

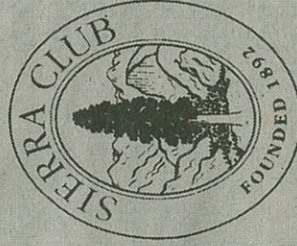
Rio Grande Sierran



March/April 1999

News of the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club

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Mining Expansion Rejected by State Court

by Gwen Wardwell, Chapter Chair

In late 1998, the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club challenged the New Mexico Mining Commission's designation of Richard Cook's El Cajete Mine as a "new unit" of his existing Las Conchas mine. On February 17, District Judge Art Encinias ruled that state regulators should consider the 76-acre El Cajete pumice mine as a separate operation. The two mines in the Jemez Mountains are more than 1 mile apart.

The first court decision on the Johnson administration's approach to mine permitting stopped a state move to treat apparently new mines under the more lax environmental rules for new parts of existing mines. Judge Encinias found that the state's 1993 Mining Act requires "new units" to be located within an existing permit area and provides no authority to the mining commission or state mining regulators to expand the permit area. He wrote, "I conclude the department's assertion of authority to expand a permit area once it has been fixed is unsupported and inconsistent with the law."

Sierra Club activists felt that the Johnson policy threatened the effectiveness of the mining law by encouraging mining op-

See *Mining* on Page 13

1999 New Mexico Legislative Session

By Jim Hannan, Chapter Political Chair

The 1999 legislative session has been an active one so far for environmental groups. Our lobbyist, Helga Schimkat, has been working on a variety of issues, including utility de-regulation, air quality and numerous wildlife bills.

This year the Chapter Executive Committee approved a legislative oversight committee to help guide the lobbyist on Sierra Club policy. The committee consists of Gwen Wardwell, Chapter Chair; Jennifer Johnson, Chapter Vice Chair; David Bouquin, Chapter Conservation Chair; Jim Hannan, Chapter Political Chair; Richard Barish, Central Group representative; and David Farrell, Southern Group representative.

The following is a summary of legislation that is currently still in play at the Roundhouse. If you are interested in a particular bill, the Club encourages you to contact your Senator or Representative and make your views known. The switchboard number for the Legislature is 986-4300. The New Mexico Legislature also has a web site at

www.legis.state.nm.us This site can be used to locate particular bills.

S428 is the Electric Utility Industry Restructuring Act. This bill will deregulate the electric industry over the next three years. The Club has been a member of the Coalition for Clean, Affordable Energy for the last year. The Club opposes the bill in its present form. It does not contain the elements that we believe are necessary, including an expanded renewable energy program, a pollution emission reduction fund and consumer protections. The bill as written is geared to lower electric rates for the largest business consumers, and allows the utilities to recoup at least 50% of their "stranded costs", mainly investment in Palo Verde Nuclear Power Plant. The Club urges members to contact their legislators and ask them to oppose this bill in its present form.

There are several bills dealing with modifications to the air quality permitting process. H 203 would cut in half the time for the Environmental Department to review and issue air quality permits. This bill also limits public participation in the permit process. Other bad bills for air quality are H 325, which

See *Session* on Page 5

Public Lands Issues

Baca in Trouble: Dunigans Withdraw Offer to Sell to Public

by John Buchser

Early in January, we were shocked to hear that the Dunigans had withdrawn their offer to sell the Baca Location Number 1 to the Federal Government. The exact reasons are known only to the three Dunigan brothers. We can only assume that since the appraisal was never released for Forest Service consideration, the confidentiality of fiscal matters were of particular importance to the Dunigans.

In any public-to-private land transfer, Federal regulations require that the appraisal become a public document. If this is in fact a stumbling block, it is possible that a third party familiar with this type of transaction, such as the Nature Conservancy, may be able to offer help to complete negotiations.

See *Baca* on Page 12

Otero Mesa

Prime Desert Ecosystem Will it be Wilderness?

by Marianne Thaeler

One of New Mexico's finer examples of prime desert ecosystems is under attack, rather literally, by the German Air Force. Due to the lack of airspace over native Germany, the United States Air Force is working collaboratively with the German Air Force. One of the things the Germans are doing is using the McGregor Range for tactical target practice from low-level aircraft.

As many of you know the Chapter is supporting the designation of Otero Mesa and the Mountain Foothills of McGregor Range, as a National Conservation Area (NCA) for the recognition of the historic landscape and the historic and prehistoric sites. We support the NCA to be managed

See *Otero* on Page 12



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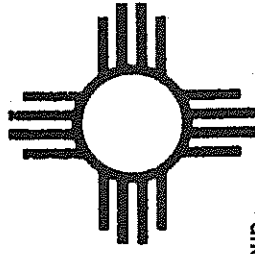
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Sierra Club Structure

The Club has three structural levels. The National Board of Directors determines the overall direction of the Club. The National Organization is subdivided into Chapters, and each Chapter is further divided into Groups. One representative from each Chapter reports to the National Board through the Council of Club Leaders. The nearest full-time Club staffers are in Phoenix.

The Rio Grande Chapter hires a lobbyist full-time during the session of the New Mexico Legislature. The largest part of the Chapter's budget goes to the printing and mailing of this Newsletter, followed by the salary and expenses for the lobbyist.



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Council of Club Leaders Delegate

Barbara Johnson, Norma McCallan (Alternate)

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The Rio Grande Sierran is published six times a year by the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club as a benefit for Sierra Club members living in New Mexico and West Texas.

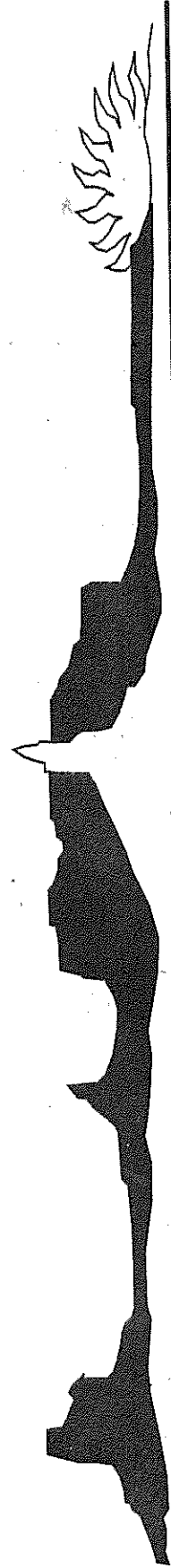
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Contributions are welcome from members. Email contributions preferred, send to jbuchser@ni.net or mail to John Buchser, 223 N. Guadalupe #419, Santa Fe, NM 87501. Articles should be received by the 10th of the month prior to publication. (The Rio Grande Sierran is published in early January, March, May, July, September, and November) Photos, artwork and poems are also welcome. Most computer formats should be compatible. Letters and articles are subject to abridgement. Contact editor for advertising policy and rates.

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by Printworld in El Paso.**



by Gwen Wardwell, Chapter Chair
and David Bouquin, Conservation Chair

A New Year: Together We Accomplish, Divided We Flounder

Next Conservation/Executive Committee Meeting

Meeting Together for Greater Effectiveness

We believe that the most important activity of the Sierra Club is promoting conservation, and that all other activities -- fund raising, membership drives, outings, publishing newsletters, etc. -- are performed to advance or support conservation goals. The Executive Committee members, as elected leaders of the Chapter, need extensive contact with all Chapter activists and knowledge about their concerns. Educating the Executive Committee members on conservation issues is crucial for activists to secure support and resources to wage their conservation issue campaigns. Activists, in turn, need contact with Executive Committee members to understand where their concerns fit into the priorities of the Chapter and of the Club as a whole. A well-informed Executive Committee makes the Chapter more effective in pursuit of conservation goals.

To facilitate this interchange of ideas, the Conservation and Executive Committees will meet consecutively on the same weekend in the same place: March 20-21, at the Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge. The Conservation Committee will meet Saturday from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m., and the Executive Committee meeting will follow. The Conservation Committee meeting provides a forum to share ideas and to devise conservation and political strategy. Activists will report on conservation activities, weigh alternatives, devise plans, and propose actions. The Conservation Committee is an advisory body, and everyone present at the meeting has a vote.

The Conservation Committee meeting will focus on developing the 1999 priorities for conservation issue campaigns within the Chapter; current and potential new conservation efforts will be reviewed. New general conservation funds have been set aside by the Executive Committee, and the Conservation Committee can make recommendations for allocation of Chapter funds and resources.

Organizational Effectiveness Study Completed

Deb Hibbard, the Chapter's lobbyist during the past two sessions and a part-time staff person for the last year, did a study of the organization and effectiveness of the Rio Grande Chapter and its local groups in 1998. Since the Report and Recommendations were written, there have been some changes in both Chapter and Group Executive Committee members, and we have begun to address some of Deb's recommendations.

Deb was hired through a special fund established by one of our members for the purpose of conducting a Chapter-wide survey, and to make recommendations on how to improve the effectiveness of the Chapter. Deb's background of two decades of community organizing and organizational development in Maine and New Mexico were believed to be an excellent foundation for this task.

Following the presentation of her report last Fall, the National Club made available two experts to help the leadership of the Chapter plan for the future. Ed Paynter of the Organizational Effectiveness Committee has been a key player in the development of the Club's current model bylaws. Ken Langton, of the National Conservation Committee, is from Tucson and is very familiar with the environmental challenges of the rapidly growing Southwest. Ed's and Ken's advice and expertise have given the Chapter's leadership needed guidance.

Her report on this study is based on a compilation of information from a question-

nnaire which last summer was completed by 23 of 70 Chapter and Group activists surveyed; meetings with Executive Committee (ExCom) members of the El Paso, Pajarito, Central New Mexico, and Santa Fe Groups and two ExCom members of the Southern New Mexico Group; interviews with eight former Chapter activists; and feedback cards from the 1998 fund appeal. Deb's Report and her Recommendations are reprinted below.

REPORT Local Groups

The local groups of the Rio Grande Chapter all report that activating members and finding new members are the major challenges facing the groups. There was a recognition on the part of all groups that the Sierra Club has a predominately white and aging membership (most activists are over 40) and that the active ExCom and group members have been at it for a long time and are tired or burning out.

There is a tension among Sierra Club members between the value and importance of outings and political action.

General group problems that were identified include lack of leadership, shrinking membership, lack of diversity, and a lack of Chapter support in providing necessary resources and training. In addition, the responses to questionnaires indicate a general lack of agreement among group ExCom

based on the priorities developed at this meeting. Executive Committee members are encouraged to attend the Conservation Committee meeting to learn and to participate in the discussions.

The Executive Committee will convene at 3:00 p.m., and the first item of business for approval is conservation issues. At this point, Executive Committee members will have the benefit of the earlier Conservation Committee discussion as a basis for sound decisions. Conservation Committee members can attend and provide clarification of the issues and recommended priorities, as needed.

Many Viewpoints Common Goals Concerted Actions

We want as many activists/Executive Committee members as possible to attend the March meetings. We want to move ahead on conservation projects. The Sierra Club is the largest environmental organization in New Mexico and west Texas, and has the potential for the greatest clout. We have members asking for things to do: we need to agree on some common goals and put all our energies into achieving them.

members as to what their group priorities and goals are for the current year.

The Pajarito Group is young and very active, reporting a core group of about 20. The El Paso Group is considerably more long-lived, but has a comparable core group of active members. The Southern New Mexico Group reported a loss of activists, without new people to replace them. The Central New Mexico Group is in the process of reorganization and reactivation after dwindling to a half dozen ExCom members. The Santa Fe Group remains active, but continues to rely on essentially the same core group, with no obvious attention given to activating new members.

The Pajarito and Southern New Mexico Groups indicated that they would benefit from training workshops, as well as the assistance and support of a Chapter staff person to help them with the basics of organizing, membership development and activation, fundraising, and publicity. The Central New Mexico Group echoed those needs and acknowledged that they are now a collection of solo players working on their own personal interests. They said they want help with general reorganization (the basic ingredients) and activating members.

The Santa Fe Group was criticized by its own members for being a clique which inhibits new people from participating. The El Paso Group is made up of a number of long-

Continued on Page 4



Organizational Development

time Sierra Club activists. They have a very active Inner City Outings program. Yet, the Sierra Club issues they expressed most concern about are not immediate local issues. Perhaps this is why they have not been able to gather the interest and attention of active members.

Chapter

The atmosphere within the Chapter is one of deep conflict. The outcome is a lot of negative rhetoric and little-to-no positive action. The local groups are all deeply concerned and very disgusted. There is a lot of finger-pointing at all levels, but little willingness on the part of Chapter ExCom members to take responsibility for shifting the dynamic. Instead, there is a prevalence of posturing, personal attacks, stridency, and self-righteousness. The result is deep polarization.

The geographical distribution and the diversity of interests and issues among the local groups is currently a liability that needs to be transformed into an asset. The distance from Los Alamos to El Paso is enormous, both literally and in terms of local environmental issues of concern. Rio Grande Chapter Sierra Club activists are not a particularly diverse group, but the communities in which they are located are. There is a misunderstanding as well as a lack of appreciation for local realities. The Chapter would be greatly strengthened if the Chapter ExCom members, as well as local group activists, would take the time to get to know the uniqueness of each group and the community in which it resides, along with the environmental issues and challenges it faces. These issues could then be addressed more creatively and in a spirit of mutual support.

Communication is the major issue facing the Chapter. Too much is done by email, too little by personal contact. Hearsay has replaced facts; sniping and personal attacks have eliminated civil discourse. There is too much chatter and gossip and not enough serious and respectful listening.

A lack of focus and leadership at the Chapter level, absence of a spirit of camaraderie, and lack of a Chapter staff person are other problems that were identified for the Chapter to address.

The Chapter's role, it was generally agreed, is to provide information, resources, training, and support to local groups. The Chapter should facilitate communication (and, for special projects, coordination and cooperation) among local groups.

National

There was overwhelming agreement that the National and Regional Sierra Club offices are not providing adequate assistance and support to the Chapter.

Some ExCom members indicated that they often feel bogged down by too much information flowing from the national office as well as too much bureaucracy. Further, Chapters are expected to respond to national dictates without adequate input.

Two local groups cited instances when they requested specific assistance from the national office that was not provided.

Feedback from Sierra Club Activists in Exile

Individuals who were formerly very active with the Sierra Club as either Group or Chapter ExCom members but chose to leave and affiliate with other environmental groups gave their reasons for leaving as too much bureaucracy, too much conflict ("fussing instead of doing"), too little camaraderie, too little action.

They also suggested that the Sierra Club is diluting its effectiveness by trying to address too many issues. The recommendation was repeatedly made to return to its wilderness roots. (The feedback from the fund appeal also indicated Wilderness as the prevailing priority.)

RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter Newsletter

1) There should be a written procedure for choosing the Rio Grande Sierran editor which should include a job description and a method for making an opening in this position known to all Rio Grande Chapter members.

2) There should be an editorial board for the newsletter to assure quality control, continuity, and a broad and balanced representation of Sierra Club issues.

3) There is strong sentiment for both Chapter and Group newsletters. Members like hearing from the Chapter for issues, statewide outings, and news of local groups. Local newsletters are potentially effective in activating local members.

Chapter ExCom

1) There should be an Orientation for all ExCom members during the first meeting after the election of new members each year which would acquaint them with Sierra Club history and issues, the Rio Grande Chapter and its local groups, the work of the Chapter committees, and the ExCom meeting process.

2) The development and adoption of some Guidelines for Civility is strongly recommended. These would apply to Chapter meetings as well as email correspondence. Consequences for those who violate such guidelines should be defined. Groups should also adopt these guidelines or establish their own.

3) The role and responsibilities of the Chapter Chair should be more clearly defined. Responsibilities should include annual visits with each Group ExCom as well as regular communication with each Group ExCom Chair.

4) The Chapter by-laws should include a clearly defined process for making (or amending) decisions between regular ExCom meetings.

5) There should be a specified ExCom meeting process. The agenda should be communicated in advance for adequate input and review, and the agenda should be reasonable in content for the time allowed. Time should also be provided for getting acquainted and for affirmation and celebration of efforts and accomplishments.

6) There should be time in ExCom meetings, or at specially scheduled meetings, for adequate discussion of controversial issues. This may, at times, require a mediator trained in conflict resolution.

Chapter Staff

1) A full-time Chapter staff person for the next two years should be a top priority. This could be accomplished through a combination of fund appeal income, Chapter 501(c)(3) funds, a tithe from local groups, and support from National.

2) The staff person could work two months as Chapter lobbyist and ten months in providing training, resources, assistance, and support to local groups.

Local Groups

During the next two years, the developing and strengthening of the local groups should be the priority of the Rio Grande Chapter. This should include providing training in basic organizational skills and membership development and developing the essential ingredients for effective local groups.

Email

1) Email should be used primarily for communicating about issues and action.

2) When conflicts arise or difficult issues need to be discussed, this should be done by talking with people directly by phone or in person. Email is NOT an effective vehicle for resolving conflicts. It instead fuels, complicates, and intensifies them.

3) Adopt guidelines for civility and enforce them.

4) Publicize local outings on the Chapter web page and/or the list serve.



New Mexico Legislature

Session from page 1

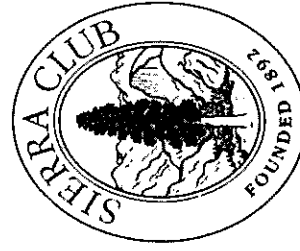
is a limited version of H 203 and S 626, which would allow companies to buy permits.

Several bills have been introduced that are a direct assault on our current system. S211 would provide for mandatory award of legal costs to the prevailing party in a lawsuit. This would severely restrict the rights of citizens and groups like the Sierra Club to seek redress in the courts. Another bill, S 306, the Private Property Protection Act, would establish private property rights as higher than community interests, including public health and safety. This is an offshoot of the "takings" movement, and the Club opposes it. A memorial, SJM 8, would set up a committee to reorganize the Environment Department to make it more friendly to the industries it attempts to regulate.

There are many water bills this year. S 84 would allow cities to remove water from the river and store underground until needed. The Club has not taken a position on this bill. H 295 would provide \$105,000 to map the acequia water systems, and S 72 would provide \$150,000 for a rivers information system. H 29 will help the large water users to plan over a 40 year time period. H 405 would give the state engineer more authority in water enforcement, which we support.

The Club lobbyist has been particularly active in wildlife issues. There has been an attempt to eliminate the Conservation Services Division by not providing any funding. The Conservation Services Division is the state agency which oversees wildlife. H 410, the Amphibians and Reptiles Protection Act, would protect these species, which are being collected and sold as pets. New Mexico is the only state which does not protect these animals. H 385 would make animal cruelty to animals a felony. There was an attempt to make amend the state constitution for the benefit of hunting and fishing, but this was defeated on the Senate floor.

The Club has also been working with the Multiple Chemical Sensitivity group to draft legislation regarding pesticide notification. Another issue is net metering, which would allow consumers and businesses to sell power back to the utilities. The Club is in discussion with the Southwest Energy Institute on supporting this concept. Another issue is a forest protection act, which would incorporate some added protections into our state forests. The Club is currently studying a



1999

NEW MEXICO LEGISLATIVE SESSION:

CURRENT ISSUES AS OF FEBRUARY 14, 1999 with 2/22 updates

by Helga C. Schimkat, Chapter Lobbyist
and Lynda Taylor of the Conservation
Voters Alliance

The legislative issues the Club is working on include staving off attacks against our state air quality law; strengthening the water quality act; ensuring electric utility deregulation (competition) includes strong consumer and environmental protections and renewable energy incentives, fighting off the so-called "takings" and industry self-regulation bills, promoting water conservation and rivers information, guarding against numerous efforts to cripple wildlife and habitat protections, and lobbying for increases to environmental agency budgets. See below for more details on key bills by environmental category, listed by bill number, title, sponsor, committee assignments, description, action. Those with a double asterisk to left of bill are highest priorities for which phone calls to legislators are needed immediately. Legislators listen to their constituents. Please take the time to call your representatives and senators as indicated below urging them to take the appropriate position on the bills listed. Generally, you will simply leave a message with the secretary who will keep tally sheets on incoming calls for particular bills.

Refer to the article on page 7 which describes the acronyms used and the process a bill goes through before it becomes law.

AIR QUALITY

****H 203 EXPEDITED PROCESSING OF PERMIT APPLICATIONS**, Heaton. HENRC/HJC.

Would arbitrarily cut the timeframe in half for the review and issuance of air quality permits for minor and major sources of air pollutants, seriously curtailing the state air bureau's ability to do adequate technical reviews and substantially cutting public and community participation in permit decisions. The permit reviews include refineries, coal plants, chip manufacturing facilities, oil and gas facilities, smelters, etc. Also would have agency return permit fees if shortened timeframe is not met, further crippling the budget of the agency. Strongly oppose. Stalled in HENRC over negotiations. Calls needed.

****H 325 AMEND AIR QUALITY CONTROLS**, Pearce. HENRC/HJC. A more modest variation of H 203 above cutting the timeframe and public involvement. Strongly oppose. Stalled in HENRC with H 203 over negotiations. Calls needed.

2/21 update: The Heaton and Pearce bills have been merged and amended and we

support the new version. The time frame for issuing permits is reduced but may be extended for good cause at the Department's initiative, including for public hearing. The language regarding permit fees has been deleted. The amended bill received a do pass recommendation from HENRC.

HJM 41 UN FRAMEWORK CONVENTION TREATY, Blanton. HENRC/HJC. Would **urge the United States Senate not to ratify the Kyoto Climate Change Treaty** adopted in December 1997. **Strongly oppose.** **GLOBAL WARMING** - We expect a memorial supporting ratification of the Kyoto Treaty, which we support.

Senate: As of Two air bills have been introduced in the Senate: S 626 and S 676.

ENERGY/ELECTRIC

UTILITY DEREGULATION

UTILITY RESTRUCTURING: We are still working on having the environmental and consumer protection requirements amended into S 428. In addition, Representative Pederson has introduced **H 865 which does** contain the environmental and consumer protection requirements; but will have less support and less chance of making it through the process.

****H 218 ON-SITE ELECTRIC GENERATION**, Garcia, MP. HENRC/HAF. Would appropriate \$80,000 to energy, minerals and natural resources department to conduct a practical demonstration of renewable solar photovoltaic and fuel cell energy systems to generate on-site electricity (independent from the electrical grid system) for government or public uses. Support.

S 428 ELECTRIC UTILITY INDUSTRY RESTRUCTURING ACT, Sanchez. SCORC/SJC/SFC. Would create a phase-in approach for deregulation, or restructuring, of electric utility industry beginning January 1, 2001, allowing 50% or more of "stranded" costs by utilities (about \$7/month on average bill). While it has a limited renewable energy program for three years, the bill includes none of the key elements promoted by the environmental/consumer group Coalition for Clean, Affordable Energy (which includes CVA, NM PIRG, Sierra Club, and Southwest Research & Information Center). Restructuring, or creating "competition" for this industry, would automatically make coal energy from the oldest, dirtiest power plants the most competitive as they are already paid off, have not had to meet recent federal clean air standards, and would be the cheapest energy source. The Coalition has identified three critical areas that

See *Legislature* on page 6

New Mexico Legislature

Legislature from page 5

must be included in this bill: (1) expanded renewable energy program (including a renewable energy portfolio which requires utilities to have a certain percent renewable energy available), a net metering program which allows homeowners or businesses to self-generate electricity through solar or fuel cells, and a low-interest loan program to help homeowners and businesses install renewable energy sources; (2) pollution emission reduction fund for SOX, NOX and carbon monoxide (global warming) from coal fired plants to offset any increased coal energy production from the oldest plants; and (3) consumer protections (antitrust monitoring, disclosure of energy sources, etc.) and a rate reduction of at least a 10% for residential ratepayers so that the "benefits" of competition will accrue to the "little guy." The Coalition's proposal would amount to about \$1.25/month on an average bill, and with 10% rate reduction would amount to lower bills than currently exists. Strongly oppose the bill in its current form, unless amended to include the above. Calls needed immediately urging inclusion of these issues, and if not included, bill should be voted down as bad for the environment, hurting small ratepayers, and thwarting development of renewable energy resources.

GROWTH/SUBDIVISION LAW WEAKENING

SJM 29 STUDY LAND USE PLANNING, Smith. SRC/SFC. Would request that the appropriate legislative interim committee evaluate current planning, zoning, and land use statutes and create a forum for state, county, municipal, private, non-profit groups dealing with growth to make recommendations for revisions. Support. This memorial was submitted by 1000 Friends, a non-profit group committed to "smart" growth.

SUBDIVISION AMENDMENTS. As of this writing no amendments to the subdivision act have been introduced, although the Lt. Governor Walter Bradley has stated numerous times in the press last year a bill would be introduced.

We understand the goal would be to gut the water sufficiency requirements for subdivisions and to create more exemptions for developers.

TAKINGS

ANTI-REGULATORY ANTI-ENVIRO AGENCIES

HJM 8 DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT REORGANIZATION, Heaton. HENRC. Would set up an interim legislative committee to review and make recommendations for reorganizing the environment department to make it more user friendly for the industries regulated under the department. Strongly oppose.

S 211 MANDATORY AWARD TO PREVAILING PARTY, Adair. SCORC/SJC. S 475. SJC/SFC. Would provide for mandatory award of costs of litigation to the prevailing party. Oppose, as this would have a

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chilling effect on citizens groups bringing legal actions against industry for pollution violations. Imagine the legal costs if a community group had to pay the legal fees for all of Intel's lawyers, or PNM's lawyers if they brought a suit in good faith and lost!

****S 306 PRIVATE PROPERTY PROTECTION ACT,** Vernon. SPAC/SJC. Would essentially make an individual private property right higher than public health, safety and welfare by requiring full market-value compensation from any governmental unit -- state or local -- that promulgates regulations in the public interest which may diminish the value of private property. We believe the constitution has protections for private property rights which are affected by regulations to protect the larger public interest. This bill would have the effect of bankrupting state and local governments which pass regulations for larger public purposes, or chilling governments from promulgating any new rules. Would apply to laws and rules currently in existing, and seems to target specifically local land-use planning and zoning programs. If the government entity could not pay full costs, the law or rule would be suspended. Strongly oppose. Calls are needed.

**INDUSTRY ENVIRONMENTAL

SELF-AUDIT BILL. We expect one will be introduced this year to let industry's self-monitor and report any pollution voluntarily, eliminating public information on pollution violations and penalties normally assessed when violations of standards occur. Oppose.

WATER

WATER QUALITY CONTROL COMMISSION:

An acceptable compromise was reached so that the commission will be authorized but the appeals process will not be changed. The interim committee has been directed and the Environment Department has committed to working towards getting greater diversity on the commission and to add provisions regarding permitting for abatement plans. The bill got a do pass recommendation from HENRC.

AMERICAN HERITAGE RIVERS INITIATIVE

received a do pass recommendation from HAGC. There seems to be a lot of misperception about what this program does. Next it goes to HENRC. Calls urging opposition to the memorial would be helpful.

H 29 WATER USE PLANNING, Larranaga. HAGC/HENRC. Would provide for a forty-year water use planning period from 10 to 40 years for municipalities, counties, state universities, nonprofit community water systems and public utilities. Will help with long term planning for treatment plants and water use. A committee substitute was developed. Support. Passed HAGC.

H 105 AGRICULTURAL WATER CONSERVATION, Gubbels. HAGC/HTRC. S 45

WATER CONSERVATION TAX CREDIT, Wilson. SCONC/SWMC/SFC. Companion

bills would provide a hefty (75%) personal income tax and corporate income tax credit for agricultural water conservation irrigation systems or water management methods. Oppose the new committee substitute bills which remove any real tests to ensure that water will actually be conserved and looks like a huge tax break on normal business operating equipment purchases by agricultural industry. Passed HAGC and SCONC.

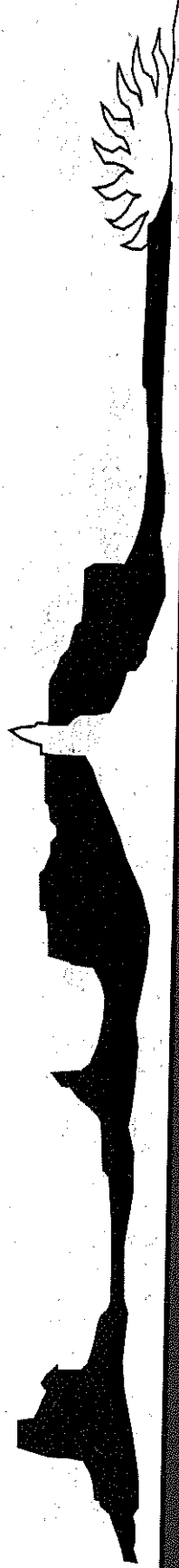
H 209 REVERSE OSMOSIS WATER TREATMENT PILOT, Marquardt. HAGC/HAF. S 143 ALAMOGORDO WATER SYSTEM STUDY, Duran. SCONC/SFC. Would provide \$300,000 to environment department for a pilot project using reverse osmosis water treatment on non-usable brackish underground water near Alamogordo. Alamogordo clearly needs a new water source as their future supply is seriously limited; concerned since substantial federal funds will be applied that this could be expanded to tap huge underground water reserves that could promote unlimited growth in the area, create land subsidence, and perhaps spend large federal dollars on technology not yet demonstrated feasible. Working on amendments to clarify. No position yet.

H 295 REGIONAL ACEQUIA GEOGRAPHIC INFO SYSTEMS, Rodella. HENRC. S 71 REGIONAL ACEQUIA INFO SYSTEMS, Cisneros. SCONC/SFC. Would provide \$105,000 to state engineer to assist Taos valley and Rio de Chama acequia associations in developing a pilot regional acequia geographic information systems. This information is needed to protect acequia water systems. Support. Passed HENRC; passed SCONC w/o recommendation.

S 72 RIVERS INFORMATION SYSTEM, Cisneros. SCONC/SFC. Would provide \$150,000 to department of environment to initiate a rivers information system to better understand status of rivers in state. Support. Passed SCONC w/o recommendation, and may be stalled due to lack of interest by environment department.

****H 321 REAUTHORIZE WATER QUALITY CONTROL COMMISSION,** Gubbels. HENRC/HJC. S 380 EXTEND CERTAIN BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS, Cisneros. SRC/SFC. H 321 reauthorizes the WQCC, which promulgates state regulations governing water quality, and changes the current appeals process which may be to the detriment of public involvement. Oppose in current form. The commission includes several state agencies and divisions and three public members appointed by governor. Currently the commission is heavily represented by agricultural interests, and the commission has been reluctant to pass certain water quality regulations and remove exemptions relating

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New Mexico Legislature

How Is A Law Made?

by Helga Schimkat

For those who are not familiar with the legislative process, here's how it works. Prior to the start of the session, a person or organization that has an idea for legislation begins working on a draft bill. In addition to that, the person or organization attempts to meet with all individuals, groups, agencies and similar entities who will be affected by the proposal or may oppose it and tries to work out an agreement with those parties. At the same time the individual or group attempts to find a sponsor--a representative or senator--who will carry the bill at the session. The process will be much smoother, and the bill stands a greater chance of passing, if the advance preparation is thoroughly done.

Once the session starts, the representative or senator introduces the bill on the floor and the bill is assigned to one or more committees of that chamber. For example, if a representative introduces a bill regarding air quality, it may be assigned to the House Energy and Natural Resources Committee and the House Judiciary Committee. The bill then is scheduled to be heard in the first committee, at which time audience participation is allowed. After the sponsor and one of the individuals behind the bill introduces the bill at the committee hearing, the various lobbyists and other interested individuals stand up and state whether they support or oppose the bill and why. The committee members then ask questions of the sponsor and witness. Then the committee votes to give the bill a do pass recommendation, in which case the bill goes through the same process at the next committee hearing; a do not pass recommendation, in which case the bill dies; allows it to pass on with no

recommendation; or tables the bill. In many cases where the committee feels the various interested parties should negotiate an agreement to amend the bill, the committee will table the bill until the parties agree. Sometimes a bill is tabled permanently by the sponsor of the bill.

The following are committee abbreviations used in this article:

H AFC: House Appropriations and Finance Committee
H AGC: House Agriculture & Water Resources
H CPAC: House Consumer and Public Affairs Committee
H BIC: House Business and Industry Committee
H ENRC: House Energy and Natural Resources Committee
H GUAC: House Government and Urban Affairs Committee
H JC: House Judiciary Committee

S CONC: Senate Conservation Committee
S CORC: Senate Corporations & Transportation Committee
S FC: Senate Finance Committee
S JC: Senate Judiciary Committee
S PAC: Senate Public Affairs Committee

Once the bill makes it through its committee assignments, the bill is heard on the floor of the chamber and all of the representative or senators vote on whether to pass the bill or fail it. If the bill fails it is dead. If the bill passes it goes to the other chamber, gets assigned to committees and goes through the same process. Once both chambers pass a bill it goes to the governor for signature or veto.

The lobbyists do several things during the course of the session including researching and analyzing issues and providing information to legislators on what is good or bad about a bill and giving testimony at hearings. The job is intense and demanding but very exciting.

Legislature continued from page 6

to agriculture. Environmentalists have recommended including language calling for greater "diversity" of public interests to be represented on the commission, removal of the new appeals language, and providing the commission with authority, not currently available, to abate water pollution. Bill stalled in HENRC over negotiations. S 380 simply extends the life of numerous boards and commissions including the WQCC, which we want to reflect above recommendations.

****H 405 STATE ENGINEER ENFORCEMENT**, Gubbels. HAGC/HJC. Would provide much needed state engineer authority for greater enforcement powers and to issue compliance orders, including suspension of a permit or license, if water is overdiverted or there is illegal diversion of water. Strongly support.

H 455 NEW MEXICO WATER BANKING ACT, Gubbels. HAGC/HJC. Would create a state authority and board to regulate water banking of conserved and surplus water rights.

This is a very complex bill that has pros and cons. Acequias are concerned and want a more regional approach. Needs further study. No position.

HJM 38 AMERICAN HERITAGE RIVERS INITIATIVE, Blanton. HAGC/HENRC. Urges the President and Congress of the United States to refuse to authorize, endorse, ratify or adopt any international treaty or federal designation that would "usurp" authority of the states and focuses particular attention on the President's American heritage rivers initiative. Implicitly, it opposes treaties such as the biodiversity treaty, Kyoto treaty, and others. These fears generally have come from the anti-environment, "the United Nations is going to take over the world and dictate that we put environmental concerns first globally." The heritage rivers initiative is an important one designed to preserve, protect and restore rivers that are important to our nation's history, culture and natural heritage, and include some federal funding to accomplish these goals. Strongly oppose.

S 208 RIPARIAN ENHANCEMENT

ACT, Sanchez. SCONC/SFC. Would create a small grant and technical assistance program to maintain and recover healthy riparian areas and provide \$750,000 for the environment department to manage program. Includes a diverse task force. Support, but amendments are being added by the state engineer which need to be reviewed, and have some concerns that funds could be used to aerially spray the herbicide Roundup to get rid of the non-native trees that are choking river systems without notification and buffer zones to protect aquatic life. Passed by SCONC with amendments.

WILDLIFE

WILDLIFE HABITAT ANIMAL RIGHTS

H 7 DEPARTMENT OF GAME & FISH APPROPRIATIONS, Taylor, JG. HGUAC/H AFC. and

S 7 DEPARTMENT OF GAME & FISH APPROPRIATIONS, Macias. SCONC/SFC. These bills are identical and make the

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New Mexico Legislature

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department's appropriations for fiscal year 2000. The bills did not include a general fund appropriation for Conservation Services Division, which oversees wildlife and habitat for the state. We have raised the issue and amendments are in the works to reinstate the CSD budget. However, Governor Johnson line-item vetoed this appropriations last year, and calls are needed to the Governor to support. Strongly support.

****H 385 INCREASE CRUELTY TO ANIMALS PENALTIES**, Pederson, HJC, S 339
EXTREME CRUELTY TO ANIMALS, Garcia, SPAC/SJC. Extreme cruelty to animals would become a fourth degree felony; second offense of regular cruelty would become a fourth degree felony; certain assaults against police and fire animals would become a third degree felony; and the courts would be given greater leeway in dealing with the perpetrator and the injured animal. A broad coalition of groups from animal activists, police, and human services has formed to support the bill, which links animal cruelty with violence against people. Currently cruelty to animals is only a misdemeanor. Strongly support these bills. Calls are needed as similar bill died last session. Livestock interests are opposing this bill.

****H 410 AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES PROTECTION**, Begaye, HENRC/HJC. NM is currently the only state not protecting these species. Many are collected and shipped out of state to become exotic pets. Eventually a threatened or endangered species situation could result. The Department of Game & Fish is currently not supporting this bill claiming lack of funds and manpower, and previous attempts to provide protection have failed in the legislature. Calls are needed. 2/21 status: Stalled in HJC.

S 34 PARKS AND WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT, McKibben, SPAC/SCONC/SFC. The sponsor has tabled this bill in SPAC which would have combined the Department of Game & Fish with the State Parks Division without making any changes to the laws creating those entities. The sponsor stated that he just wanted to initiate a dialogue to combine all natural resources agencies into one entity. He may propose a memorial directing that a study group or task force be formed to look into this. No position as other fundamental changes in law and budgets would need to be made to see the two entities were effective.

S 87 ELK ENHANCEMENT PERMITS, Lyons, SCONC/SFC. The bill would allow the Department of Game & Fish to sell by auction and lottery two additional permits to hunt bull elk. The proceeds are to go to programs and projects to better manage elk. The first committee resisted efforts

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to specify, that the funds would be used in part for research regarding habitat analysis. No position. Passed SCONC.

S 89 BIG GAME PARTNERSHIP ACT, Lyons, SCONC/SFC. This would allow the Department of Game & Fish to enter into cooperative agreements with private landowners for the purpose of maximizing big game production on public and private property, ostensibly to encourage them to "tolerate" wildlife on their land. We are told the bill is designed to increase mule deer population in the state. We are keeping a close eye on this bill as we are not sure what the intentions behind it really are. No position. Passed SCONC.

S 118 ELK RANGES, Rodarte, SCONC/SJC. The sponsor has withdrawn this bill after first attempting to amend it to make broad statements about the negative impact of elk on the land, including the "level of depredation to cattle pasture" and to have special hunts to reduce "excessive" numbers of elk. Opposed.

S 229 AMEND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION ACT, Feldman, SCONC. The amendments create protection for "threatened" species. Currently no such protection exists and we support these protections. A provision in the bill allows limited "takings" of threatened species and we have worked with the sponsor to tighten up that language so that takings under habitat conservation plans will not be allowed. Strongly support. 2/21 status: Failed on Senate floor. Strong discussion against endangered species. Bad timing as hearing followed notice of intent to sue under endangered species act.

S 252 JAGUAR PROTECTION, Lyons, SCONC/SJC. Would create minimal state protection for the jaguar if it is ever taken off the federal list of endangered species. Could be worrisome, however, in that state protection is one factor the feds will consider in deciding whether to de-list a species. On the other hand, weak state protection could ensure that jaguar will not be taken off federal list. Passed SCONC with amendment.

****SJR 1 HUNTING AND FISHING CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT**, Lyons, SRC/SCONC. Would amend constitution of NM to state that lawful hunting and fishing and the taking of game and fish are a valued part of NM's heritage and shall be forever preserved for the people in the state constitution. If passed, it would be put on the ballot at the next general election. Such amendments are being proposed in many states by anti-wildlife interests and should be fought on the basis that the constitution should not be trivialized with such statements. Oppose. 2/21 status: Failed on Senate floor (narrowly).

SM 6 OPPOSE BIOSPHERE PROGRAM, Adair, SRC/SCONC. Opposes the Biosphere reserves designation under the United Nations Environment Programme and urges

that the proposed Convention on Biological Diversity not be

ratified by the United States. Strongly oppose. The Biodiversity Treaty should be ratified by Congress and would have the U.S. recognize the intrinsic value of biological diversity and of the ecological, genetic, social, economic, scientific, educational, cultural, recreational and aesthetic values of biological diversity in the world. Passed SRC and tabled in SCONC from which it could be pulled off at any time. 2/21 status: Stalled in SCONC. Could pop up again. Lots of misperception.

MISCELLANEOUS and 2/21 UPDATE NIGHT SKY PROTECTION ACT. 2/21 update: Other bills that have just been introduced are: Interstate Stream Commission (H700); Protectin of Growing Timber (H 870 and S 702); Improved Watershed Function (HJM 65); State Water Trust Study (HJM 21); New Domestic Water Wells (S 505); Net Metering System for Self-Generation (S 615); Wildlife Management Impact Studies (S736); Environmental Justice Act (S742); and State's Natural Resources Legislation (SJM 41).

H 39 NIGHT SKY PROTECTION ACT, Gubbels, HENRC/HJC. Would provide protections for the state's dark sky for its beauty, which is threatened by "light pollution" and for astronomy by regulating outdoor night lighting fixtures through the use of shields and other lighting techniques. Support. Passed HENRC with numerous amendments. 2/21 status: Moving along.

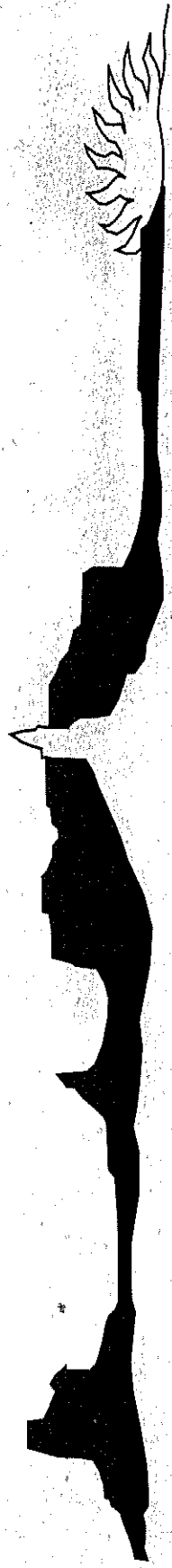
H 211 WEATHER MODIFICATION SERVICES, Crook, HAGC/HENRC/HAFC. Would provide \$200,000 to the interstate stream commission to contract for weather modification services (cloud seeding) to enhance precipitation and water supply. Concerned that water may be "created" in one location at the expense of another's natural processes. Designed to help eastern New Mexico create more rain. Supported by agricultural interests. Oppose. Passed HAGC and HENRC.

H 390 AMEND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT ACT, Larranaga, HENRC/HJC. Would provide authority for the environment department to establish administrative penalties for drinking water violations and a capacity development program for communities in need. Support. Passed HENRC.

S 99 MULTICHEMICAL SENSITIVITY EDUCATION PROGRAM, Tsosie, SPAC/SFC. Would provide \$53,000 for a statewide public education program on multichemical sensitivity. Support.

S 205 URANIUM MINING HEALTH EFFECTS, Pinto, SIAC/SFC. Would provide \$150,000 to a Shiprock clinic to help former Navajo uranium miners suffering health problems from their mining activities. Support. Passed SIAC.

S 214 LEAD HAZARD ACT, Feldman, SPAC/SCORC. Would create a program to prevent lead poisoning in children through regulation of work practices for lead hazard



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identification, risk assessment, reduction and abatement in target housing. Support. This bill was killed last year.

****SJR 12 INSTANT RUNOFF VOTING SYSTEM, CA.** Maloof. SRC/SPAC. Requires instant runoff voting for all offices from the federal level to the municipal and enables voters to vote for their first and second choice of candidates. Will help to avoid cases in three or more way races (Green, Democrat and Republican) where the least preferred candidate wins. Support (Chapter has not taken position).

OTHER POSSIBILITIES

PESTICIDES - We expect a bill dealing with pesticides, herbicides and notification to the public in advance that will be strongly opposed by pesticide users. Support.

SLAPSUITS PROTECTION - We expect a bill addressing the growing number of punitive lawsuits filed by industry against local community groups and local governments when they call attention to industry pollution, violations, etc. as part of the normal "public comment and involvement" process. SLAPP suits have had a chilling effect on public involvement in pollution issues.

FORESTRY PRACTICES - A bill has been introduced addressing forestry practices issues.

by Gail Ryba

The City of Albuquerque is sponsoring Albuquerque's 3rd Annual Bike to Work Day, and this year it will be held on Tuesday, May 4th. There will be several events during May to encourage the use of bicycles for transportation, and the theme for 1999 will be bicycle safety. In conjunction with Craig Rivera, the City's Bicycle/Pedestrian Safety coordinator, and Chuck Malagodi, in Craig's office, bicycle advocates have begun planning for a Track Stand contest on Civic Plaza, a bicycle parade in the Nob Hill area on May 1st, the Albuquerque Police Departments Bike Auction (where 500-1000 bikes will be sold), a possible midnight ride through Downtown, a bicycle fashions show, and more. To support the safety theme, we will strongly promote Effective Cycling, a class organized by the League of American Bicyclists, and we plan to hold at least two classes during April. If you are willing to lead bicycle commuting

sessions (perhaps during a lunch hour) at your work site, please call Gail Ryba or Craig Rivera at the numbers listed below, and we can arrange to have a speaker come to your work site and talk for 20-40 minutes about the essentials of Effective Cycling, and to try and interest more people in signing up for the full 9-hour course.

If you have other bike-related events you would like to promote, or you are involved in a business that would like to sponsor the bicycle parade or Bike to Work Day, please contact us. Further details can be found on the Web site for GASPI, the Greater Albuquerque Spokes People, a recently formed bicycle advocacy group in Albuquerque: <http://www.nmia.com/~gnyba>. Gail Ryba can be reached at 292-4873 or gnyba@nmia.com, and Craig Rivera can be reached at 768-3532 or crivera@cabq.gov. And PLEASE ride your bike to work on Tuesday, May 4th.

Many thanks to the following individuals who have been volunteering and making my life a little more manageable: Kirsten Stade, Jim Noel, Eleanor Eisenmenger (organized the River Day reception at the Hilton), Maxine Goad, John Buchser and Petra Hegger.



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Bike To Work Day Tuesday, May 4th

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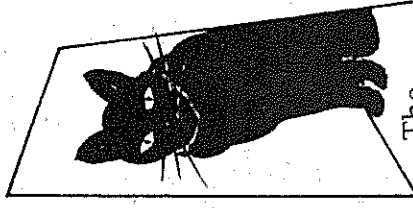
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Contributions are tax deductible to the extent
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* Choco: a chocolate-colored Burmese cat
who let Bill and Eleanor Eisenmenger
live with him for many happy years.

Wilderness in New Mexico

El Malpais

by Martin Heinrich

- Second in a series -

The following article is another in a series exploring the unique places proposed as wilderness in New Mexico. The protection of these areas will depend on national legislation. The Sierra Club supports the Citizen's Proposal which would designate 2.5 million acres of New Mexico as Wilderness Areas. With your help this proposal can become law and each of the places you read about here will be preserved. Please take a moment and write your congressional representative to ask them to support the Citizen's Proposal for New Mexico Wilderness.

Navajo Country is an outstanding landscape with many features important to native religion and culture. El Malpais is such a feature.

I pull up to the top of the Sandstone Bluffs. It is a beautiful day in late autumn. Despite the weather and the proximity to Albuquerque, I am the sole human here today. As I gather my daypack, camera, and notepad, I am joined by three gregarious ravens rolling and diving like acrobats in the updrafts created at the cliff's face.

Before setting out, I pause at the edge of this mighty sandstone bluff. From this vantage, the landscape is breathtaking and unlike any I have seen before. Across a broad plain of previously molten basalt there are lines of cinder cones, deep volcanic craters, strips of ponderosa, pinon, and Douglas fir. It is an odd mosaic of unique geology and flora. There are stands of ancient yellow-bark pines beside, and often below, lower elevation trees like juniper and pinon. Having explored the other side of this expanse, I know that there are also stands of aspen and even Douglas firs older than any others known to science. They live along cracks and tubes in areas of lava where few would think to look for these species. The tubes themselves are magical underground chambers running below the surface of this boiled and twisted landscape. If the surface is a land of fire then these caves are a land of ice, for even in summer icicles drip from the ceiling in places.

So many lava flows have criss-crossed this basin that hundreds of micro-climates and geologic zones have formed. The deep black streaks smeared across my view are the new lava flows. They are so recent that their creation is remembered in stories of local Pueblo people. Then there are golden kapookas or grassy islands where soil is thick and fertile. Several forest types create various shades of green where lava is still evident but slowly yielding to the grip of native plants. Together this makes an enormous mosaic, like a quilt sewn together from many unique habitats and geologic forms.

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In the Navajo Origin Story the land was overrun by monsters. Two brothers set out to rid their people of these terrible creatures. They visited their father the sun and he gave them suits of knives, lightning arrows, a sunbeam arrow, and a rainbow arrow for their quest. The brothers took their weapons to Tsotsil (Mt. Taylor) where the giant monster Yeitso lived.

I break away from my view and head north along the bluffs in search of a way down. Eventually I find a canyon which appears promising. I scramble down to find a dead end at a thirty foot drop-off. Refusing to turn back I find a narrow crack which allows me to chimney to the ground below.

In the narrow space between bluffs and lava flows the soil is sandy and covered by grass and live oak. Within minutes I locate a veritable critter highway. There are badger, coyote, deer, and bobcat tracks overlaid on a narrow game trail. I am thrilled. This area was overlooked by the National Park Service (NPS) in its wilderness recommendation, yet I find solitude, wildlife, and breathtaking views. This is just one of several areas not recommended for wilderness that I will explore today.

At the advice of the four holy people at Tosato (Warm Springs near San Rafael), the boys learned how and when Yeitso came to drink there. They lay in wait as Yeitso approached making the ground rumble with his footsteps. After drinking, the brothers approached, but Yeitso saw them coming in the pool's reflection. A great battle ensued with Yeitso and the brothers hurling lightning bolts at each other.

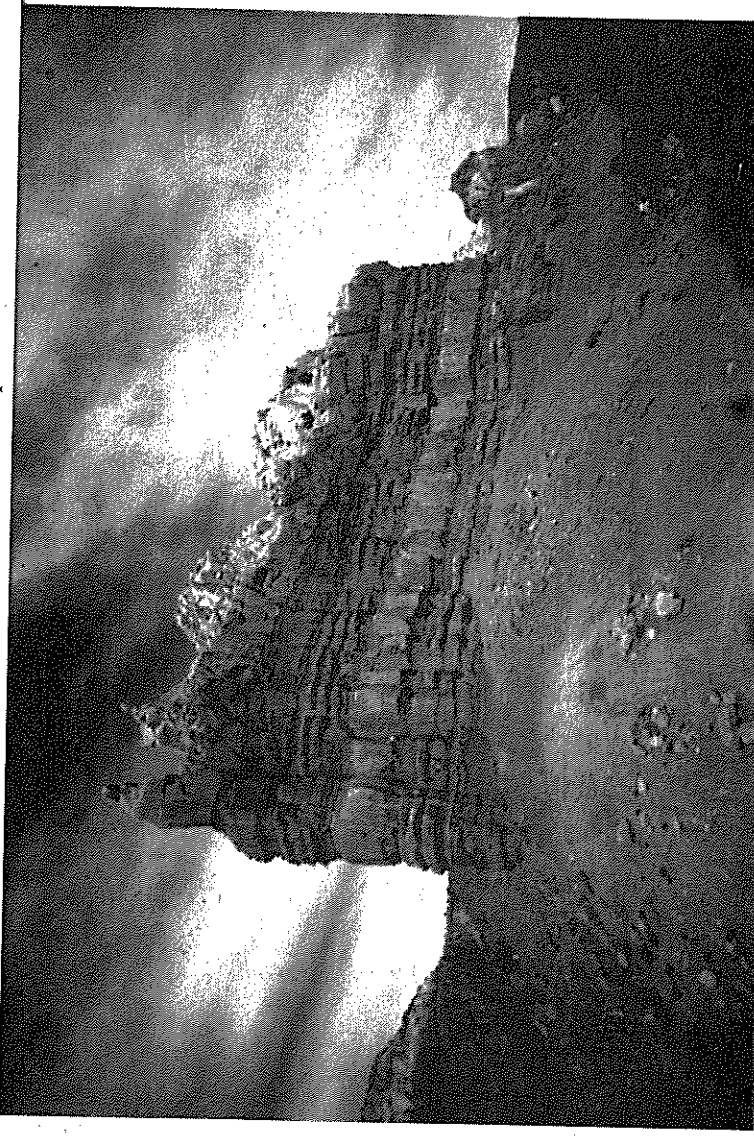
From here I travel to the splendid grasslands along the eastern boundary of El Malpais National Monument. These too have been overlooked. I am excited to learn that even the old two-tracks that once provided access for ranch access are now either revegetating themselves or have been mechanically reseeded by the Park Service. In fact, I cannot find any reason to exclude these large grassland tracts of the monument from wilderness designation. Grasslands are among the most under-represented ecological communities in the National Wilderness Preservation System. These areas cannot be

overlooked, especially when considering that the overlooked areas are separated by a single two lane road from the grasslands of the Cebolla Wilderness Area. The ecological importance of protecting these native grasslands is evidenced by the eagles, falcons, and hawks which nest in the nearby cliffs and feed upon the rodents living here.

All of this points to old prejudices when evaluating potential wilderness areas. When many of the Park Service and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) recommendations were made, recreation was the overriding wilderness value considered. BLM administrators even remarked that a given roadless area could never be roadless because it was too flat! Evaluation of an area's value to native wildlife often went unconsidered. Fortunately, the public has voiced its desire for wilderness that isn't just beautiful, but that provides for abundant native wildlife.

Many of the most visually spectacular areas in the El Malpais area will almost certainly become wilderness. Grand lava tubes, cinder cones, and the Zuni-Acoma Trail will likely be protected. However, we cannot give up on the most biologically rich areas. The NPS boundary proposal follows the lava's edge in areas that must be expanded to protect the flat, grassy areas most susceptible to the excesses of tourism. This is, after all, a National Monument and only vigilance will ensure that it never suffers from the roads and parking lots which have practically ruined other Parks and Monuments.

The elder brother eventually hit Yeitso with a bolt of lightning. He stumbled and fell four times, finally expiring. The younger brother cut off Yeitso's head and threw it north over Tsotsil. It landed and still rests in that place today. We know it as Cabezon. Then blood poured forth to form Yeitso's body. If this blood reached the monsters to the south, Yeitso would revive. The elder brother drew lines across the valley with his knife club causing the blood to pile upon itself. The blood remains there today as the lava flows of El Malpais.



Lee Hughes

formation near Abiquiu, New Mexico



Wilderness Alerts

HELP STOP OIL & GAS DRILLING WITHIN THE BISTI / DE-NA-ZIN WILDERNESS AREA

by Martin Heinrich

Three hours from the buzz of Albuquerque and Santa Fe is the beautiful Bisti/De-Na-Zin Wilderness Area. Its surface is lunar and magical, with hoodoos, spires, and painted buttes. The bones of dinosaurs are perpetually eroding to the surface of Bisti's colorful, but fragile soils. It is home to at least one species that lives nowhere else. It is a sublime landscape like no other. The Bisti was the first BLM wilderness area and represents a landmark in New Mexico landscape protection.

Unfortunately, an oil company called Speerex is attempting to force the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to let it drill for oil and gas in the Bisti Wilderness. We can't allow this most enchanting of New Mexico's landscapes to be defiled with roads, pipelines, and drill rigs.

You can help stop the unnecessary destruction of the still. The BLM still has to approve the drill permits and rights way for Speerex to move forward. With enough public pressure they could deny the permits and easements. Please take a few minutes and write the BLM to let them know that you support the "No Action" alternative in their Draft Environmental Impact Statement. No Action means no drill rigs in the wilderness.

The only acceptable alternative is the
NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE.

Written comments on the Draft EIS will be accepted through April 30, 1999. Only with resounding condemnation from the public will this scheme be stopped.

See C. Otteni, Field Office Manager
BLM, Farmington Field Office
235 La Plate Highway, Suite A
Farmington, NM 87401

--AND--

Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt
Department of the Interior
349 C St. NW
Washington, DC 20240
MAIL: exsec@ios.doi.gov

02/09/1999 - ARCO Leader - 'Age of Oil' Entering its Last Days

Fort Worth, Texas - ARCO Chairman and CEO Mike R. Bowlin said the world is entering "the last days of the Age of Oil" and urged the U.S. energy industry to pay more attention to alternative transportation fuels, including natural gas. At the Cambridge Energy Research Associates' annual conference, Bowlin said the 21st Century will bring a dramatic "new look" to the energy industry and that natural gas and renewable energy will play decisive roles in the energy mix of the future. "The demand for clean energy - natural gas, renewables, electric and new energy technologies - will grow faster than overall demand for energy, including oil and coal," Bowlin said. "Energy providers must make a critical choice, he said, 'Embrace the future and recognize the growing demand for a wide array of fuels, or ignore reality and slowly - but surely - be left behind.' Bowlin, head of the world's fifth-largest oil company, also urged the energy industry to join automakers in developing alternative fuels, including reformulated gasoline. Bowlin's comments were made last September by the head of the industry (News Notes 9/15/98).

Protect Utah's Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument

The comment period has been extended to March 12. If you haven't written yet, please do so. Linda & I led a National trail maintenance outing there last Fall, and it truly is a place worth protecting. It's huge and it's wild. Substantial ORV use is included in one of the options. Let's save it! -- John Buchser

The following is from the club's web site, which includes an e-mail submission form. <http://www.sierraclub.org/activism/escalante.html>

Background Information

The federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has unveiled its Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, America's newest national monument, and has opened it up for public comment through March 12, 1999. The DEIS presents five alternatives for public comment. Of the five scenarios, Alternative D is most closely aligned with protecting the wildland values of the monument. This alternative would prohibit all-terrain vehicle use throughout the monument, would close many unnecessary and unmaintained roads, and would limit development to levels consistent with the monument's primitive character.

While Alternative D comes closer than the others to preserving the pristine character of the 1.6 million acres of wilderness proposed by the Utah Wilderness Coalition within the monument, none of the alternatives would require the BLM to use its authority to protect all of the monument's wildlands under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act.

We need your help. Only a large outpouring of public support for full protection will persuade the agency to improve its plan. You can help by sending your written comments to the BLM via the email petition above (see web site). When commenting on the plan, ask the BLM to designate as wilderness study areas all those lands which the Utah Wilderness Coalition has identified as meeting the agency's wilderness standards. Further, ask the BLM to recommend as suitable for permanent wilderness designation all of these qualifying areas within the monument.

Two issues should be addressed to improve alternative D. The Burr Trail is a route which crosses the Escalante Canyons portion of the Monument. In Alternative D, it is categorized as eligible for developed facilities. This treatment of the Burr Trail, a narrow, winding, infrequently-traveled route, would change the character of the road, significantly increasing the number of people who drive it and adversely affecting adjacent wild areas, which are included in H.R. 1500 and S.773, America's Redrock Wilderness Act. Developed facilities should be confined to the communities adjacent to the monument.

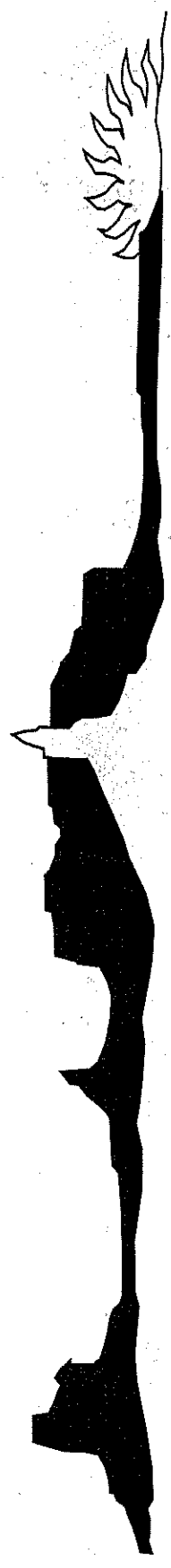
In addition, the issue of livestock grazing in the monument must be more adequately addressed. Despite acknowledging that various federal laws govern grazing management of public lands, the BLM is dragging its feet in applying these laws and delaying compliance until three years after the final plan is signed. Grazing must be managed so as to protect the delicate ecosystems of the monument.

Writing Makes a Difference!

Written comments are of the utmost importance and are the best way to demonstrate to the BLM that citizens from all over the country want the monument managed for its solitude, unspoiled natural character and breath-taking beauty.

Email your comments by March 12, 1999 to the Utah BLM using the form at <http://www.sierraclub.org/activism/escalante.html>, or contact Pete Wilkins at:

Bureau of Land Management
Attention: Pete Wilkins
337 S. Main St. Suite: 010
Cedar City, Utah. 84720
Fax: 435 865-5170



New Mexico and its

Declining Bio-Diversity

New Mexico has already lost considerable biological diversity; 22 species and subspecies of vertebrates have been extirpated from the state, 5 of which are now extinct. All New Mexico counties have lost wildlife, ranging from 4 to 17 species per county.

VERTEBRATES EXTIRPATED: (* indicates extinct)

Shovelnose Sturgeon
Spotted Gar
Colorado River Cutthroat Trout
American Eel
Bonytail Chub
* Rio Grande Bluntnose Shiner
* Phantom Shiner
Beautiful Shiner
Palomas Pupfish
Freshwater Drum
Sage Grouse
* New Mexico Sharp-tailed Grouse
Gray Wolf (recent reintroduction into adjacent AZ)
Grizzly Bear
Bison
* Merriam's Elk
* Hot Springs Cotton Rat
Black-footed Ferret
Mink
Southwestern River Otter
Western Boreal Toad
Lowland Leopard Frog

Baca in Trouble

Baca from page 1

The Valles Coalition has grown to include partners such as the Garden Club of America. Ralph Regula, a Republican from Ohio who is a keystone of determining which monies are spend out of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, has stated privately that he was surprised when he started hearing from some of our senior citizens around the country, indicating that protecting this ancient volcanic caldera was important to them. As a result of this collaborative lobbying, Rep. Regula has indicated he will leave the \$40 million in place at least until this summer. We are hoping that between Rep. Tom Udall's support of this land acquisition and the fact that the Senate is now completed with the impeachment process, that we will see some progress in acquisition of this important ecological and scenic wonder.

Skip McWilliams
**Sierra Trail
Lodges**



(800) 776-3942
coppercanyonlodges.com

Inner City Outings

ICO from page 20

Opportunity for Funding

The Inner City Outings group of the Sierra Club is part of the Chamizal Collaborative, a group based in Central El Paso that is seeking funding from the Paso del North Health Foundation. The foundation is Giving multiyear grants to projects involving youth and healthy behavior. Project Vida, which has worked with ICO before, and many other grass roots organizations are cooperating for this funding. Our representative is Barbara Nehring.

Reports of Fun Times

Tierra Madre

Used tires, old utility poles, and straw bales. These were the major components of a unique ICO service trip for two weekends in February in Sunland Park, NM. Students from Life Management Center and Magoffin Middle School helped build a playground of recycled and donated materials for a low-income community.

Tierra Madre, a community dedicated to environmentally sound, low-cost housing, started its building efforts with a playground. Volunteers from Returned Peace Corps and many other groups transformed a desert spot with nothing but yucca, greasewood, and sand into a place for fun.

Jimmy Jolly, a designer who travels around the world building low-cost playgrounds with community volunteers, spearheaded the activity. Highlights of the playground are a tiny straw bale "playhouse," a gazebo with dragons flying from the roof, and multiple playground equipment pieces using old tires.

What started out as a one-day activity turned out to be so much fun that four boys (and Richard Rheder) worked all five days. They chopped yucca, dug ditches, positioned tires, shaped boards into dragon heads and tails, "rode" the sand "waves" as the backhoe dragged logs from the road to the site, and stacked bales of straw.

Several other children worked one or two days. Their efforts were rewarding to them ... and valuable to the community.

Feather Lake

Craig Braginton of the Audubon Society led a group of seven children and several adults from Life Management Center on a late afternoon stroll to watch the evening fly-in at this bird sanctuary. They learned the difference between coots and ducks (ducks quack ó that's a joke) and watched a red-tailed hawk circle above. One happy child commented to his mother that they had lived within blocks of this Lower Valley spot, yet they had never known of it.

Aden Crater

Two van loads, of children and adults from Life Management Center had a great time exploring, particularly the caves in the lava. The big hit of the day was the bones in the spot where raptors perched. While they might have preferred a "live" volcano, they thought this ancient one was worthwhile, too. Two hearing-impaired children and an interpreter, Suzanne Lightbourn, from the El Paso Center from the Deaf accompanied leaders Ian Hanna, Cheryl Frey, Laura Tourville, and Richard Rheder.

The group was an unwitting ally of a gopher who was being attacked by a Swainson's hawk by the side of the road as the van went home on NM 126. While the children marveled at the size of the wing spread, the hawk decided he didn't want to share the road with the van and headed off for easier prey.

Otero Mesa from page 1

by the BLM for multiple use: grazing, wildlife habitat, hunting, hiking, and camping; and as a show case of the custom and culture of southern New Mexico. To succeed we need a sustained campaign for this designation.

The first step has already been taken by local activists in El Paso, Alamogordo, and Las Cruces who appeared at public hearings in January.

The second step was taken by activists writing letters of support for the NCAALternative presented in the Legislative EIS prior

to the deadline in February.

Now, it's up to you to keep the ball rolling. This campaign will need to be sustained over a period of time

until Congress acts. Write or email Dr. Vliet at

Ft. Bliss:

Dr. Andrew Vliet

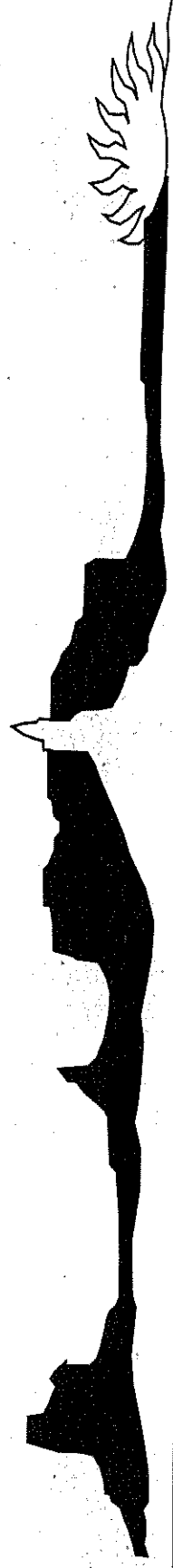
Program Manager, McGregor Renewal

P.O. Box 6020

Fort Bliss, Texas 79906

mcgregor@emh10.bliss.army.mil

Contact you local Congressional delegation as well!



Chapter Executive Committee Report

by Jennifer Johnson

The Rio Grande Chapter Executive Committee (RGC ExCom) met at Sevilleta Wildlife Refuge on January 9 and 10. The following items were covered. To find out more contact the person listed, or contact the secretary for a more detailed summary.

RGC ExCom Election- committee and results, Barbara Leonard. Results were accepted, new members: Jennifer Johnson, Gwen Wardwell, Bryan Bird. Leaving: Abe Jacobson, Ted Mertig.

New officers elected- Chair, Gwen Wardwell; Vice-Chair, Jennifer Johnson; Secretary, Bryan Bird; Treasurer, Blair Brown.

Minutes- old minutes and TO DO items. For complete draft minutes of this meeting contact the secretary, Bryan Bird. For final minutes of previous meetings contact Barbard Leonard.

Membership update- submit to National, Bryan Bird.

Future Executive Committee meetings- will be held on a Saturday 3-5PM and Sunday 8AM-noon, in March, September, and December at Sevilleta Wildlife Refuge and a yet undetermined place in June. Schedule, Gwen Wardwell. Draft Agenda should be submitted to Excom members 2 weeks prior to next meeting.

Committee appointments made, Gwen Wardwell. New Conservation Committee Chair, David Bouquin.

Conservation meetings will be 9AM-3PM on the Saturday preceeding the Sunday Executive Committee meeting. Funding, cycle of meetings, a big issue to unite club (land) was discussed, David Bouquin.

- John Buchser elected new edi-

Mining from page 1

erators to link new, potentially larger mines onto existing mines. "If we lost this case, it would have significantly weakened the law." said Abe Jacobson, Chapter Mining Issues Chair.

Sierra Club Counsel Doug Wolf said he expects Cook's Copar Pumice Co. to appeal and possibly to seek permission to keep mining while the appeal is pending.

The closed Las Conchas mine grew by more than 300 acres across the Jemez National Recreation Area to embrace the new, 76-acre El Cajete pumice pit, itself twice the size of the Las Conchas pit and located more than a mile away. That's contrary to the apparent intent of the mining act, Encinias ruled. The law created new, relatively mild regulations for existing mines, more stringent rules for new parts of existing mines and the toughest rules for wholly new mines. At El Cajete, Encinias wrote, the "decision to expand the permit area had the effect of converting what should have been a 'new mine' into a 'new unit of an existing mine and, in that way, reducing the intended regulatory control."

tor. The newsletter will be published

6 times per year. Schedule, group newsletters, John Buchser.

Editorial board- Blair Brown, Chair. A continuing committee to make recommendations to editor.

Budget- old budget, new budget, funding for conservation activities, mining manual, request audit of books, Blair Brown.

Fundraising- March Letter Committee, Jennifer Johnson, Chair. Chapter Book (outings/lands), Committee, Barbara Johnson, Chair.

Political report from the State and National elections, legislature highlights, legislative committee responsibilities and procedure, lobbyist, Jim Hannan. The lobbyist is Helga Schimkat, she will work from Jan 1 through March 31. If you are interested in helping, please contact her at 983-4254 or Schimkat@earthlink.net. Robert Haskel spoke on utility deregulation. Conservation Committee- draft minutes from the November 8 meeting at Bosque Del Apache, conservation report, global warming postcards, military issues, Otero Mesa, conservation action, Picuris Pueblo mining, Sen. Bingaman Forest Health, Wilderness Alliance, Marianne Thaeler.

Attend the Next Meeting of the

Rio Grande Chapter Conservation

and Executive Committee

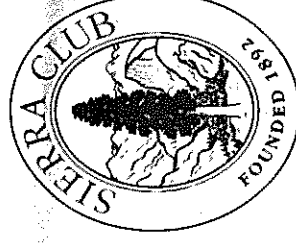
at Sevilleta
National Wildlife Refuge

near

Socorro, New Mexico

March 20 and 21

Contact Gwen Wardwell,
Chapter Chair for details.



Get Involved - Come to the Southwest Grassroots Wilderness Conference!

The Southwest Grassroots Wilderness Conference will be held April 30 through May 2. Activists from New Mexico and Arizona will converge in Albuquerque (exact location to be announced) to kick the Southwest wilderness effort into high gear. Featured speakers will include Dave Foreman and Mayor Jim Baca.

All activists interested in protection and designation of New Mexico and Arizona wilderness areas are invited to attend. Sierra Club members will be key to the protection of our regions wildlands, so get involved! This event is being sponsored by the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance and the Southwest Forest Alliance.

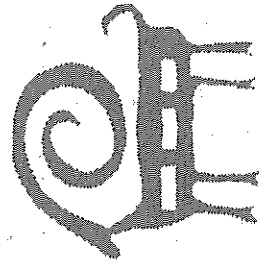
Call 255-5966 ext.106

Central New Mexico Group News

General Meeting - March 15

On Monday March 15, Martin Heinrich of the Sierra Club and New Mexico Wilderness Alliance will be presenting a beautiful slide show on New Mexico's proposed wilderness areas. The slides are from Michael Berman's impressive landscape prints of these areas. This is a presentation you will not want to miss! All Sierrans and community members interested in New Mexico's wilderness legacy are welcome!

**Friends Meeting Room, 1600 5th St. NW
March 15, 7:30 pm**



Group Directory

207 San Pedro NE
Albuquerque NM 87108

Phone: 505-265-5506 Fax 505-256-0373

1999 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Richard Barish	247-8079	rdbarish@aol.com
Blair Brown <i>Secretary</i>	265-3231	bblairb@aol.com
Martin Heinrich <i>Vice-chair</i>	232-7151	mtheinrich@aol.com
Petra Hegger	890-0331	pfmh@laughingdesert.com
Jeremy Kruger <i>Chair</i>	242-8022	kruger7@aol.com
Jon Maaske	256-1393	
Mike Norte	844-0935	
Gary Simpson <i>Treasurer</i>	898-6249	garyksimpson@juno.com
David Ther	260-1553	grelbik@worldnet.att.net

The Central New Mexico Group of the Sierra Club depends totally on the efforts of volunteers. To help, call any of us!

ADMINISTRATION

Petra Hegger <i>Administrative Asst. Books & Calendars Phone Tree</i>	890-0331	pfmh@laughingdesert.com
Blair Brown <i>Information Technology</i>	265-3231	bblairb@aol.com
Julie Hicks <i>Media Coordinator</i>	232-7151	mtheinrich@aol.com
David Ther <i>Membership/Programs</i>	260-1553	grelbik@worldnet.att.net
Richard Barish <i>Political Chair</i>	247-8079	rdbarish@aol.com

CONSERVATION CAMPAIGN TEAM LEADERS

Mike Norte <i>Conservation Chair</i>	844-0935	
Richard Barish <i>Bosque Protection</i>	247-8079	rdbarish@aol.com
War On The Environment East Mountain Susan Gorman	OPEN 265-3231	
Sustainable Albuquerque Julie Hicks	232-7151	bblairb@aol.com
Petroglyph National Monument Barbara Leonard	862-7915	mtheinrich@aol.com
Western New Mexico Martin Heinrich	232-7151	mtheinrich@aol.com
Wilderness/ Wildlife		

Volunteers Wanted!

Many of you have called our office offering to volunteer. Right now what we need most of all are folks to lead outings. If you are interested in leading hikes, locally or otherwise, please contact David Ther (260-1553) or Petra Hegger (890-0331). You can volunteer one-time only or as often as you like. First-aid/CPR certification or training will be necessary. Our outings program is an important part of what we have to offer to our members, and it's been sorely missed. With your help we can make it a great one this year!

CALENDAR

Unless otherwise noted, Sierra Club meetings take place at the Central NM Sierra Club Office, 207 San Pedro NE.

March 4	Deadline for agenda items for Group Excom mtg.; e-mail to bblairb@aol.com
March 8	Group Excom Meeting, 7:00PM
March 15	General Membership Meeting, 7:30PM (see related notice)
March 20-21	Chapter Excom Meeting at Sevilleta Wildlife Refuge (see notice)
March 27	3rd Assembly for Water Planning in the Middle Rio Grande Region; 9AM - 4PM Anthropology Lecture Hall, NM Campus
April 8	Deadline for agenda items for Group Excom mtg.; e-mail to bblairb@aol.com
April 12	Group Excom Meeting, 7:00PM
April 10	Deadline for submission of articles for Rio Grande Sierran. See Page 2 for details.
April 19	General Membership Meeting, 7:30PM (details to be announced)
April 22	Earth Day. Check for activities in your area.

PUBLIC HEARING ON DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR BLM GRAZING STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

This draft EIS is on standards to be used to judge the health of approximately 13.5 million acres of BLM managed public land in New Mexico. All interested community members are urged to attend and speak out on this important environmental issue! For more info call Gary Simpson 898-6249.

3/22/99 BLM Office, 435 Montano NE, ABQ
3/16/99 BLM Office, 1474 Rodeo Rd., Santa Fe
3/09/99 Civic Center, 200 W. Arrington, Farmington
3/08/99 Crownpoint Institute of Tech., Crownpoint

All meetings 2-5PM and 7PM until last speaker.



Central New Mexico Audubon Society

offers a series of bird-identification classes conducted by some of NM's most accomplished birdwatchers.

Thurs. March 18 Shorebird Identification
by John Parmeter, NM Ornithological Society

Thurs. April 8 Warbler Identification
by Bill Howe, Migratory Bird Specialist for USFWS

Cost \$5 per class. For info call Pat at 856-7443

Group Directory

Southern N.M. Group
Executive Committee

P.O. Box 3705 UPB
Las Cruces, New Mexico 88011

Cheryl Blevins,
Chair

526-6220(day)
524-4861

spotblev@greatwhite.com

Margo Wilson,
Chapter Representative

744-5860
hshs2@riolink.com

Marianne Thacker,
Conservation Issues

522-3421
marianne.thaer@sierraclub.org

David Farrell,
Legislative Issues

895-3352
dafarrelli@hotmail.com

Robin Heard,
ICO Chair

522-1275

Lesa Wilson,
Treasurer

647-4298

Outings Leaders:

Barbara Coon 522-1576
Ron Gordon 522-4527

Outings

We try to get all outings in the Sierran in a timely manner, but this isn't always the case. So, also check out the web page for outings at <http://www.sierra.nm.org>

Saturday, March 6 - Ash Canyon Hike on WSMR

Place: Ash Canyon
Class: Moderate

Limit: The El Paso group outing; need to reserve 2 weeks in advance.

Leader: For information call Rollin 1-915-832-4023 (day)

Saturday, March 13 - Off-trail from Indian Hollow around Sugarloaf

Place: Indian Hollow around Sugarloaf
Class: Strenuous

Leader: For information call Barbara at 522-1576, Ron 522-4527

Saturday, March 20 - San Nicholas Canyon on WSMR

Place: San Nicholas Canyon
Class: Moderate

Leader: For information call Barbara at 522-1576, Ron 522-4527

Saturday, March 27 - Children's Nature Walk

Place: Dripping Springs in the Organs

Class: Approximately ages 3 to 8. Naturalist at Dripping Springs will interpret an approximately 2 hour hike to the springs. Bring food, water, sun protection and meet at north Pam Am parking lot at 8:15 a.m.

Leader: Total group limit, so *please* call ahead; Cheryl Blevins at 524-4861 or 526-6220 (day).

Saturday, March 27 - Lookout Peak in the Robledos

Place: Robledos Peak

Class: Moderate day hike, off-trail

Leader: For more information call Ron 522-4527

Saturday & Sunday, April 10 & 11 - San Mateo Mountains

Place: San Mateo Mountains

Class: Car camp and day hikes

Leader: For more information call Barbara at 522-1576.

Saturday, April 17 - South Rabbit Ears mostly off trail scramble.

Class: Strenuous - off trail scramble

Leader: Call Ron 522-4527 or Barbara 522-1576.

Saturday & Sunday, April 24 & 25 - Car Camp in the Sacramentos with day hikes.

Class: Car Camp in Sacramentos with day hikes.

Leader: Call Barbara 522-1576.

Program: April 7 Weds. "Alternatives to Sprawl in the West and the Mesilla Valley". Guest speaker, Dr. Jack Wright of the NMSU Geography Dept. Dr. Wright will present slides and talk about his efforts and research in protecting open space in the West and his ideas and proposals for maintaining open space in the Mesilla Valley.

7:30 p.m. Science Hall Room 107, NMSU campus. The public is welcome; call 524-4861

Executive Director Supports
National Conservation Area

January 19, 1999 from Carl Pope to Sylvia Baca
Assistant Secretary BLM Lands and Minerals
Washington DC

Dear Ms. Baca,

This letter will supplement the comments already sent to you from our Rio Grande Chapter concerning the Draft Legislative EIS on the Rewithdrawal of the Fort Bliss McGregor Range in southern New Mexico.

The Sierra Club considers protection of remaining natural landscapes in New Mexico of the highest priority, and has been active on these issues for many years. We view the review of the existing military use of the McGregor Range as an important opportunity to achieve permanent protection for the Culp Canyon and Otero Mesa area on the northern end of the range.

Specifically, we endorse Alternative 6 in the DLEIS, which calls for creation of a National Conservation Area with the Culp Canyon Wilderness Study Area at the core.

We believe that the essential missions of the military can be conducted on the remainder of the McGregor Range and in other areas suitable for that purpose. We urge the Department of Interior to advocate protection of the Culp Canyon/Otero Mesa area through designation into our national lands conservation system.

Sincerely,

Carl Pope

Executive Director, Sierra Club

5th Annual Border
Book Festival

* * * Touted by Publisher's Weekly "One of the top regional book festivals in the U.S. and the N.Y. Times as a "place where books are a success story" * * *

Border Book Festival opens
March 7-14 1999 -

The theme of this year's festival is:

"Our Bodies/Our Earth", exploring the correlation between what is happening to animal/ plant life, as well as minerals, to that of the earth as a whole. The week-long event will feature a series of writers, panels/work shops, as well as a luncheon. The event will also feature the work of nationally recognized authors including: Barry Lopez, Terry Tempest Williams and Leslie Silko. Festivities commence Sunday March 7th at 2:00 p.m. at the Las Cruces Branigan Memorial Library.

For more information: Border Book Festival 422 N.

Alameda Las Cruces, NM 88005

• e-mail at bbf@zianet.com or visit the website at: www.zianet.com/bbf/



New ExCom Officers

The ballots have been counted and it's official. Two members of El Paso's Executive Committee have been re-elected and two new members have been elected.

Laurence Gibson and Ted Mertig will continue to serve on the ExCom. They are joined by new ExCom members Jamie Newlin and Shirley Phillips. In the middle of their two-year terms are Ann Falknor, Sally Savage and Liz Walsh. With the election behind them, the ExCom elected the 1999 leadership for the El Paso Regional Group.

Laurence Gibson has been elected Chairperson. He and Rollin Wickenden will continue to run our outstanding Outings program. Jamie Newlin is this year's Vice Chair. Ann Falknor will continue as Secretary. Kathy Sunday will continue as Treasurer. Sally Savage has committed to expanded coverage of regional environmental issues as the editor of the LORAX. Ted Mertig will continue to head up the Membership Committee. He will also represent the El Paso Regional Group at the Chapter ExCom. Bill Addington, of Sierra Blanca fame, will serve as Border Issues Chair. Gary Williams has returned as Program Chair. Leadership of other issues committees are available.

Army Deciding Fate of Otero Mesa and Sacramento Foothills

On January 12, 1994, the Army held public meetings in Alamogordo, Las Cruces and El Paso on the recently completed draft legislative environmental impact statement to renew the land withdrawal for McGregor Range, a 600,000-acre Army training facility located in Otero County, New Mexico.

The focus of the meeting was the McGregor Range, New Mexico Land Withdrawal Draft Legislative Environmental Impact Statement (DLEIS). The DLEIS was required by the Military Lands Withdrawal Act of 1986. Congress will use the DLEIS in making its decision whether McGregor Range should continue to be withdrawn to support the Army's and other military services' training requirements.

The DLEIS analyzed six alternatives that include options for renewal of the withdrawal for all, part or none of the existing withdrawn land area. The Sierra Club supports Alternative 6, which developed using public comments submitted during scoping meetings. Alternative 6 would establish Otero Mesa and Sacramento Mountain foothills as a National Conservation Area and the Culp Canyon Wilderness Study Area (WSA) as a wilderness area.

The U.S. Army and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) jointly manage the Otero Mesa and mountain foothills for multiple use. These management programs will expire in 2001. The U.S. Army occasionally uses portions of the area for multi-national force training, and as a buffer zone for live fire missile training. The military has temporarily withdrawn from the McGregor Range. The BLM manages wildlife, recreation, grazing and hunting. Otero Mesa and Sacramento Mountain Foothills are recognized as an Historic Landscape under the rules of the New Mexico State Historic Preservation Officer (SHIPO) for designation to the National Register of Historic Places. This historic landscape has 10 historic home sites and over 100 prehistoric sites. The area is being evaluated by the Mescalero and Tigua Indians for potential historic sacred sites.

The German Air Force wants to use this area for a bombing range complex. The U.S. Army wants it for missile training. Alternative sites for these activities exist.

Comments were due February 9. Congress will now decide the fate of these areas.

Dinner Focused on Franklins

By John Sproul

On Friday, February 26, the Franklin Mountains Wilderness Coalition hosted a special dinner meeting focusing on Franklin Mountains State Park.

The event took place in the Faculty/Staff Lounge in the Student Union Building at the University of Texas at El Paso.

This meeting gave members of the Coalition's participating organizations, including the Sierra Club, a chance to get together for fellowship and to discuss current issues affecting Franklin Mountains State Park.

Highlighting the evening was a presentation by Dr. Richard Worthington of UTEP on Current Biological Research in the Franklin Mountains. The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department is preparing a natural-resource management plan for Franklin Mountains State Park and wants this plan to have a sound scientific foundation. Dr. Worthington is doing many of the needed biological studies.

League of Women Voters Held Environmental Conference

by Joe Groff

Mission Possible was the message for the January 23rd Environmental Conference in El Paso sponsored by the League of Women Voters. Focusing on survival strategies for our Paso del Norte region, the event featured outstanding speakers and displays. There were awards for members of industry, business, public and private agencies or individuals who are protecting, preserving, and improving our region's natural resources.

The event was at the University of Texas at El Paso. There was no cost to attend.

Keynote speaker was Dr. Charles G. Groat, Director of the U.S. Geological Survey in the Department of the Interior. Before being nominated by President Clinton, Dr. Groat served as Associate Vice President for research and sponsored projects at UTEP.

Other speakers included Mark Lloyd DVM, Deputy Director of the El Paso Zoo; Dr. Carlos Rincon, El Paso Border Air Program, Environmental Defense Fund; Biologo Francisco Nunez, Environmental Director for Mexico and the Caribbean Area, United Nations; Dr. Steve R. Cook, Program Coordinator, The Energy Center, Center for Environmental Research Management, UTEP; and Dr. John A. Peterson, Director, Anthropology Research Center, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, UTEP.

Speakers focused on efforts to improve air and water quality, renewable energy suited to our area, and the sustainability of our communities in the Paso del Norte region.

Co-sponsors included the Center for Resource Management at UTEP, College of Engineering at UTEP, El Paso Community College, and the El Paso Community Foundation.

ICO News

by Mary Lou Parker

ICO Updates Bicycles for Feminine Comfort

Using donations from the El Paso Bicycle Club, Inner City Outings bought two saddles designed for women and seat posts so females attending the rides can be more comfortable. Sun City Bicycles also provided a reduced rate for tuning up five mountain bikes which have been actively going up and down the levee in the Upper Valley.

Earth Day Plans

Inner City Outings is forming a youth committee to explore ideas to celebrate Earth Day in April. A poster contest is one possibility. Anyone interested should contact Ted Mertig, 852-3011.

Youths Enjoy Outdoor Activities

Magoffin Middle School students in the class of Mary Lou Parker set themselves a goal in November: reach the top of the mountain. They joined Life Management Center and climbed the Thousand Steps formation to sight-see on the ridge by Ranger Peak in central El Paso. Minor cactus encounters and a steep climb deterred no one, and the next goal is Guadalupe Peak.

Life Management Center headed for the snow and pine forests to make snow angels and select and cut Christmas trees. Ten trees were happily chosen in early December and returned to El Paso from the Lincoln National Forest by Cloudcroft, NM. Assisting were Barbara Nehring, Ted Mertig, Richard Rheder, and youth leaders Victor Smith and Carl Blood.

Aztec Cave, Mundy Gap, and Cottonwood Springs in the Franklin Mountains State Park were all stops on the December hike led by Alex Mares, Dave Zucconi, and Richard Rheder. Life Management Center children demonstrated precision teamwork as they helped each other navigate down an eroded arroyo on the path.

ICO teamed up with the Texas Department of Transportation in November to present El Paso Safe Communities Transportation Safety Fair. Leader Ed MacBeth with youth leaders Carl Blood and Victor Smith and youth members of ICO presented demonstrations of bicycle safety at Cielo Vista Mall.

Outings

FEB 28: ADEN CRATER TOUR

Place: Potrillo Mountains West of El Paso
Class: Easy
Approximate length: 1 mile
Elevation gain: none
Leader: Betsy Julian: 544-5741

MARCH 6: ASH CANYON - SALT CANYON LOOP DAY HIKE

Place: San Andres Wildlife Refuge, White Sands Missile Range
Class: Moderate
Approximate length: 6 miles
Elevation gain: 1,200 feet
Limit: 15 (Reservations and leader approval required)
Leader: Rollin Wickenden: 532-9645 (leave message)

This is our annual outing in otherwise-unavailable areas of the White Sands Missile Range.

We'll meet early Saturday morning in Northeast El Paso and drive up War Road to the WSMR Public Affairs Office. This hike is coordinated with Jim Eckles, Public Affairs Officer, who will lead us to our traditional Ash Canyon - Salt Canyon Loop. Points of interest include a wall of hanging ferns and foundations of long-ago abandoned ranch houses.

Participants must be U.S. citizens. Names and Social Security numbers



are needed two weeks in advance.

MARCH 6-7: ALAMO MOUNTAIN BACKPACK

Place: East of Hueco Mountains
Class: Moderate
Approximate length: 4 miles (no trail)
Elevation gain: 900 ft.
Leader: Laurence Gibson: 594-7342

MARCH 13: VINTON CANYON DAY HIKE

Place: Franklin Mountains State Park
Class: Easy+
Approximate length: 2-3 miles
Elevation gain: 200 ft.
Leader: John Sproul: 545-5157 (H)

MAR 14: HUNTER PEAK LOOP DAY HIKE

Place: Guadalupe Mountains National Park
Class: Moderate +
Approximate length: 8.7 miles
Leader: Gary Williams: 593-3624 (H)

This loop hike begins at Pine Springs Campground and follows the Bear Canyon Trail 3.3 miles (and approximately 2,000 feet) on a steep trail to the edge of The Bowl. We will then proceed along the Hunter Peak Trail to Hunter Peak (8,368 feet). From the peak, we will return to Pine Springs Campground by way of the Tejas Trail. The views and scenery make the ascent to the escarpment well worth the effort.

MAR 14-17: HOT SPRINGS OF THE GILA DAY HIKE/BACKPACK

Place: Gila National Forest
Class: Easy to moderate (2 - 18 miles, your option)
Leader: Laurence Gibson: 594-7342

There will be at least 3 hot springs on the itinerary.

MARCH 20: DOG CANYON DAYHIKE

Place: Oliver Reed State Park, Sacramento Mountains near Alamogordo
Class: Moderate
Approximate length: 4 miles
Elevation gain: 800 feet
Leader: Ann Falknor: 833-9162

About 11 miles south of Alamogordo, Dog Canyon is one of a few canyons on the west side of the Sacramento Mountains that has water in it year-round. The first 600 feet elevation gain are steep and full of switch backs. At the end of the canyon is a spring that is shaded by large cottonwoods. There we?we'll let our imagines roam while resting near the ruins of the Lee line shack. The visitors center has a large photo of what the shack looked like decades ago. There is a small state park entrance fee.

MARCH 28: RON COLEMAN TRAIL DAY HIKE

Place: Franklin Mountains (start at McKelligon Canyon)
Class: Moderate
Approximate length: 4 miles
Elevation gain: 1200 feet up
Leader: Carolina Greenfield: 594-7342

We'll do a shuttle to start at McKelligon Canyon and end at Trans Mountain Road.

APRIL 3: FEATHER LAKE AFTERNOON STROLL

Place: Feather Lake Wildlife Sanctuary
Class: Easy
Approximate length: 1 mile
Elevation gain: none
Leader: John Sproul: 545-5157 (H)

This is the annual walk to enjoy the spectacle of migrating birds roosting during their spring migration. Last year, the white-faced ibis fooled us and didn't come through in the usual large numbers. Maybe this year, we'll get to see thousands of them floating down among the pinks and purples of sunset.

APRIL 4: AGUIRRE SPRINGS DAY HIKE

Place: Organ Mountains
Class: Easy to Moderate
Approximate length: 4.5 miles
Elevation gain: 1,300 feet
Leader: Liz Walsh: 584-1471 (H)

APRIL 10-11: CHIRICAHUA CAR CAMP WITH DAY HIKES

Place: Chiricahua Wilderness
Class: Easy to Moderately Strenuous (your choice)
Approximate length: Varied
Elevation gain: Varied
Leader: Laurence Gibson: 594-7342 (H)

APRIL 24-25: NORTH PERCHA CREEK BACKPACK

Place: Black Range, Aldo Leopold Wilderness
Class: Easy+
Approximate length: 5 miles
Elevation gain: 400 feet
Leader: Rollin Wickenden: 532-9645 (leave message)

EL Paso Group

Executive Committee

Jim Bell, Chair (915)581-8864
Jamie Newlin, Vice Chair (915)584-1471 or (915)747-5421
Kathy Sunday, Treasurer (915)584-9301

Members

Ann Falknor (915)833-9162
Laurence Gibson (915)5947342, gibson@ece.utep.edu
Ted Mertig (915)852-3011, tmertig@aol.com
Liz Walsh (915)584-1471, ewalsh@utep.edu
Boarder Issues Chair, Bill Addington

Administration

Chapter Rep
LORAX, Sally Savage (915)833-6899
Secretary, Ann Falknor (915)833-9162

Protect Chairs

BLM Wilderness, OPEN
Enviro, Center & Franklin Mtns., (915)545-515,
John Sproul ae494@rgfn.epcc.edu
Grazing & Timber, Liz Walsh (915)584-1471,
Memberships ewalsh@utep.edu
Outings, Laurence Gibson OPEN
Political Action, Jim Bell (915)594-7342,
Population, Sally Savage gibson@ece.utep.edu
Programs Chair, Gary Williams (915)581-8864
Publicity (915)833-6899

ICO Chair, Richard Rheder

OPEN
(915)544-5659,

Sierra Club Environmental Center, 800 South Piedras @ Paisano

Phone: (915)532-9645, Fax: (915)532-4876

Pajarito Group News

Executive Committee

Abe Jacobson, Chair 672-9579
Miriam Oudejeans, Vice-Chair 672-0414
Karla Atkins, Secretary
Terry Phillips, Treasurer 662-4838
David Bouquin 662-3741
Gordon Spingier, DOE Land Transfer 662-9481
Michael Smith, Forests 662-2380
Abe Jacobson, Mining 672-9579
Janet Gerwin, Water 662-9568
Beth Walter, Wildlife 661-9778

Conservation Committee

Michael Smith, Chair 662-2380
Janet Gerwin, Co-Chair 662-9568
Carole Jacobson, Adopt-A-Highway 672-9579
Jennifer Johnson, Baca Ranch 662-3023
David Bouquin, DOE Land Transfer 662-3741
Gordon Spingier, DOE Land Transfer 662-9481
Michael Smith, Forests 662-2380
Abe Jacobson, Mining 672-9579
Janet Gerwin, Water 662-9568
Beth Walter, Wildlife 661-9778

Administration

David Bouquin, Chapter Rep. 662-3741
Janet Gerwin, Publicity 662-9568
Newsletter OPEN
Guthrie Miller, Membership 662-5545
Warren Steckle, Outings 672-0414
Website and Email Administrator OPEN

General Meetings

All general meetings are held on the first Wednesday of every month at Mesa Public Library, 7 PM and are open to the public.

March 3, 1999

Jim Bailey, New Mexico Department of Game & Fish, will speak on New Mexico wildlife protection programs.

April 7, 1999

Bill deBuys, historian and author, will speak on the natural and human history of northern New Mexico.

Other Meetings

Conservation Committee meetings are on the second Wednesday and Executive Committee meetings are on the third Wednesday of the month. All meetings are at Mesa Public Library, 7 PM and are open to the public.



SANTA FE GROUP MEETINGS

BAD NEWS FOR BEARS:

Delisting Threatens the Yellowstone Grizzly

Tuesday, March 16, 7 PM

The few hundred remaining grizzlies of Yellowstone are imperiled by a new threat: premature removal from Endangered Species Act protection - or delisting. Although there's been progress in the 20 years since listing, many experts believe delisting is biologically unsound and would reverse recent gains. Delisting is particularly inappropriate now, as the grizzly is facing unprecedented development pressures from the oil and gas industry, recreation, subdivision on private lands, logging and road-building, as well as loss of habitat quality inside Yellowstone National Park. And, not just Yellowstone bears would be affected: following delisting in Yellowstone, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service has announced that the Northern Continental Divide grizzly population around Glacier would also be delisted.

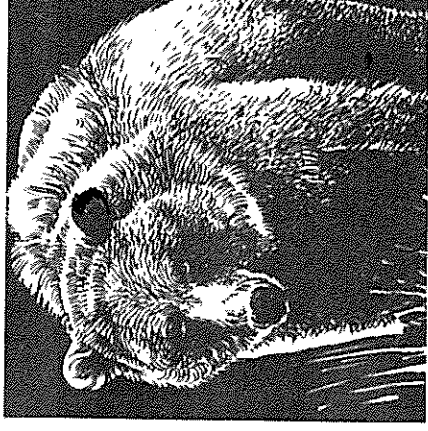
Because grizzlies are long-lived, adverse effects can be masked until it is too late to stop a spiral toward extinction. Delisting would not only harm bears by loosening the current habitat protections, it would adversely affect other wildlife whose well-being is measured by the health of the bear. Come learn how you can help prevent such consequences and ensure the Great Bear remains a part of the Western landscape for generations to come. And see great slides of bears in the wild.

FIRE ON THE MOUNTAIN

Tuesday, April 13, 7 PM

John Pierpont, long time Sierra member, will show us the acclaimed movie *Fire on the Mountain* and talk about his experiences as a member of the 10th Mountain Division, the famed army unit in World War II, which was specially trained to operate in cold weather and high mountain conditions. From their experiences came a lot of our modern equipment and gear and the start-up of many ski resorts.

Be a part of history and learn about this amazing group of men who trained virtually in our back yard!!



The Membership Meetings are held at the Unitarian Church 107 W. Barcelona St (between Gallisteo and Don Gaspar).

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

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

NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

Doug Fraser

The purchase of the Valles Caldera appears stalled — with Senators Bingaman and Domenici, as well as Representative Udall, all on board. Let us hope the log jam breaks loose soon.

Cliff Larsen held his first Conservation Committee meeting in January and we actually had some new faces. But we need more! If anyone likes conservation issues, please give Cliff a call at 466-2128.

The New Mexico legislature is in full swing. If you are interested in helping, call our lobbyist, Helga Schimkat at 983-4254.

Finally, we will be forming a committee to review and develop a Group policy position on the transfer of public lands to private ownership, i.e. the Spanish land grant issue. This is a sensitive matter in Northern New Mexico. We need lots of input. Anyone out there wanting to get involved? My phone number is 474-7615.



Help Wanted:

Land Use Sustainability Issues

We need people to attend the county and city planning commission meetings! If interested, please call Eleanor Eisenmenger at 820-6401. Thank you.

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

Cliff Larsen

As I write this, there is a movement (albeit slight) to merge the Game and Fish Department (G&FD) with the State Parks Division of the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department to create "The Parks and Wildlife Department." Even something as mild as a name change was soundly defeated in the Round House a few sessions ago. So this initiative will likely meet the same fate (and, by the time you read this, probably has).

The unfortunate truth of the matter is that animals (the occasional dog or cat excepted) have little value in New Mexico if they can't be eaten or shot for "sport." The Game and Fish Commission (which creates all regulations controlling G&FD), under the sway of Commissioners Padilla and Hettinga, has worked earnestly to use the wildlife of New Mexico as a cash crop for harvest by landowners, outfitters and guides. With predator species, they get a double-banger by permitting off-season hunts that the local rancher can profit through by selling entry permits and by preserving the myth that hoofed animals are being protected (for future killing, of course). The sad fact is that habitat loss is creating the most depredation, not predator species, and that trend will not change.

Long-term planning by the commission rarely extends past the next hunting season, and virtually all game species are dwindling as a result. It is rare that the commission pays much attention to the biologists in G&FD or to the consultants whom they hired for reproductive-health studies. The recent solution is to stop making studies and eliminate the Conservation Services group within G&FD (the "kill the messenger" ploy, to avoid receiving the message).

Here at the Santa Fe Group of the Sierra Club, we need your help with wildlife issues: Come to the monthly Conservation Committee meeting to learn what you can do.

♦ ♦ SANTA FE GROUP OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS ♦ ♦

Chair — Doug Fraser *
Vice-Chair — Barbara Johnson *
Secretary/Treas — Lionel Soracco *
Conservation — Cliff Larsen *, Mining
Water-John Buchser
National Parks-Courtney White *
BLM-Roger Peterson
Sustainability-Barbara Johnson *
SF National Forest-Greg Pollock
Carson Nat'l Forest-George Grossman
Activist Outings-Norma McCallan *

474-7615 Newsletter/Publicity — Kay Carlson
466-4935 Phone Tree — Jean Winterfelt
983-6715 Chapter Rep — Doug Fraser *
Outings — Norbert Sperlich
— Norma McCallan *
466-2128 Political Committee—Susan Martin *
820-0201 Membership — George Grossman *
982-5502 Eleanor Eisenmenger *
983-7559 Gwen Wardwell *
466-4935
661-6707
982-1024
471-0005

982-3926
989-9224
474-7615
983-1962
471-0005
988-5206
982-1024
820-6401
438-3060

GROUP COMMITTEE MEETING DATES

Group Conservation Committee meets:

Tuesday, March 23, 7 PM
Tuesday, April 27, 7 PM

Group Executive Committee meets:

Tuesday, April 6, 7 PM
Tuesday, May 4, 7 PM

SANTA FE GROUP OUTINGS

Sat Sun March 1999

- 6 David Bryant (1-505-757-3477) Easy X-country Ski Tour on Aspen Vista Road. Leave 9 AM. If not sufficient snow, Dave will lead a moderate hike somewhere appropriate.
- 7 Victor Atyas (438-9434) Easy Hike in the Cerrillos Hills. Leave 9 AM.
- 13 Carolyn Glick (984-3184) Moderate Hike to Window Rock, north of Española. Dogs OK. Call for time/reservations.
- 14 Jeff Jones (466-2389) Easy Hike down Diablo Canyon. Kids encouraged. Leave 9:30 AM.
- 14 Matt Gervase (466-3479) Moderate X-country Ski Tour (snow permitting). Call for details.
- 14 Jennifer Johnson (662-3023) Easy/Moderate Hike through a magical old growth forest in the Jemez. 3-4 miles, hilly and cross country. Meet 9 AM in Los Alamos, at overpass to the high school in Sullivan Field parking lot on Diamond Dr, or at 8 AM at SF Sierra office to carpool to LA.
- 20 Lionel Soracco (983-6715) Moderate X-country Ski Outing to wherever snow is good. Must call for details and reservations. Leave 8 AM.
- 20 Tom Peterson (255-1497, Abq) and Rick Hurley (299-8401, Abq or RICKHURLEY@aol.com) Moderate Exploratory Hike on the Ojitos Trail in the Chama River Wilderness. 12.5 mi RT; elevation gain 1750'. Steady, though not rapid pace. Great scenery on this little used, marked section of the Continental Divide Trail. Call by March 17. (Joint hike with Outdoor Adventures for Singles)
- 21 Norbert Sperlich (983-1962) Strenuous Hike in Diablo Canyon to Sagebrush Flats & Rio Grande overlook. 9 miles RT. Mostly off trail, some rock scrambling. 900' elevation gain. Call for reservations.
- 27 Carolyn and Arnold Keskulla (982-9570) Easy Hike up the Rail Trail. Beautiful views. Meet 9 AM at BLM Building on Rodeo Rd (close to where the RR tracks cross Rodeo Rd).
- 28 Bob McKee (672-3926 or 471-0005, Norma McCallan) Moderate Hike to Ancho Rapids, near White Rock. Cumulative uphill hiking 1040'. 6 miles RT. Dogs OK. Meet 8 AM at Santa Fe Sierra Office to carpool, or meet 9 AM at Smith's Grocery in White Rock.

Sat Sun April 1999

- 3 Tobin Oruch (820-2844) Moderate Hike to Glorieta Ghost Town. 6.5 mi RT, 950' up. Dogs allowed. Leave 8:30 AM.
- 4 Norbert Sperlich (983-1962) Moderate Hike in Wild Rivers Rec Area (north of Questa). About 9 mi RT, 1000' elevation gain. Long drive (220 mi RT). Leave 7 AM.
- 10 Carolyn and Arnold Keskulla (982-9570) Easy Hike in Cerrillos Hills. Leave 9 AM at Villa Linda Mall, in front of Walgreens.
- 10 Tom Peterson (255-1497, Abq) and Rick Hurley (299-8401, Abq or RICKHURLEY@aol.com) Exploratory Hike to Cerro Pedernal, the prominent flat-topped peak near Abiquiu. Nontechnical, but steep, route to top with some rock scrambling. 3-6 mi RT, 750'-1200' elev gain, depending on route. Call by April 7. (Joint trip with Outdoor Adventures for Singles)
- 11 Bob McKee (672-3426) Strenuous Hike from Ponderosa CG to Obsidian Ridge. 11 mi RT, 1500' elev gain. Meet and carpool in SF at 8 AM. Meet leader at Ponderosa CG 9 AM.
- 17 Lionel Soracco (983-6715) Strenuous Hike to Glorieta Baldy via Apache Canyon. Leave at 8 AM.
- 18 Tobin Oruch (820-2844) Moderate Hike Atalaya Peak. Steep climb. 5.5 mi RT, 1800' elev gain. Dogs OK. Leave 8:30 AM.
- 18 Warren Steckle/Miriam Oudejans (672-0414) Moderate Hike to Ancho Canyon from Rt 4, down to the Rio Grande, starting at rim of Ancho Canyon, then scrambling down some loose tuff to bottom of canyon and following canyon floor to Rio. Meet leaders at White Rock "Y" at 9 AM or carpool from SF Sierra office at 8 AM.
- 24 Carolyn Glick (984-3184) Strenuous Hike up (and down) the Winsor Trail, from Tesuque to Ski Basin, trail conditions permitting. 16 mi RT, 3300' up, dogs OK. Call leader!
- 25 Victor Atyas (438-9434) Easy/Moderate Hike on Frey Trail (Bandelier). Leave 9 AM.

Friday to Sunday, April 23, 24, 25

Bob McKee (672-3426) Bandelier Backpack Upper crossing to Capulin Canyon. Day hike on Saturday to St. Peter's Dome. Will probably retrace route followed three years ago when dome fire erupted.

Sat Sun May 1999

- 1 Matt Gervase (466-3479) Cabezon Peak Hike Short but very steep, to the top of the prominent volcanic plug southwest of Cuba. Non-technical, but rock scrambling.
- 2 Tobin Oruch (820-2844) Moderate Hike Probably up Chamisa and Winsor Trails. Dogs OK. Leave 8:30 AM.
- 8 Carolyn & Arnold Keskulla (982-9570) Easy Hike on Bear Wallow Loop. 4 mi RT. Spring flowers should be great! Leave 9 AM.
- 9 Norbert Sperlich (983-1962) Strenuous Hike to Deer Creek and Shaggy Peak. Mostly off-trail, some scrambling. 2400' elev gain, 12 mi RT. Leave 8 AM.
- 15 Craig O'Hare (954-7125-w) Easy/Moderate Hike into the Santa Fe Watershed. Sponsored jointly by the City of Santa Fe and the Santa Fe National Forest, the outing will allow participants the opportunity to see firsthand the conditions in the watershed (closed to the public since the early '30s) and to comment on the best means of dealing with the severe fire danger caused by long years of fire suppression. Trip limited to 15. Call early for reservations and more information. Meet Water Treatment Plant just below Randall Davey Audubon center, Upper Canyon Road, 9 AM.
- 16 Victor Atyas (438-9434) Easy Hike on the Falls Trail in Bandelier National Monument. Leave 9 AM.
- 22 Carolyn Glick (984-3184) Strenuous Hike to Glorieta Baldy (via the Baptist Assembly). Possible extension to Thompson Peak. Dogs allowed.
- 29 Lionel Soracco (983-6715) Strenuous Hike to Caballo Peak in the Jemez.
- 30 Art Judd (982-3212) Moderate Hike in the high country. Saturday, May 29 to Thursday, June 3 (or Sunday, June 6)
- Norma McCallan (471-0005) or Bob McKee (672-3426) 4-day exploratory backpack in Hackberry Canyon, a little traveled but magnificent slick-rock canyon west of the Kaiparowits Plateau. A car shuttle will enable us to walk the length of the canyon and explore the numerous side canyons. Since driving takes up a full day at each end, will consider a second, shorter backpack or several day hikes and return Sunday 6-6 to make the most of our time.

COMING ATTRACTIONS

June 12 Overlook of the Molybdenum Mine and hike along the Columbine Creek Trail in a proposed wilderness area with Ernie Atencio, Amigos Bravos, guest leader.

ATTENTION: Local newspapers do not always provide information (accurate or otherwise) about upcoming hikes. If you intend to go on a Sierra Club outing, keep this page as reference.

PLEASE ALWAYS CALL THE OUTINGS LEADER PRIOR TO A HIKE, AND ESPECIALLY FOR A X-COUNTRY SKI OUTING, FOR CONFIRMATION AND DETAILS.

