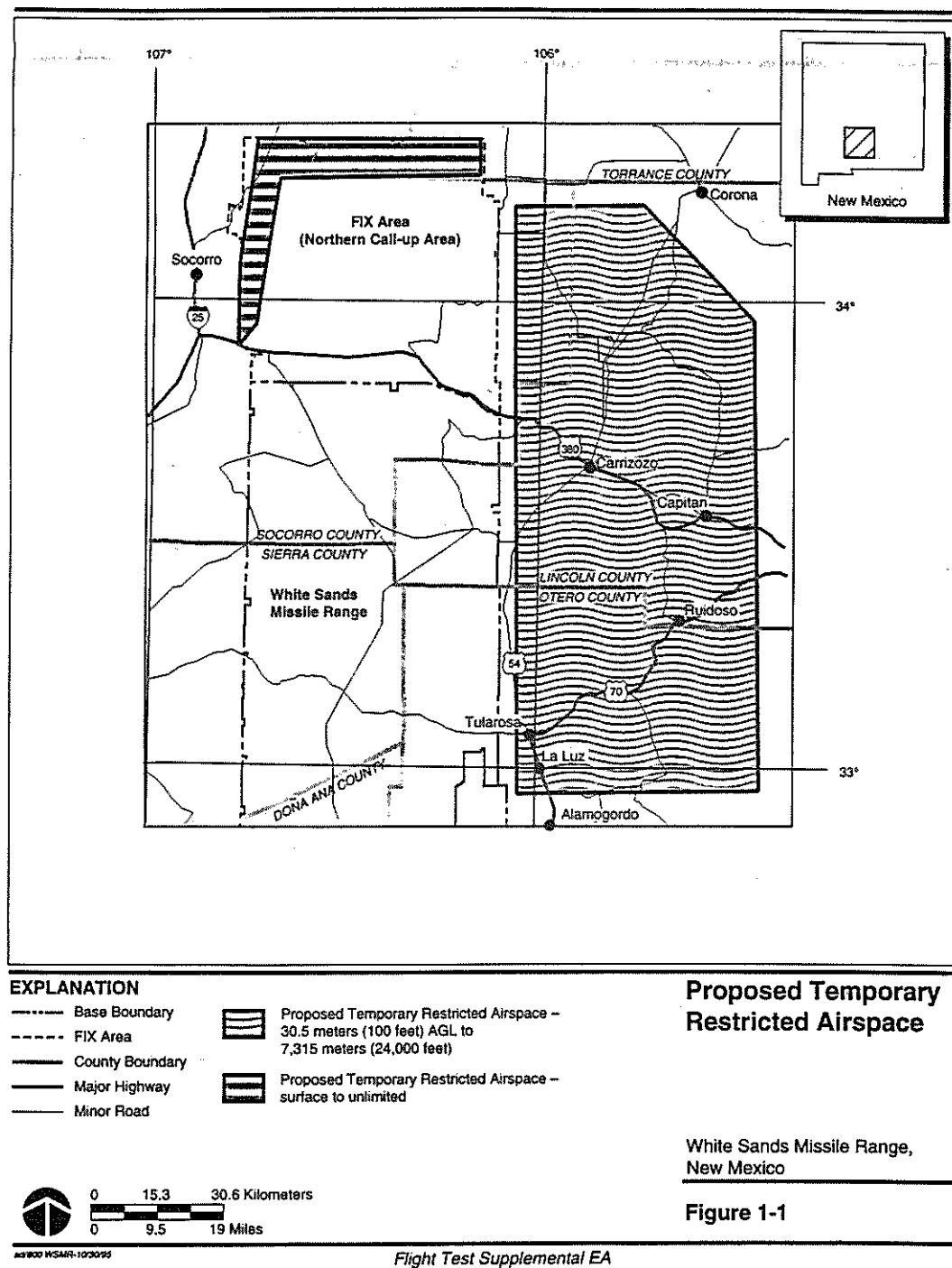
On December 18, 1995, Al Defler, Supervisor of the Santa Fe National Forest, reversing his preliminary decision of March 1994, announced that he will permit the Ski Area Operator to expand into the Big Tesuque Basin with a ski lift a mile long. By selecting Alternative #4 (the Ski Area Operator's choice) from the alternatives in the Environmental Impact Statement, the Forest Service is allowing the Ski Area to have access to 891 acres, up from the existing 585 acres (a 52% increase), permitting the number of Skiers at one time (SOAT) to increase from 4150 to 5980, an additional 1850 (a 45% increase), allowing total snow-making capability to rise from today's 57.6 acres to 104.1 acres (an 81% increase), allowing the construction of a three-level terraced parking lot with 886 spaces (which will increase the total parking to 1661 from 1485 today—750 spaces now used on the access road will be eliminated through the discontinuance of the present "cattle car" shuttles), allowing the development of commercial mountain biking on 19.3 km of trails (none is permitted now), and expanding existing support facilities and buildings.

The Santa Fe Ski Area Containment Coalition (SACC) is the umbrella group of local organizations opposed to this radical expansion. Members include the Santa Fe Group of the Sierra Club, the Sangre de Cristo Audubon Society, various acequias and ditch associations, Forest Guardians, La Tres Villas, Forest Conservation Council, La Raza Forum, and the Tesuque Pueblo Tribal Council as well as other local businesses and groups. SACC was organized in 1992 and has been fighting the expansion for almost 4 years. After the preliminary decision for Alternative #3 was announced in March 1994, SACC developed a "Citizen's Alternative," a responsible approach to the expansion. Support for the "Citizen's Alternative" was given to SACC by Senator Jeff Bingaman and Representative Bill Richardson, the Santa Fe City Council, the Board of Santa Fe County Commissioners, the Eight Northern Indian Pueblos Council and a large number of local citizens. It is significant that Al Defler ignored this support and cited only Governor Johnson's letter supporting the expansion during his press conference announcing his decision December 18.

SACC has a current lawsuit filed against the Santa Fe National Forest, seeking an immediate halt to the illegal diversion of water for domestic purposes. This illegal diversion by the Ski Area Operator has been going on every year since 1986, with the full knowledge of the Forest Service, in violation of a federal court order.

SACC intends to file an administrative appeal of Defler's decision with the Regional Forester in Albuquerque. Should that not succeed in reversing this decision, SACC intends to pursue the matter in the courts.

There will be a fundraiser at La Fonda in Santa Fe on the evening of February 23 to help raise the money needed to fight this expansion. This will be a good opportunity for our members to support SACC. Tickets are \$5.00. For further information, contact Bill Maley at 989-7289.



It's been over 20 years since Bill Koch won a silver medal at the 1974 Winter Olympics, and there hasn't been anything like it since. There wasn't much before, either. At least not from the U.S. Nordic (cross-country) Team. The unimpressive performance of the U.S. teams in international competition is all the more strange considering the growth of Nordic skiing in the U.S. Today, Nordic skiing, and particularly ski-touring, is growing in popularity far faster than Alpine (downhill) skiing, and, to the chagrin of resort operators, significantly faster even than snowboarding, the presumed salvation of the Alpine resort industry. Nordicskiing, however big, does not extend across American society at large. It is almost exclusively a pursuit of the middle-aged. American children are not a part of it, hence the absence of U.S. medalists in the youngish sphere of ski competition.

In contrast, the Scandinavian child will be on skis by age three or four. Everyone in the Scandinavian world gets around on skis, for travel to the corner shop or for Sunday sport, and the kids, emulating their elders, and with continual opportunity and encouragement, learn early. Motor skills—things we do without thinking, like **balance**—are learned early, up to age seven. By age 11 or 12, that stage of development is essentially past. That, unfortunately, is about the age at which most American children will first be introduced to skiing.

Controlling one's position while sliding is a motor skill. It may derive from ice skating, skiing, sledding, or sliding down icy sidewalks for fun. Happily, most middle-agers who hadn't the opportunity to learn to ski as children, did, in fact, develop some of the requisite motor skills by other means, and do often become proficient skiers. But the easy, fluid, grace-in-motion that characterizes the exceptional skier, ballet dancer, or gymnast—that almost invariably was learned early in life. When children learn to control their body in space, and in motion, it's a skill which is not only permanent, but transferable. It gives the child potential in many directions, and throughout his/her life.

If asked why a child should ski, the Sierra Club member/parent usually will emphasize the value of experiencing the winter world. Observing the majesty of God's creation. But what could be more elegant than to cultivate these spiritual values at the same time we cultivate the child's highest physical potentials: grace-in-motion? What greater gift could one generation give to the next?

As a practical matter, however, we don't live in Scandinavia, and our children don't automatically develop the desire to ski. Even if we've decided to make the effort to teach them, we're faced with the matter of **motivation**. American kids are saturated with pitches for effortless achievement and unearned rewards. We need to get a head start on TV seduction: we need to capitalize on our children's natural desire in early life to be with us, to go where we go, and their capacity for having fun doing **simple** things. We need to tailor the activity to the child's individual level, to avoid frustration and resistance. And we need a bit of patience. Putting a child on skis before they're ready is the **worst** thing that can be done. But that doesn't mean they can't be out on the snow watching what others are doing.

Before an infant has reached the walking stage, parents commonly will carry them in back slings. In Africa and Asia, children have been riding on Mom's back for eons. Why not on a ski tour? The important considerations are to select a route and exercise enough judgment to prevent backward falls; and to select a back sling with enough tubular reinforcement to protect the child if a fall in *any* direction should occur. It goes without saying that the infant should be adequately dressed for the temperature. Frequent checks should be made to assure that sleeves and legs haven't ridden up, exposing delicate skin. Be aware that bright sunlight on snow is no easier on baby's eyes than on your own. Consider a cap with peripheral shielding, or a cloth draped over the infant's head.

As an alternative, if money permits, consider taking the infant along in a **pulk**, (or, for the purist, "pulku"): a small lightweight sled which can be

towed behind either Mom or Dad. Pulks have been around for centuries, hauling everything from firewood to groceries to babies. Modern versions are ultralight, frequently with a canopy to protect from sunlight and snowfall and, besides accommodating baby, can carry lunch and extra clothing as well. Naptime comes and goes as usual, and diaper-changing is easy.

In a recent evaluation that I conducted in California, I found that even slightly-built women could tow a pulk easily, utilizing either classical striding or skate technique. We found in a series of trials, contrary to the assertions of some, we could not overturn the test models, even in severe skate turns. Deep tracks in newly fallen, loose, dry powder snow, however, may cause the pulk to tip to the side and to create additional drag, making a back sling a better choice for those conditions. For parents uncertain of their own skills or the weather, pulks are a very safe choice in most instances. With a little care, pulks last forever. Your grandchildren will use the one you buy today.

As children grow, they become more adventurous. Their first active sliding endeavor might be on *your* skis. Find a small hill or bump, then stand your child on your skis ahead of you. Assume a crouching position, securely holding the child, and slide down the hill and on to a gradual stop. Always select a slope with a clear runout at the bottom and, if possible, position someone at the bottom for emotional as well as physical security. If the snow is going to be firm, either naturally or through your fancy footwork, bring along a light, inflatable plastic tube or piece of cardboard. Children aren't fussy about what they slide on. Sitting is a lot less scary than standing, and all of it contributes to confidence and motor skills.

Eventually the day will come when you will be able to take the child down the little hill, not on a tube, but on their own short skis. Position them between your skis, in well-defined tracks, securely hold them, and slide down the hill together. With sufficient positive experience they will want to do it themselves, without Mom or Dad hanging on and, at that point, you've succeeded!

The key is **positive experience**.

Take your cues from the child's reactions. Let them establish their own pace. Never demand that they do something they're fearful of, or which they haven't already watched someone else do before them. Another child, already proficient, is unquestionably the best model. Borrow your neighbor's kid for a day.

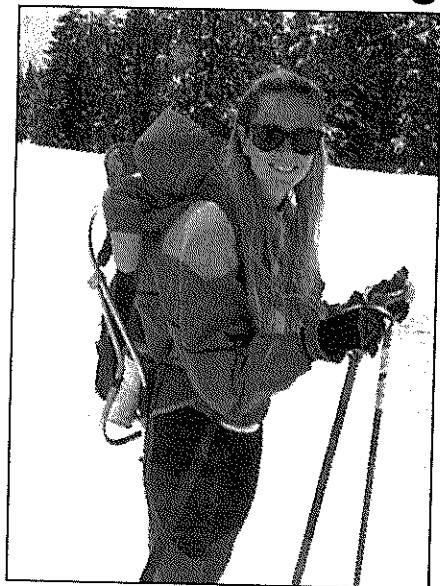
Having an infant to care for should not mean the end of your ski-touring. Use your ski trips as an opportunity to share with and bond with your child. Use these early years to build your child's motor skills, self-confidence, and, importantly, his/her relationship with you. Skiing, besides being great fun, builds self-reliance, a sense of responsibility, and genuine social skills. It's a sport that can be done throughout one's entire lifetime, into very old age. For the skier, winter weather is a favorite season, not a burden to be suffered. And if these benefits were not enough to justify the investment in your children, remember there is no boob-tube violence-training on the ski trails.

Next issue: The child's transition to skis and independence. A child's idea of skiing may not be the same as yours.

Introducing Children to Skiing Part 1

by
John
Turnbull

5



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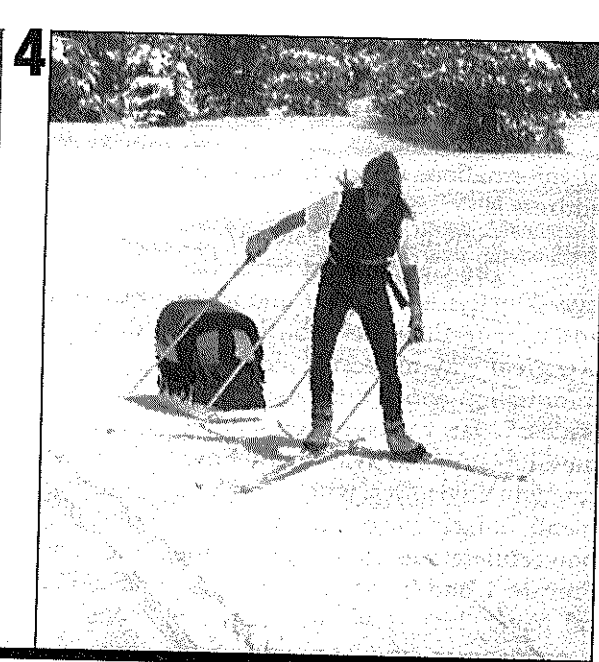
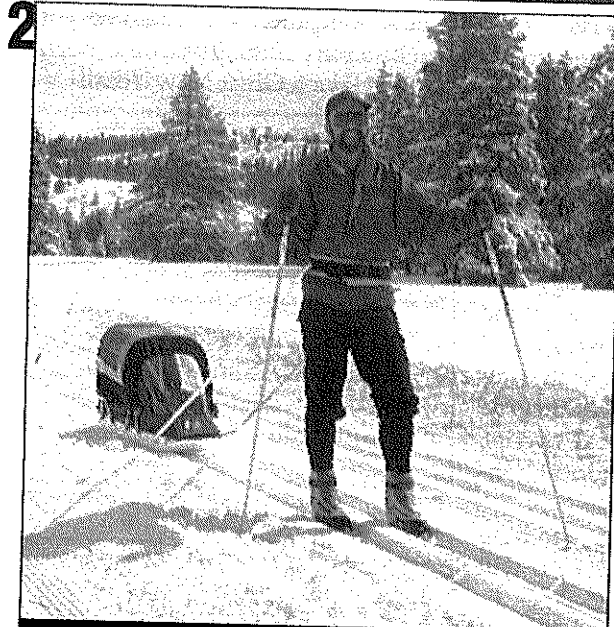
1. Naptime on the ski trail. The child's skis, if the right moment arises, are attached.

2. The designer of the Oregon-built lightweight pulk during evaluation session last year. His own two children were the original test pilots. Note complete canopy installed, with windows for visibility.

3. A smiling young lady from New England with test pulk loaded with case of soda. Rigid stays prevent pulk overtaking skier on slopes. Evaluators were not able to overturn pulk even in sharp turns.

4. How fast can you go towing a pulk? The winner. A ski instructor and racer from California using a V-1 skate stroke.

5. A young Mom (visiting from Sweden) with baby in a back sling. Note tubing around child's feet and legs for protection in falls.



Chapter Outings Notes from Norma

by
Norma
McCallan

Saturday, January 13, SOUTHERN PLAINS ANNUAL CONFERENCE, Amarillo, Texas. Our Chapter has received a special invitation from Russ Denelson of the Amarillo Group of the Palo Duro Chapter to attend this conference, which annually explores various factors pertinent to the Southern Plains Bio-Region, of which New Mexico's Eastern Plains is a part. This year's presentations will focus on the agristology of the area (study of the grasses). This Conference goes from 8:30 am to 4 pm, with a catered lunch, at the Amarillo Civic Center. \$10 registration fee. Exhibits, lectures and panel discussions. Call Russ at 806-372-8934 for more information.

Russ promises an outing on the New Mexico/Texas border in the next issue.

Saturday, January 13, Mining Workshop in Santa Fe. See page 5 for details.

Saturday-Sunday, March 16/17, BLM WILDERNESS STUDY AREA exploratory outing in the southern part of the state. Margot Wilson, 744-5860, will coordinate. See next issue for details.

Saturday, March 30, WORKING MINE SITE, all-day tour. Sue McIntosh, 466-2001, will arrange a tour at one of the big mine sites in the southern part of the state. Details in the next issue.

Remembes, group hikes are open to all Sierrans (and non-Sierrans). Each of the groups leads hikes far afield from their local sites. Scan the Group outings pages and see if there isn't something near you, or of particular interest to you.

Anyone wishing to coordinate issue-oriented or educational trips which would be of value to members Chapterwide, please contact Norma McCallan at 471-0005.

Letters

(con't from page 2)

surrounding state trust lands in the same lease. If such a parcel is separated, it makes the balance of the land less usable and less rentable. That does not benefit the trust.

Moreover, our grazing lessees have long understood that they are getting the land as it lays, in all its diversity. This way, a rocky hillside that won't support cows still earns revenue for the trust.

But, if leaseholders can unilaterally exclude tracts from their leases, we will end up with more unleased land. Unleased land invites illegal dumping, off-road vehicle abuse, and woodcutting. That does not benefit the trust.

What benefits the trust is all of us working cooperatively with our leaseholders in their management responsibilities, recognizing and rewarding good stewardship, and supporting healthy rural communities.

I want to give some examples of what we are doing to improve the overall administration of the state trust land.

I have commissioned a survey of rare plants and initiated field inventories of streamside (riparian) areas to ensure their protection. I have automated our field offices, added field positions, and hired the best scientific and technical staff available.

I am asking the Legislature for substantial funding next year for the first extensive biological inventory of the trust's land, and I am upgrading our geographic information and global positioning systems.

In the financial arena, we are working hard to generate more revenues for our beneficiaries. I must honestly tell you that, despite what you may be told, the livestock industry is not a potential source of greatly increased revenues for the trust. Grazing revenues total just 5.5 percent of our total revenues. Our annual rent would have increased by just \$3,700 a year if we had accepted all of the high bids. It cost five times that amount

just to evaluate the bids.

Of course, we are making sure that we get a fair market value for the trust. But of equal or greater value to the trust is having actual leaseholders on the land, exercising good management practices and providing long-term, stable revenues to the trust.

We are always looking for new opportunities to increase revenues for the trust. Let me give you some examples:

I signed an agreement with the State Investment Council that increased the earnings from our advance royalty payments from \$240,000 a year to about \$1.4 million.

We successfully sold our production interest in some natural gas wells in San Juan County that are eligible for a federal tax credit, which will generate up to \$8 million over the next 20 years. We are the only state trust land agency in the country that has been authorized to enter this type of agreement.

As a result of aggressive and fair pursuit of uncollected revenues by my office, we have reached settlements of disputes with Marathon Oil Company and Texaco Inc., resulting in nearly \$5 million in additional collections this year.

We have collected \$50 million in previously unpaid royalties, taxes, penalties, and interest from oil and gas companies during the past five years.

In January, I will ask the Legislature to authorize a special project to continue that effort, which could result in an additional \$30 million.

In conclusion, we are working hard on many fronts to lead the nation in our land stewardship activities. We are already leading the nation in our efforts to maximize financial returns.

Sincerely,

Ray Powell, M.S., D.V.M.
Commissioner of Public Lands

A Year Ago, the Electronic Sierra Club Was Just a Vision--We've Come a Long Way!

By Bruce Batson (bbatson@ni.net) & Blair Brown (bblairb@aol.com)

The vision for the Electronic Sierra Club began over breakfast one Saturday morning back in October 1994. Since then, the vision has become real.

The Rio Grande Chapter's Homepage provides vital information about our activities and, through Hyperlinks, transports folks to the National Sierra Club Homepage and to other great sources of information. Check it out - the address is:

<http://www.nm.com/~sierra/>

The Chapter List Serve has over 30 activists on it now, and we're adding more daily. Being on the 'List' is a great way to receive alerts and information about the most urgent issues. So far, we have been sending the Club's regular War on the Environment advisories, which give you plenty of facts so you can write powerful letters to Congress, the President, and the editor of your local paper. List Serve members can

also send out their ideas, comments, concerns, and pleas for help and information on local issues. If you want to be added, just E-Mail us a request.

That's pretty good, you say, but now you want to know what's going to happen next.

The most significant event we see is happening at the National level, in the wake of the Board of Directors' approval to develop a comprehensive electronic communication system for the Club.

This system will utilize many of the new electronic tools currently at our disposal:

- E-Mail between members will be expanded to include any member with an Internet address. The Club will maintain an on-line directory so that users will be able to find the E-Mail addresses of other members. (We would like to encourage everyone with a computer to consider getting a modem and sign-

ing up with an Internet Provider so they can become a part of this network.)

- A fax network for members who don't have E-Mail, but have a fax machine available to receive messages and alerts.

- A 'Fax-Back' service that you can call to request faxed statements of Club policy and alerts.

We will keep you advised of their progress in future columns.

Within the Rio Grande Chapter, the Information Technology Committee is working hard to improve both the Home Page and the ListServe. In response to the feedback we've been getting, we will be adding a 'local news' section to the Home Page, which will include listings of upcoming local events, meetings and reports on local conservation activities.

The more people who help with this, the more effective it will be. Send us E-Mail messages or

floppy disks with reports on what's happening and what you're doing. We'll put them on the Home Page and, when immediate action is needed, we'll also put them on the ListServe, so many others will know.

We hope Santa brought you a new computer or modem so you can be a part of the Electronic Sierra Club. Have a Great New Year!!

Sierra Club on the World Wide Web!

Have you checked out the World Wide Web?

The Sierra Club Rio Grande Chapter is there along with National Sierra Club and a growing number of other Chapters and Groups. When you're on the Web, point your Web browser to:

<http://www.nm.org/~sierra/>

You will be transported to the Rio Grande Chapter's Homepage.

With a click of the mouse you'll find the information you need.

Outings listings to plan your next hike
Information on the Chapter & Groups like time & location of meetings
Alerts on the War on the Environment
Special topics like Ecoregions and Sustainable Communities
Volunteer opportunities
Much much more!

Other Web sites let you review your congressman's voting record or learn about what's happening in Washington and even send an E-mail message to the President or your elected representative.

We could go on and on... there is a world of information on the Web to help you learn about anything environmental (or any other interest you may have!)

Don't be left out! See you on the Web!

The hearings are finally over and the Fish and Wildlife Service has stopped taking comment on whether or not to reintroduce the rarest of American wolves to New Mexico and Arizona. One would think that, after the lopsided turnout at hearings in favor of Mexican wolf reintroduction, we could now all relax and let the FWS do their job.

Don't even think about it! Unfortunately, our job has just begun.

What should have been a done deal by now has started to fray around the edges from continued and focused assaults by Wise Use and Livestock interests in the South west. The latest round of attacks began when Governor Johnson sent his comments to the FWS even though the deadline had passed. He related his concern that wolves would devastate our rural economies. Of course, he provided no evidence to support his position. He would have been hard pressed to do so since biological data from areas with high wolf density shows a livestock predation rate at a minute fraction of 1%. Fortunately for Gary Johnson, this is a political and not a biological debate. To add fuel to the fire, the New Mexico Game and Fish Commission voted unanimously to oppose reintroduction. This should come as no surprise since they were all appointed by the Johnson administration, but it did sting since Game and Fish is supposed to act in the best interest of New Mexico's ecology and wildlife. Rather than uphold their duty in this regard, they cited baseless political concerns for ending the program. Among these were livestock predation (sound familiar?), the cost to the taxpayers, and the supposed hybridization of the Mexican wolf population. Dave Parsons, Regional Director of the recovery project, tried to explain the genetic purity evidence. Unfortunately, the Commission isn't exactly packed with scientists and would rather listen to rumors than try to understand the finer points of genetics and mitochondrial DNA testing.

The Poll

In its attempt to circumvent both the will of the majority and the Endangered Species Act, the Johnson administration finally dropped the ball, in true Johnsonesque style. All along, one of the basic tenets the Governor has used to defend his stance has been the mantra of local control. He argued that rural New Mexicans in counties

like Catron, Otero, Grant and Sierra were obviously opposed to wolves and that the federal government was sticking its nose where it didn't belong. To prove his point, he commissioned a poll. The idea was that rural residents would overwhelmingly state their opposition to wolf introduction and buoy Johnson's popularity with his rural constituency. When the Governor got wind that opposition wasn't as strong as he once thought, he got cold feet and canceled the poll. This is where things get interesting. The League of Women Voters picked up Johnson's poll and implemented it statewide, while taking no position on reintroduction themselves. The results spoke for themselves. Residents of the four counties which were supposed to be the heart of the opposition favored reintroduction of wolves to New Mexico by a 52% to 34% margin. Statewide support for wolf reintroduction exceeded opposition by greater than a two to one margin. It is now clear, New Mexicans want wolves even if their elected officials are too pigeon-holed by special interests to come along.

Where Are We Now?

So where does this all

leave us? On shaky ground at best. While public opinion is certainly on our side, it would be very easy for US Fish and Wildlife to get cold feet right now. With interdepartmental budget cuts about to take their toll on the Mexican wolf reintroduction program, we have to keep pressure on FWS to do the right thing. That means not only releasing wolves, but doing it in the right place. If wolves are released in White Sands only and then the budget is cut, it will amount to a death certificate for a continuing population. Now would be a fine time to write the FWS Regional Director and Secretary of Interior Bruce Babbitt, to espouse the virtues of Mexican wolves running free in the Blue Range of Arizona rather than just in White Sands.

Probably even more important are letters to Senators Domenici and Bingaman, especially Domenici, since a public statement from him opposing reintroduction could demoralize some of the less than passionate FWS wolf supporters.

So keep the fire to their feet! Let them know we want Mexican wolves free and wild, not pacing back and forth in a zoo. We can

still win this one and, if we do, a species that is the very spirit of wilderness will have a second chance in our own backyard.

Addresses for Action:

The Honorable Pete Domenici
US Senate
Washington, DC 20010
(202) 224-6621 DC
(505) 766-3481 NM

The Honorable Jeff Bingaman
US Senate
Washington, DC 20010
(202) 224-5521 DC
(505) 766-3636 NM

Department of Interior
Secretary Bruce Babbitt
Main Interior Bldg.
1849 C St. NW
Washington, DC 20240
Phone (202) 208-7351
Fax (202) 208-6956

US Fish & Wildlife
Regional Director Nancy Kufman
PO Box 1306
Albuquerque, NM 87103
(505) 248-6282

Public Demands Wolves, Politicians Aren't So Sure

by

Martin T. Heinrich

Welcome New Members!

Marilyn Adams, Santa Fe
Lawrence Alei, Albuquerque
Ted Allred, T Or C
Lucy Altman, Belen
G. Alvarado Cpt, El Paso
Ms. C. Archuleta, T Or C
Jason Asters, El Paso
Mr. David Aubrey, Los Alamos
Jonathan Bahnks, Santa Fe
Sharon Bailey, Albuquerque
William Balassi, Albuquerque
Cynthia Baque, Clovis
Mrs. Barbara Barnes, Deming
Eileen Beaulieu, Los Lunas
Mark Benak, Albuquerque
Bo Erik Bergstrom, Silver City
Kathleen Birnbaum, Albuquerque
Cheryl Black, Albuquerque
Elizabeth Blackmond, Belen
Mr. & Mrs. William Bohn, Roswell
William Bohn, Roswell
Miriam Boucher, Albuquerque
Ms. Susan Bowin, Rio Rancho
Mary Bradshaw, Santa Fe
Joyce Braun, Las Cruces
Kathryn Brennan, El Paso
Russell Brito, Albuquerque
Mr. & Mrs. Tod Brown, Santa Fe
John Brown, El Paso
Jerri Bryson, Santa Fe
Dean Buck, Albuquerque
Tom Burns, Carlsbad
Jesse Cantrell, Albuquerque
John Carter, Albuquerque
Rosemary Castorina, Alb.
Margaret Chaffey, Corrales
Manny Chavez, El Paso
Denise Cherrington, Placitas
Christina Clements, Albuquerque
Robert Clickner, Rio Rancho
Dorothy Clough, Albuquerque
Chris Clow, Santa Fe
Tery Cole, Albuquerque
Nancy Cordes, El Paso
Samuel Correnti Phd, Santa Fe
Willis Cox, Los Ojos
Janis Cox, Santa Fe
J. Crisler, Jemez Springs
Shelley Crowe, Roswell

Angela Cummings, Tesuque
Mr. Stephen Degiullo, Alamogordo
Elizabeth Dekorne, Santa Fe
Yvonne Delamater, Los Alamos
Dr. Margart Diaz, Santa Fe
Ross Dingman, Ruidoso
Franklin Dippery, Aztec
Kathy Dixon, Albuquerque
John Dodge, Fruitland
James Dowling, Albuquerque
Deborah Duncan, El Paso
Tom Duncan, Albuquerque
Luis Echeverri, Albuquerque
Stephen Edwards, Albuquerque
Sandra Eisdorfer, Las Cruces
Sally Englund, Rio Rancho
Mr. David Engstrom, Las Vegas
Brian Etheridge, Las Cruces
Mr. Brendan Falde, Albuquerque
Mr. J. Farslow, Albuquerque
Shaleen Feasby, Williamsburg
Allen Ferguson, El Prado
Mary Fiorina, Albuquerque
Kristina Fisher, Santa Fe
Eleanor And Carl Fix, El Paso
William Fowler, Albuquerque
Lisa Fugit, Albuquerque
Dr. Lawrence Gansemer, Santa Fe
Thomas Garcia, Santa Fe
Kelly Garner, Albuquerque
David Gean, El Paso
Rita Getty, Albuquerque
Chris Gibbons, Albuquerque
Margaret Glocker, Albuquerque
David Gomez, Espanola
Devika Gordon, Santa Fe
Denise Gray, Albuquerque
Sue And Jon Greening, Tijeras
John Grost MD, El Paso
Heidi Guzman, El Paso
Ewing Hacknney, Albuquerque
Holly Hagan, Santa Fe
Patricia Hager, Albuquerque
Charles Hall, El Paso
Mr. Charles Hall, El Paso
Alia Hallowell, Tesuque
Paul Hartman, Roswell
W. Heath, Alto

Richard Hepperle, Santa Fe
Teresa Holle, Espanola
William Howe, Albuquerque
Matt Hughes, Las Cruces
Rose Hurst, Portales
Ms. Edith Iwan, Albuquerque
Scott James, Santa Fe
Jodi Johanson, Tijeras
Sharon Johnson, Placitas
Jack And Jinny Johnson, Santa Fe
Owen Jones, Las Cruces
Beverly Jones, Chimayo
G. Kather, Tijeras
Susan Kazmierski, Bernalillo
Karen King, Santa Fe
Mary Klare, Elephant Butte
Helen Knopp, El Paso
Duane Koss, Las Cruces
Juanita Ladyman, Albuquerque
J. Laferriere, Las Vegas
John Laing, Albuquerque
Ricardo Landy, El Paso
Linda Larson, Albuquerque
Richard Laubenbacher, Las Cruces
Frances Laughlin, Thoreau
Linda Lebeau, Albuquerque
Cathy Lemon, Albuquerque
Laura Lewis-Roibal, Albuquerque
Art Liberatore, Albuquerque
Robyn Lievens, Albuquerque
Ken Lord, Albuquerque
Robert Loughridge, Albuquerque
Ms. Dana Ludwig, Santa Fe
Jan Lustig, Santa Fe
James Lyon, Portales
James Maly, El Paso
Mary Marsh, Albuquerque
Michelle Martinez, Albuquerque
Evelyn Mathey, Albuquerque
Claude Mathis, El Paso
Mr. Andrew Maunders, Santa Fe
Robert Maynard, Albuquerque
Jim Mc Sweeney, Santa Fe
Rog & Pat Millard, Cerro
Erica Miller, Alb.
Ray Miller, Albuquerque
Jeff-joyce Moore, Santa Fe
Mrs. Margaret Moore, Alb.

Orval Moore, Hobbs
Martha Morales, El Paso
Gloria Morris, Alb.
Susanne Morstad, Las Vegas
Sara Murphy, Alb.
George Myers, El Paso
Thomas Neale, Alb.
Mrs. Darlene Nease, Las Cruces
Sai Neesh, Farmington
Thayer Nichols, Alb.
Laser Nightsky, Santa Fe
Michael Oberg, Alb.
Louis Oceppek, Las Cruces
Fracine Ognacevic, Alb.
Mrs. Richard Padberg, Embudo
Nora Padilla, Alb.
Lisa Paesani, Alb.
Deborah Pannabecker, Alb.
Jim Parker, Alb.
Pauline Patraw, Santa Fe
Cheryl Payne, El Paso
Barbara Pease, Alb.
Eva Perteet, Ruidoso
Alex And Kiley Petencin, Socorro
R. Peters, Hobbs
Anita Petrosky, Albuquerque
Linda Pickett, Rio Rancho
Mr. & Mrs. Albert Platz, Grants
Mr. Harding Polk, San Fidel
Mr. Russell Porter, Albuquerque
Thomas Pratt, Albuquerque
Dale Preece, Tijeras
Gary Rasmussen, Albuquerque
Jacqueline Raud, Albuquerque
Stell Reed, Santa Fe
Mr. Wesley Reese, Silver City
Greg Reiche, Placitas
Laura Reyes, El Paso
Joe Ridgel, Albuquerque
Marcl Riskin, Santa Fe
Doris Roberts, Silver City
Margaret Rogers, Silver City
Robbie Rolph, Mesilla Park
Jim Rorebeck, Albuquerque
Mrs. Enid Russell, Pecos
Benjamin Saiz, Santa Fe
John Samuels, Los Alamos

(con't on page 20)

Activist Profile Courtney White



by Gwen Wardwell

Although Courtney has been a Sierra Club member for over a decade, he didn't become active until after the 1994 election when he realized that "a generation's worth of environmental achievements were at risk." He decided that he had to get involved, so he went to a panel discussion on Takings sponsored by the Albuquerque Group where he met our lobbyist and volunteered to work in the 1995 Legislative session. Courtney was a big help in the session, and we especially appreciated his willingness to attend committee meetings on an hour's notice, even at 10:00 at night.

Courtney and his wife, Gen, are professional archaeologists with the National Park Service at Pecos National Historical Park. They met when both were students at Reed College, continued their education together at UCLA, and moved to New Mexico, Gen's home state, in 1991.

Courtney is from Phoenix and says that watching what happened to his hometown has been a model to him of what to avoid in the West. He says that "the guys in the black hats today are real estate developers: the architects of urban sprawl."

The Santa Fe Group appointed Courtney to fill a vacancy on its Executive Committee in August, and his appointment was confirmed in the recent election. He is the new group Conservation Chair where his goals are to increase the level of activism and to get results. At his first meeting as chair, he got consensus on a more structured approach to conservation which involves having issue chairs and plans of action for each issue.

Philosophically, Courtney believes that the environmental movement is "dead in the water" and "needs to get beyond the angry rhetoric on both sides." He sees "traditional adversaries choking each other to death while the land

we both love continues to be assaulted. Ranchers and environmentalists, for example, have more in common than differences, and we need to acknowledge that and act on it to protect the land." Courtney is committed to finding common ground.

By now it should surprise no one to learn that Courtney is a writer, but he is also a photographer. He is trying to find a publisher for a book of his photographs of the West entitled *Living Frontier*. It includes a forward by Wallace Stegner.

Readin', 'Ritin', 'Rithmetic and.... Tree Huggin'?

by Susan Gorman

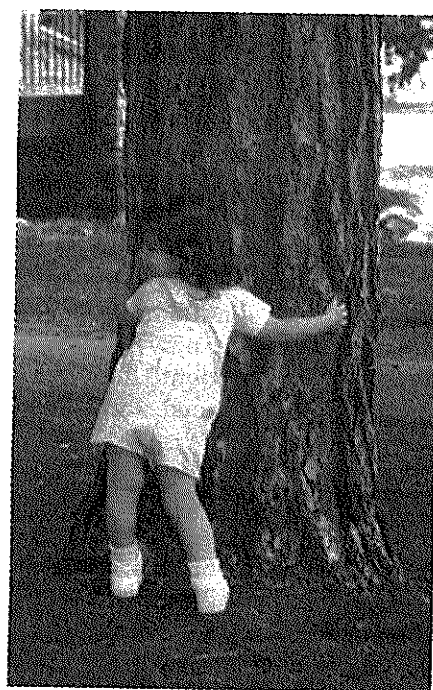
Close your eyes for a moment and think back to your school days. Remember the basics-- readin', 'ritin' and 'rithmetic? Then there was social studies (what did that mean, anyway?), and English, science, history, economics, literature, a foreign language. Everything in the world fit into a neat box with a subject label. That's called disciplinary education. The theory is that students should be taught the facts of each subject and then they'll figure out how all of the facts in these neat boxes are really interconnected and overlapping after they get out of school...like on the job training for life.

Can you remember any courses you have taken which hinted at the interconnectedness of everything? Were you ever taught to think about how the decisions you make through life have broad-based and far-reaching effects? Were any of the courses you took aimed at helping you understand how science, politics, economics and culture combine in real life to create situations and processes? The point is that traditional education doesn't do a very good job of training people to live in the real world.

There are many thoughtful people who have figured this out and are thinking and talking and writing about education reform and many of these experts have come to an important conclusion: teaching students about the environment, both natural and built, is the best way to educate them about the interconnections, to help them understand the broader implications of actions and to make informed life decisions. This is called trans-, inter and intra- disciplinary education.

In the last few years, as education reform has focused on the environment, many states have initiated projects to determine what's happening in the schools to incorporate education on the environment into the K to 12 curriculum and to find out what degree programs exist at local colleges and universities to train teachers to teach students about the environment.

Now New Mexico has joined these progressive states! On November 1, the State Land Office announced that a contract had been awarded to PioneerWest to carry out an assessment of Environmental



(A young tree hugger, Skye Bolluyt, niece of the author)

Education in the state. So the New Mexico Communities Environmental Education Project was born. This project will be having Community Conversations to listen to folks to find out what's happening now, what more should be happening, and what resources would be needed to make it happen.

The project team members, Leslie Lazaga, Patricia Pettit and Susan Gorman, will be visiting Four Corners, Southwestern NM, South Central NM, Southeastern NM and Albuquerque/Bernalillo County in the first phase. The data, information, contacts, resources, and ideas will be compiled and used to develop a statewide Action Plan for Environmental Education.

If you are interested in Environmental Education and want to get involved, there are lots of opportunities! Most immediately, Information Gatherers are needed in the five regions. Information Gatherers will be collecting information about what's happening now. Your great ideas on resources, curricula, programs and projects are needed, too.

To learn more or to volunteer, contact Susan Gorman, New Mexico Communities Environmental Education Project, 2226B Wyoming NE, Suite 272, Albuquerque, NM 87112, TEL: 505-265-3231, FAX: 505-256-0373, EMail: bblairb@aol.com.

New Members

(con't from page 19)

Rennald Schmidt, Gallup
G. Schwartz, Albuquerque
Raymond Seagers, Edgewood
Mary Shapiro, Santa Fe
Nancy Shapiro, San Juan Pueblo
Neva Short, Silver City
Rebecca Skeele, Santa Fe
Mark Skowroner, Rio Rancho
Sylvia Sloan, Albuquerque
Steven Smith, Alamogordo
Mrs. Gerri Smith, Alamogordo
Charles Smith, Santa Fe
Julian Spalding, Albuquerque
Mary Speer, El Paso
David Stainton, Tijeras
Peggy Stall, Taos
Helen Stebbins, Las Cruces
Roy Steed, Torreon
Peter Stern, Santa Fe
Todd Stewart, Albuquerque
Christina Suessbrich, Las Cruces
Jessica Swanson, Los Alamos
Susan Szymkiewicz, Las Vegas
James Taxter, Albuquerque
Joan Taylor, Albuquerque
Bertha Thurlow, Alamogordo
Veena Tikare, Albuquerque
Dr. David Townsend, Clovis
Layne Tuckman, Albuquerque
Emily Uptegrove, Las Cruces
Mrs. Howard Van De Car, Albuquerque
Gustaaf Vanmoorsel, Socorro
Meredith Ward, Albuquerque
Sheryl Ward, El Paso
Marissa Weems, Cerrillos

Kit Weiler, Taos
Edward Weiner, Santa Fe
Sheri Weinreich, Rio Rancho
Deborah Wellborn, Fabens
Virginia Westray, Santa Fe
Curtis Wheat, Alamogordo
Max Wilk, Santa Fe
Mark Williams, Albuquerque
Gordon Williams, Los Alamos
Pamela Wolfe, Silver City
Alison Yager, Albuquerque
Joe Yarkin, Albuquerque
Edna Young, Roswell
Abdel Zellou, Socorro

Chapter Executive and Conservation Committees Meet

March 2 and 3
Black Range Lodge
Kingston, New Mexico

All members are welcome.
Join us!
For information, call Chair
Van Perkins, 505-983-8801.

