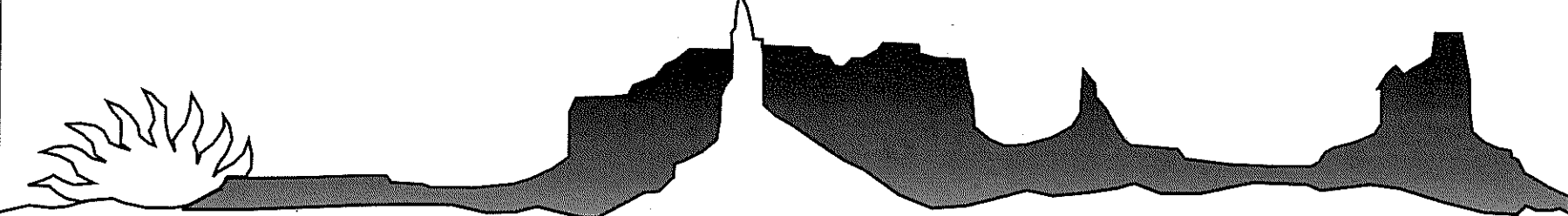


Rio Grande Sierran



News of the Rio Grande Chapter Sierra Club
Special Election Edition October 1996

U.S. Congressman Bill Richardson, District 3

Bill Richardson, U.S. Representative from District 3, continues to hold one of the highest ratings in the U.S. Congress for advocating environmental legislation.

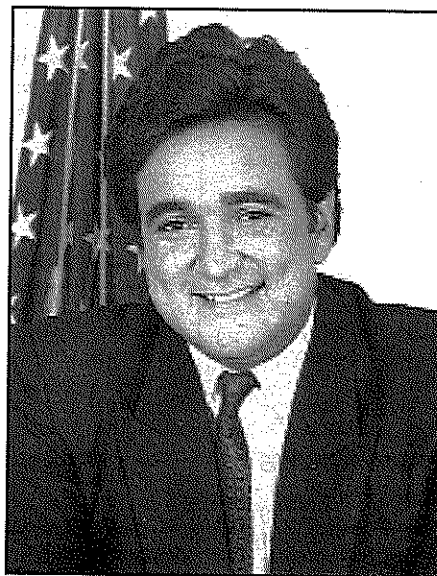
He has fought for grazing reform, mining reform, and for BLM wilderness. In the most recent Congressional session, he helped to protect National Wildlife Refuges from proposed jet skiing, hunting, and oil and gas development, and to eliminate \$10 million of funding for the Animas/La Plata water project. The environment suffered from a House of Representatives in which most of our issues lost but, in most of those struggles, Bill Richardson was with us, helping to send the signal that, on the environment, Our America has not signed Their Contract.

Richardson, currently Minority Whip, could again become Majority Whip if the Democrats recapture the House; he also has strong connections to the Clinton White House. Either circumstance--or perhaps both--will enhance his effectiveness in passing environmental legislation.

The Rio Grande Chapter

strongly advocates the re-election of Rep. Richardson to the House. He is simply the best friend we have in Congress.

We urge you to vote for him and to actively work for his re-election, making it known why you are there. We must renew our own contract with this outstanding environmental legislator. If you are interested in working for Rep. Richardson's campaign, call his Santa Fe office at 988-7230 and ask what you can do.



1996 Election Important to Environmental Protection -- Locally and Nationally

When the Republicans took over control of the House and Senate in 1995, they claimed a "mandate for change," even though the League of Women Voters estimates that just 44 percent of eligible voters bothered to vote. Based on their supposed "mandate," the "Contractors on America" began a campaign to destroy 20 years of environmental safeguards. Among other things, they attempted to gut the Endangered Species Act; weaken the Environmental Protection Agency and the federal land agencies within the Interior Department; open the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to exploitation by oil and gas companies; sell off national parks; curtail the public's right to know about toxic substances dumped by industry; relax restrictions on cancer-causing substances in food; replace the "polluter pays" principle with a "pay the polluter" principle--which would have rewritten the terms of the Superfund law to clean up hazardous waste sites; enact "regulatory reform" legislation which would have subjected every new government regulation to a rigid cost-benefit analysis, thus freezing the government's ability to enforce laws protecting the environment, health, safety, consumers, and workers. Many of these attempts were made by sneaking anti-environmental "riders" onto bills dealing with other issues, especially spending bills.

War on Environment Twarted

Most of these plans were thwarted by two things: vetoes from President Clinton (see page 4) and overwhelming disapproval from the public. Opinion polls, including those taken by the Republicans, show that Americans want more, not less, environmental protection. Republican pollster Linda DiVall found that "by greater than a 2 to 1 margin, voters had more confidence in the Democrats than the Republicans as the party they trusted most to protect the environment." The nonpartisan Pew Research Center found that 67% of Republican voters believe that the government "should do what it takes" to protect the environment, and that 53% of them believe that strict regulations "are worth the cost."

Agenda Remains Unchanged

Even though Republicans have been softpeddling their anti-environmental stance lately, their agenda has not changed. The Republican national platform adopted at their convention in San Diego calls for more development of wetlands, more grazing on public land, more timber production in national forests, and oil production in

E. Shirley Baca, U.S. Congressional District 2

A lifelong resident of Las Cruces, Shirley Baca, 45, is the Democratic candidate for New Mexico's second Congressional district against incumbent Republican Joe Skeen.

Baca has a long history of political activism. She won her first elective office as student body president of Las Cruces High School. More recently, she was campaign manager for the Reuben Smith for Governor Campaign, and has served in the New Mexico Legislature as representative of the 35th District since 1991.

Baca earned Bachelor of Fine Arts and Master of Science degrees from New Mexico State University in the mid-1970s, and in 1985 graduated from the Antioch School of Law in Washington, D.C.

On the environmental front, Baca sponsored a bottle recycling bill in the 1995 state legislature (it failed) and has been aggressive in challenging her opponent's plans to privatize federal (public) BLM lands in the West. In April, 1996 she challenged Skeen at a public forum, mostly attended by ranchers, asking him to justify his bill before Congress which would turn public lands over to the states, with the states given the option to sell them off to private interests.

More recently, she has openly criticized Skeen's plans to turn lands and waters in and around Elephant Butte Reservoir over to the Elephant Butte Irrigation District.

On other issues, Baca describes herself as pro-choice and an opponent of the immigration reform now before Congress. "People have asked me if the endorsement of the Sierra Club would really be helpful to my campaign," Baca told the *Sierran*. "But I'm proud to have the endorsement of the Sierra Club. I've always been a strong supporter of environmental issues and I want to draw a distinction between myself and my opponent."

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Santa Fe Area

Senate District 2

Darla Whitney-Wells (D-Aztec), when a Representative from District 3, fought to defund the "pork-barrel" Animas-LaPlata water project in favor of more realistic water projects. Now, environmentalists in her district believe she can, as senator, serve our cause with greater impact.

Senate District 6

Carlos Cisneros (D-Quetta) is dedicated to creating a Ute Mountain State Park to prevent development on the site. As Chairman of the Education Committee and as a member of the Judiciary Committee, he has been the environment's consistent friend.

Senate District 24

Nancy Rodriguez (D-Santa Fe) will defend the infrastructure-protecting Subdivision Act of 1995, oppose "takings" bills, and support legislation to establish a statewide water plan which includes conservation, priorities in usage, and coordination of water quality and quantity.

Senate District 25

Roman Maes (D-Santa Fe) has been regularly with us on environmental issues, effective as a member of the Indian and Cultural Affairs Committee, and, more significantly, as Chairman of the Corporation and Transportation Committee, particularly having helped pass the Tire Recycling Act.

House District 40

Nick Salazar (D-San Juan Pueblo), with a background in atomic research, has been an especially effective and consistent friend as Vice Chairman of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee. On the committee that enables policy, the Appropriations Committee, he provides an environmentally supportive vote.

House District 47

Max Coll (D-Santa Fe) is arguably the environment's most effective advocate in the Roundhouse. He is Chairman of the Appropriations Committee; he has opened its processes to the public. He is Chairman of the Interim Finance Committee; he has ended secrecy in its fiscal impact reports. These changes provided leverage for the public's environmental will and enhanced Max's efforts for clean air, safe water, and open spaces.

House District 68

Jose Abeyta (D-Wagon Mound) provides important support on the Appropriations and Finance and the Consumer and Public Affairs Committees. In the last session, he helped bring the State Trails Act to the Governor. From a rural district, he has courageously fought funding for the Animal Damage Control Program.

Darla Whitney-Wells**Rep. Nick Salazar****Sen. Nancy Rodriguez****Rep. Jose Abeyta****Rep. Max Coll****Sen. Carlos Cisneros****Sen. Roman Maes**

Correction

The October Santa Fe Group General Meeting was incorrectly listed in September/October *Sierran*. The meeting will be:

**October 15, 1996, 7 PM
at the Unitarian Church
107 W. Barcelona St.
(Between Galisteo and Don Gaspar)**

The meeting will focus on the upcoming ELECTION. This is an opportunity for to get to know your state candidates for office. We have invited Environmental Congressman Bill Richardson and the local New Mexico State Legislators whom we endorsed: Max Coll, Roman Maes, Nick Salazar, Nancy Rodriguez, and Carlos Cisneros.

Please bring your thoughts and questions about such New Mexico issues as:

Water: Research and planning, mandatory statewide conservation, instream

Mining Act of 1993: Defending a better law

Abandoned Mine Sites: Reclaiming

Waste Dumps: Ethnicity

Oil: Recycling

Pollution: Criminal Penalties

Payers for Development: Taxpayers? Developers?

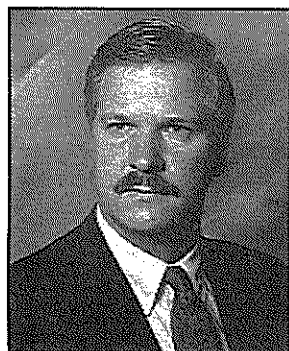
"Takings" Bills

Solar Power

New Mexico's Endangered Species List

Albuquerque Area

Todd Aakhus



Gail C. Beam



Karen Durkovich



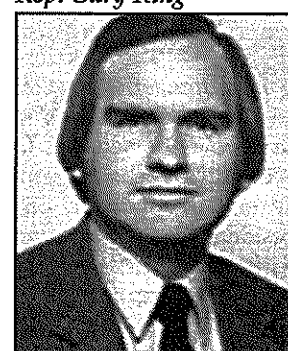
Dede Feldman



Rita G. Getty



Rep. Gary King



New Mexico House of Representatives

Gail C. Beam: District 18

Gail Beam is concerned about sprawl and development. She says that, as she talks to voters in her district, she finds "lots" of them are very nervous about water availability. Beam is also concerned about commercial logging. She says: "I believe we need both a vision and a long-range plan for growth and preservation of our environment. I support a concerted effort to bring key individuals to the table to hammer out these issues, address the challenges and propose solutions." Beam is running for the open seat vacated by Cisco McSorley.

Rita G. Getty: District 26

Rita Getty has been active at the Legislature on behalf of animal rights, and most recently has worked to outlaw steel-jaw leghold traps. She is a volunteer lawyer for the Animal Legal Defense Fund, and she has lobbied against the Animal Damage Control program since 1992. She also supports adequate funding for the Conservation Services Division. Getty's campaign literature calls for a statewide emissions control board to stop pollution by commuting vehicles; a mandatory statewide water conservation program for industries, businesses, and governments; and an environmental crime whistleblower program.

Gary K. King: District 50

Gary King has consistently supported the environment. He worked hard with the Club on the 1993 Hard Rock Mining Act. One of his big issues is water supply, and he has worked diligently for effective water planning. King believes that water transfers from one basin to another are not smart, and that such transfers should at least be accompanied by the permanent retirement of a major fraction of the transferred rights.

Robert A. Perls: District 44

Bob Perls has consistently supported the environment in the House. One of his big issues is recreational trails, and he has worked for expanding hiking and biking trails. He pushed hard for a bill which would have removed the State pre-emption which prohibits stricter air quality standards in New Mexico than those required by Federal law. He favors a regional transportation planning authority, light rail between employment and retail nodes, and rapid rail along the Rio Grande corridor.

New Mexico Senate

Todd M. Aakhus: District 20

Todd Aakhus opposes the current level of grazing on state lands, and thinks we should exclude cattle entirely from about 1 million acres of state lands to make them more useful for recreation. He would support a comprehensive water survey to determine the location, magnitude, and quality of New Mexico's water resources. He wants to make sure that mining reclamation really works. Aakhus is a member of Sierra Club.

Karen A. Durkovich: NM Senate, District 15.

Karen Durkovich wants to protect precious water resources through wise development planning. She supports transportation planning, and keeping public lands for the public, not special interests. She supports in-stream flow, which would establish the use of water already flowing in a stream as a "beneficial use" for maintaining wildlife habitat under state water law. She opposes "takings" legislation, which would require the state to compensate individuals if complying with

environmental laws reduces the value of their land. Durkovich is a Trustee for the New Mexico Chapter of the Nature Conservancy.

Dede Feldman: District 13

Dede Feldman has written extensively on environmental issues since the late 1970s, primarily on nuclear materials handling and waste. Feldman is a member of the Mayor's Shared Vision Task Force on Transportation. She has been outspoken in her public opposition to both the Montano Bridge and any extension of roads through the Petroglyph Monument. Feldman believes that public transportation is a sustainability issue. She would seek a leadership role in the Senate in fostering and enabling a regional transportation authority. She supports regional and statewide land use planning, would foster a rapid rail link along the Rio Grande corridor, and would lead an effort in the legislature to deny an extension of Paseo del Norte into the Petroglyphs. Feldman is running for the open Senate seat vacated by Tito Chavez.

Anita Miller: District 21

Anita Miller has not served in the Legislature but has been active in lobbying for environmental causes. She favors increased public transportation, with strong support for a regional transit authority, a mandatory planning process by local governments, a state strategic plan to which local plans would have to conform, and "concurrency" legislation, which would require that infrastructure services be available to serve new development as a condition for their approval. Miller feels that the fundamental issue in New Mexico is water: supply and waste. Her agenda in the Senate would be directed toward growth management, and she would seek to develop a strategic planning process, with the resource base as the limiting factor.

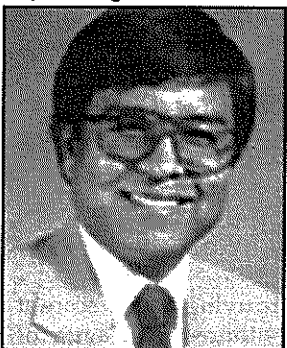
ENVIRONMENTAL CHAMPIONS

The following incumbent legislators were endorsed unanimously by the Albuquerque Group Executive Committee, and ratified by the Rio Grande Chapter, on the basis of their continuing, consistent support of the environment in the New Mexico State Legislature. Their voting records, and their individual leadership on behalf of environmental issues, have earned them the distinction of Environmental Champions:

New Mexico House of Representatives

Rep. James Roger Madalena, District 65
Rep. Robert David Pederson, District 5
Rep. Danice Picraux, District 25
Rep. Henry "Kiki" Saavedra, District 10
Rep. Raymond G. Sanchez, District 15
Rep. Mimi Stewart, District 21

Rep. J. Roger Madalena



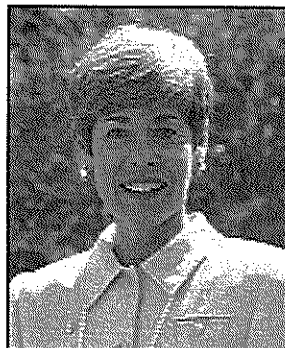
New Mexico Senate

Rep. Cisco McSorley, District 16
Sen. Janice Paster, District 10
Sen. Ann Riley, District 18
Sen. Shannon Robinson, District 17
Sen. Michael Sanchez, District 29
Sen. Leonard Tsosie, District 22

Rep. Cisco McSorley



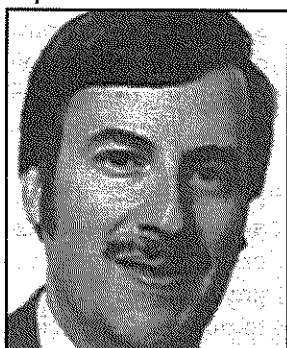
Anita Miller



Sen. Janice Paster



Rep. R. David Pederson



Rep. Robert Perls



Rep. Danice Picraux



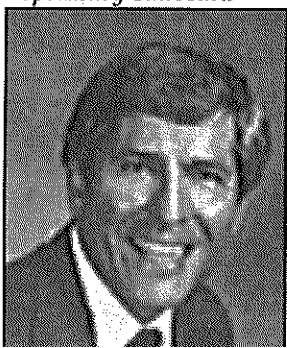
Sen. Ann Riley



Sen. Shannon Robinson



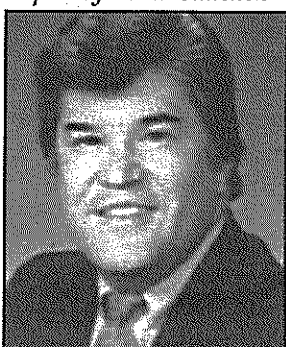
Rep. Henry Saavedra



Sen. Michael Sanchez



Rep. Raymond Sanchez



Rep. Mimi Stewart



Sen. Leonard Tsosie



A Look at Their Records

Clinton vs. Dole on the Environment

Well, it's election time, and — for environmentalists, at least — time for a reality check. As most will remember, the Club endorsed Bill Clinton in his successful 1992 challenge to George Bush, the self-proclaimed environmental president. And while President Clinton's record on green issues has been decidedly mixed — strong serve, weak follow-through, impressive late rally — many environmentalists inside and outside the Club can neither forget nor forgive last year's about-face on the logging without laws salvage rider, which resulted in untold damage to millions of acres of public forests in the Pacific Northwest.

On the other hand, the president's Republican challenger, Citizen Bob Dole of Kansas, was until recently the Senate majority leader, and along with House Speaker Newt Gingrich, one of the two highest-ranking Republicans in the dastardly 104th Congress. This, lest we forget, was a Congress whose agenda brimmed with anti-environmental assaults on everything from clean air and water to wilderness and endangered species — assaults that might have succeeded but for critical Clinton vetoes.

Nevertheless, it's tempting to view the major party candidates in light of our previous expectations — high for Clinton, non-existent for Dole — rather than on the merits. Here, for the record, is a look at their records.

Bill Clinton

Overview

Appointments: Named well-respected, highly qualified individuals to key environmental posts, including former Arizona Gov. Bruce Babbitt as Interior secretary and Carol Browner, Florida's secretary of the environment, as head of the Environmental Protection Agency.

Public Lands Reform: Made bold proposals to reform grazing, mining and logging policies on federal lands soon after taking office. Abandoned them even more quickly in the face of opposition from special interests in the West and their allies on Capitol Hill.

Wilderness and Parks: Signed the Colorado Wilderness and California Desert Protection Acts into law. Withdrew lands from new mining claims to protect Yellowstone National Park. Opposes efforts to close national parks and to open Utah wilderness to development. Just last month Clinton protected 1.7 million acres of Utah wilderness by creating the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument in southern Utah, under the 1906 Antiquities Act (which means no legislative approval is needed). Proposed Everglades restoration program. (Also see vetoes, below.)

Air and Water: Added 286 chemicals to those that companies must report under Right to Know rules, and opposed congressional efforts to block funding for Right to Know program. Proposed reforms of Superfund and Safe Drinking Water Act, thwarted in 103rd Congress. Opposes House-passed Clean (a.k.a. Dirty) Water, risk-assessment and takings legislation.

Key Vetoes

Clinton vetoed bills that included provisions to:

—Allow oil drilling in Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

—Clearcut Alaska's Tongass National Forest.

—Dramatically weaken protection for California's Mojave

National Preserve.

—Slash the EPA's environmental enforcement budget by 25 percent.

—Cut funding for international family planning.

—Block enforcement of wetlands protection standards.

Key Failure

—Signed clearcut logging rider, a.k.a. "logging without laws," in 1995 budget rescissions bill.

Follow-Through

Below are some of the commitments Clinton made in 1992, and whether or not he kept his promise.

—Ban offshore drilling. Yes, opposed in California.

—Create tax incentives for renewable energy sources. **Proposed**, but blocked by Congress.

—Increase funding for solar and renewable energy. **Yes.**

—Boost recycling. **Yes.** Executive order requiring federal agencies to buy products with recycled content has stimulated markets for wastepaper.

—Support higher fuel economy (CAFE) standards for cars and light trucks. **No.**

—Work to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 20-30 percent by 2005. **Mainly no.**

—Avoid increased reliance on nuclear energy. **Yes.** Supported efforts to cut funding for research on new reactors.

—Ensure that free-trade pacts provide adequate environmental safeguards. **No.** The NAFTA and GATT agreements supported by Clinton did not include such guarantees.

—Enforce the Clean Air Act. **Yes.** More than half of the cities that violated smog standards in 1990 are now in compliance.

—Work to amend the Clean Water Act to include standards on non-point source pollution, or toxic runoff. **Yes.** Blocked in the 103rd Congress.

—Support wilderness designation for Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. **Yes.**

—Require federal facilities to comply with Community Right to Know law. **Yes.**

Bob Dole

Overview

If you're trying to keep score at home, don't bother — the League of Conservation Voters has been doing it for decades. And it's not a pretty picture. According to the LCV, Bob Dole averaged a 20 percent rating — that is, he voted for the environment just once in every five opportunities — during his quarter-century in the Senate. He topped out at 49 percent in 1979-80, plummeting to just 5 percent in the 103rd Congress, and hitting a perfect zero in 1995.

Specifically, Dole:

—Was one of only 14 senators to support President Reagan's veto of the Clean Water Act of 1987.

—Supported filibusters meant to block passage of the 1994 California Desert Protection Act.

—Has repeatedly voted to open the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil drilling.

—Voted in favor of all the anti-environment bills vetoed by Clinton in the 104th Congress.

—Has been a reliable supporter of subsidies for the nuclear power industry.

In addition to his votes against the environment, Dole has been a leader in efforts to block public health and environmental protection via regulatory reform and takings legislation.

The Character Issue

Of course, that was then, this is now. Responding to questionnaires as a presidential candidate — and in the wake of what Gingrich has termed GOP "malpositioning" on green issues — Dole says he supports common-sense protection of the environment. But many of his specific claims do not hold up to scrutiny. For example:

Claim: Dole says he is the only presidential candidate to have voted in favor of the Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act.

Fact: He voted to sustain Reagan's 1987 veto of the Clean Water Act.

Claim: At Sen. Dole's insistence, the 1996 Farm Bill provides \$300 million for restoration of the Florida Everglades.

Fact: Dole's takings and regulatory reform bills would significantly reduce protection for Florida's wetlands.

Claim: In 1995, Bob Dole co-sponsored the Safe Drinking Water Act.

Fact: This bill would have weakened protection from contaminated drinking water, and was opposed by the Sierra Club.

Claim: Sen. Dole supports Superfund reform that focuses on the cleanup of hazardous waste sites.

Fact: In 1994, Dole was responsible for killing a compromise that would have accomplished this goal, and at less cost than the current program. The reform bill had bipartisan support and endorsements from the Sierra Club and the Chemical Manufacturers Association.

1996 Election

(con't from page 1)

the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. While Bob Dole tries to downplay his anti-environmental views by concentrating on publicly criticizing President Clinton's drug policy and offering a pie-in-the-sky tax cut, he has not shied away from his efforts at "regulatory reform." He has clearly stated that it will be part of his agenda as President.

Our Opportunity

We have an opportunity in New Mexico to affect the make-up of the Congress. Three of the strongest supporters of the War on the Environment are Sen. Pete Domenici, Rep. Joe Skeen, and Rep. Steve Schiff. All are up for re-election. Particularly in the Skeen race, we have the opportunity not only of unseating someone who has a League of Conservation Voters score of 0, but of replacing him with a true environmental advocate. Shirley Baca has proven during her tenure in the New Mexico Legislature that protecting our air, water, land, and citizens is her primary concern, not satisfying the special interests.

Importance of Local Races

Let us not forget how important our local races are. The Johnson administration's anti-environmental bias is beginning to impact the state agencies, like Environment and Mining and Minerals, who are charged with protecting New Mexico's health and resources. The only way to ameliorate this negative impact is by electing pro-environment candidates to the Legislature — there are 27 such candidates endorsed in this issue. With environmental advocates in the State Legislature, we can meet the promised assaults on the 1993 Hard Rock Mining Act and the 1995 Subdivision Act and the renewed pushes for state "takings" audit privilege bills. With environmental advocates in the State Legislature, perhaps we can pass needed water and land use planning legislation.

The choice is up to you. Many of us, for whatever reason, did not vote in 1994, and we have all paid the price. We cannot afford to abdicate our responsibilities as citizens once again in 1996. Even though we have been telling the politicians how important environmental safeguards are to us, many still seem to listen to special interests before listening to the average citizen. We need to tell those politicians, through our vote, that we want to protect and preserve our environment — for our families and for our future.

Proposed Constitutional Amendment Allows Counties to Borrow to Acquire Open Space

The purposes for which counties may borrow money are controlled by the constitution. The constitution does not presently allow counties to borrow money to acquire open space. As a result, Bernalillo and perhaps other counties have been unable to commit substantial funds to the acquisition of open space, even though undeveloped land is rapidly disappearing and land costs skyrocketing.

Constitutional Amendment 7 proposes to amend the constitution to allow counties to borrow money for the acquisition of open space. This constitutional amendment would allow communities to set aside open space now, before it no longer exists and before costs become prohibitive. The proposed amendment requires taxpayers to approve or disapprove any decision to borrow money to purchase particular parcels of open space. Constitutional Amendment 7 also authorizes counties to borrow money to purchase capital equipment for public road and bridge construction.

The Sierra Club supports Constitutional Amendment 7 and urges its members to vote in favor of this amendment.