Valle Grande: Is It Ours This Time?

by John Buscher, Chapter Chair

On Thursday, October 16, Senator Jeff Bingaman, the senior U.S. senator from New Mexico, brought a small group of Rio Grande Chapter Sierra Club members to the southern part of the state. The event was to highlight the importance of the Rio Grande and the need for conservation efforts.

The Rio Grande is one of the longest rivers in the United States, stretching over 1,800 miles. It begins in Colorado, flows through New Mexico, Arizona, and Mexico, and finally empties into the Gulf of California. The river is crucial for water supply and navigation in the southwestern United States.

Senator Bingaman discussed the need for federal action to protect the river and its ecosystems. He emphasized the importance of collaborative efforts among federal, state, and local governments, as well as with Native American tribes and local communities.

The group also visited the Rio Grande National Forest, which covers over 500,000 acres of land along the river. The forest is home to a diverse range of wildlife, including bald eagles, black bears, and elk. Senator Bingaman highlighted the forest's role in preserving natural habitats and maintaining ecological balance.

Following the visit, Senator Bingaman called for increased federal funding for conservation efforts along the Rio Grande. He stressed the need for sustainable management practices to ensure the long-term health of the river and its ecosystems.

In conclusion, Senator Bingaman underscored the importance of collaborative conservation efforts to protect the Rio Grande for future generations. He called on federal and state officials to take bold action to ensure the river’s continued health and wellbeing.

---

Wolves Shed Sheepskin

The Washington Report

by Richard Baerseh

Okay, so we like wolves, and it’s not a very good metaphor, but you get the picture. After the 1996 elections, once again demonstrated that the American public is not very tolerant of legislators who vote against the environment, anti-environmental Republicans in Congress reined in their attacks on the environment for a few months. However, there are debts to corporate campaign contributors that have to be paid, and the war on the environment has now resumed with renewed ferocity.

Having not included the specific votes of our congressional delegation because, I am sorry to have to report, the votes were entirely predictable. Republicans Domenici, Skoien, and Redmond voted for Washington, page 3
Sierra Club Addresses:

Albuquerque Group
207 San Pedro Ave NE
Albuquerque, NM 87108
(505) 262-5606

El Paso Group
800 S. Piedras
El Paso, TX 79993
(915) 532-9645

Pajarito Group
P.O.Box 945
Los Alamos, NM 87544

Santa Fe Group
621 Old Santa Fe Trail #10
Santa Fe, NM 87501
(505) 983-2373

The *Río Grande Sierra* 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. (Make address changes by calling Membership Services at 415-977-5646.)

Non-member subscriptions at $10 per year are available from the Treasurer, Blauz Brown, Send checks to 2268 Wyoming NE, Albuquerque, NM 87112. Please allow 8 weeks for processing.

The opinions expressed in signed articles in the *Río Grande Sierra* are the opinions of the writers and not necessarily those of the Sierra Club. Articles may be freely reprinted for non-profit purposes, provided that credit is given to the author and the *Río Grande Sierra*. Please let us know. Products and services advertised in the *Río Grande Sierra* are not endorsed by the Sierra Club.

Contributions are welcomed from members and non-members. Send to Editor, *Río Grande Sierra*, Matt Allen, 607 Richmond Dr. NE, Albuquerque, NM 87106 or by E-mail to mail@earthlink.net. Articles should be submitted by the 15th of the month prior to publication. (The *Río Grande Sierra* is published in odd-numbered months.) Photos, artwork, and poems are also welcome. Most computer formats should be compatible—check with the Editor. Letters and articles are subject to abridgment.

Printed on 100% post-consumer waste newsprint by PrintWorld in El Paso.

We Get Letters . . .

Once in a Lifetime Opportunity: Save Valle Grande

A once in a lifetime opportunity is before us. The Valle Grande is up for sale and the Durango family is looking for a buyer. Truly it is remarkable that this family would like to see this unequalled parcel of land be passed on to the public.

The Valle Grande (also known as Elac Location 1) is the 95,000 acre parcel of private land in the middle of the Jemez Mountains/Santa Fe National Forest. It is a truly unique and National Park quality piece of property. From the incredible wildlife that lives there, to its wonderful hot springs, to the unequalled opportunity it will give recreationists, hikers, fishermen and of course Sierrans, this is a parcel of land we cannot pass up.

Senator Jeff Bingaman (D) has introduced a bill to purchase the Valle Grande from the Durango family and put it under the management of the Forest Service. Senator Bingaman’s legislation is in place, but his intentions are great and he should be publicly congratulated. While on his tour of this issue he made the remark, “FAX: 258-6533”

The bill is now before us, and we should all take up this issue to support the purchase of the Valle Grande. We can begin to write letters to the Senator supporting the concept of the Río Grant as public land.

If this piece of the Jemez were to be acquired as public land, it could facilitate much better management of the Jemez as a whole. Ecosystem management would be easier and many opportunities for the protection of the area could be corrected. For example pine martens have been missing for many years now in New Mexico. With the Valle Grande under public supervision, reintroduction of martens might stand a chance. There also may be opportunities for the conservation of species like the Jemez salamander (endangered by logging) and possibly even native fish. There is no telling what survey of the lava rock streams and headwaters streams in this area might turn up.

So please get involved as this campaign heats up. It is likely to reach an organizing fever not seen since the early days of the wolf reintroduction campaign. If you would like to start now, here is what you can do...
against the environment at every opportunity, while Democrat Bingaman supported the environment on all matters of principle. As a result, the legislative battle is still recovering from the effects of his treatment for skin cancer and has not been entirely successful. Although this did not stop him from co-sponsoring a couple of bad bills.

**Fast Track Trade Authority**

President Clinton is seeking "Fast Track" authority to negotiate trade agreements with South American countries. Fast Track is a process by which Congress grants negotiating authority to the President with the understanding that when a trade agreement is reached, it will be considered by Congress without amendment in a straight "up or down" vote.

The President's Fast Track bill is fundamentally flawed because it fails to balance the interests of the environment with the interests of the economy. The bill provides, in essence, that environmental or labor issues cannot be addressed in trade agreements, and that it is to remove regulatory requirements as "barriers to trade."

Trade agreements without environmental guarantees threaten the environment in a number of ways. First, the trade agreements would make it easier and cheaper for companies, especially those from developed countries, to make investments in South American countries where environmental protections are weaker than in the United States. This makes the environment in these countries, the production of which would harm the environment, subject to greater environmental damage. Moreover, the threat of moving jobs out of this country will be used as an excuse to keep environmental standards low in order to prevent the flight of jobs.

Furthermore, the Fast Track bill includes the authority to negotiate a Multilateral Agreement on Investment, which would allow foreign investors to sue governments in the United States for compensation if their property values were reduced by actions taken to enforce environmental or labor protection laws. Such "takings" rules could result in the weakening of our pollution and environmental protection laws, and would subject environmental protection laws not being enacted because of concern about takings suits to the trade agreements.

Such suits are already cropping up under the provisions of NAFTA. This past April, Canada's legislature banned a hazardous gasoline additive, MMT, known to damage the nervous system. The producer of MMT, Virginia-based Ethyl Corporation, has sued Canada for $250 million under NAFTA. Ethyl claims, in essence, that the MMT ban was a regulatory "taking" of its investment. The suit will be heard before a Paris-based trade court that bars public participation and that does not allow appeals.

Moreover, trade laws on our environmental laws through the provisions of trade agreements pose the single greatest threat to our environment and our health. While the advocates of takings legislation and other anti-environmental measures have not been able to achieve direct, they may yet accomplish through trade agreements. An integral part of the core text of all trade agreements must be provisions to ensure that environmental protection laws are not compromised, and environmental protection must be a part of the negotiating authority and objectives of any Fast Track proposal considered by Congress.

**Endangered Species Act**

An unwieldy and deceptive public relations campaign financed by timber companies, mining companies, developers, and large agricultural businesses has created a myth that the Endangered Species Act is broken and in need of reform. On Sept. 16, Sen. K推销, Chafee, Baucus and Reid introduced an ESA reauthorization, S. 1180, that, although promoted as a "compromise," would severely hamper species recovery efforts.

Among the worst provisions of S. 1180 are the following:

- S. 1180 allows landowners to enter into long-term "Habitat Conservation Plans" that absolutely exempt them from any further conservation obligations for up to 100 years, even if it turns out that the HCP is contributing to the decline of a species or that conditions have changed elsewhere and the species is headed toward extinction.

- The bill severely weakens science-based recovery planning. The bill would allow HCPs, Memoranda of Understanding, and even Forest Plans to serve as "functional equivalents" of recovery plans, thereby eliminating scientific recovery teams, public notice and comment, and recovery goals.

- The bill allows the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to refuse to designate critical habitat (lands important to the recovery of an endangered species) on the grounds that such habitat is not "determinable."

- Under current law, a "watchdog agency," the FWS, must evaluate the impact on endangered species and consider in actions by other federal agencies such as timber sales or dam construction, the impacts of the actions on the species. Under S. 1180, notably anti-environmental agencies such as the Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Corps of Engineers assess the impacts themselves. The FWS then has 60 days to "obtain the clock" and object to the agency's decision; or the project may proceed, regardless of its harm to species. An unfriendly Congress could make it impossible for the FWS to do its job by withholding funding for the consultation program, and an unfriendly agency can submit multiple actions at once, overloading the FWS and making it impossible for them to evaluate all of the actions within the sixty day period.

- S. 1180 allows the Secretary of the Interior to grant anyone immunity from prosecution under the ESA by signing a "No Take" agreement. There are no standards for the issuance of a "No Take" agreement, no requirement that impacts be minimized or mitigated, and no public participation.

- S. 1180 adds cumbersome and time-consuming new procedural requirements that will delay listing decisions and recovery planning, including extensive and speculative economic analysis on the costs (but not the benefits) of all recovery strategies considered. The economic analysis provision requires that estimates be made of the value of property, which may then be used as the evidentiary basis for takings lawsuits.

The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee approved S. 1180 by a vote of 14-3, and Committee Chairman John Chafee (R-RI) said he will try to arrange a vote on the Senate floor "as soon as we can." The Clinton administration has reportedly endorsed the bill without some changes. No changes to S. 1180 have yet been introduced in the House.

**Quincy Library Group Bill**

The Quincy Library Group is a group of timber industry representatives, local elected officials, and a handful of local "environmentalists" who met at a workshop in Quincy, California and developed a "Community-Stability" proposal to dictate how to manage vast tracts of three California National Forests. The plan did not include all stakeholders and does not therefore represent a real consensus. Unfortunately, however, Congress has not taken the Quincy Library Group proposal the Quigley Library Group Forest Recovery and Economic Stability of 1997, H.R. 858. Conservationists in Plumas County and throughout the Sierra Nevada oppose the legislation, as do virtually all regional and national conservation organizations.

The bill increases logging in several National Forests two to four times over current levels by allowing logging to create huge fuel breaks. Although the ostensible purpose of the fuel breaks is to provide fire protection, it is believed that the fuel breaks would increase, not decrease, fire danger. The brush and small trees that spread on a fuel break, combined with the slash left behind by logging operations, would leave the breaks very prone to catastrophic, high intensity fires.

More critically, this bill would set a dangerous national precedent by legislating exclusive control of our National Forests to entities that do not adequately represent environmental interests and that are not required to produce science-based plans for the forests or comply with environmental laws. The Quigley bill makes a mockery of the Environmental Impact Statement process, which is designed to provide information on the environmental consequences of various alternatives so that decision makers can make informed choices as to the best course to pursue. The Quigley bill, however, requires that the plans outlined in the bill be implemented, regardless of whether the EIS identifies better alternatives and notwithstanding any new information that may be discovered in the course of preparing the EIS. The Quigley bill also preempts a management plan currently being prepared for the Sierra Nevada region by the California spotted owl.

Congress has apparently gotten caught up in the incorrect notion that this bill is the result of a true collaboration between loggers and environmentalists. The bill passed the House of Representatives by an overwhelming majority. Its companion bill, S. 1022, is under consideration in the Senate.

**Interior Appropriations Bill**

The Interior Appropriations Bill agreed to by the conference committee contains numerous harmful environmental provisions. The Interior Appropriations Bill normally funds logging roads, which degrade untouched wild lands, fragment wildlife habitat, and create sediment that pollutes waters and damages fisheries. Once again this year, efforts were made to cut back or eliminate both direct appropriation for the construction of timber roads and the "purchaser credits" program, which gives logging companies credits against the cost of buying trees for recovery spent constructing roads associated with the timber sales. These efforts failed by narrow margins in both the House (211-209 vote) and the Senate (a tie vote).

Despite the considerable sentiment in favor of eliminating the logging subsidies, the Interior Conference Report proposes to eliminate the cap that currently exists on the use of Purchaser see Washington, page 4

**Federal Legislative Summary (continued)**
Credits, giving the Forest Service a blank check to trade millions of dollars worth of trees for environmentally destructive logging roads.

The Interior Appropriations Bill also provides funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund. The LWCF uses revenue from off-shore oil and gas leases to purchase public lands. The fund theoretically receives $900 million annually, but over the past dozen years, Congress has appropriated less than a third of these funds for land acquisition.

The Conference Report appropriates $700 million to the LWCF, but is objectionable in a number of other ways. Funds to purchase the Headwaters Forest in California and the New World Mine site near Yellowstone would have to be authorized by both the House and Senate. This could set the stage for Congress to insist that all LWCF acquisitions have specific enabling legislation—even though general authorization exists—and thereby result in the loss of conservation opportunities. The report also allows scarce LWCF funds to be used for maintenance, rather than acquisition, of land, which is inconsistent with the law.

The Conference Report marks the reemergence of the anti-environmental riders so prevalent in the last Congress. Among the numerous anti-environmental riders attached to the bill, a rider added by Sen. Pete Domenici would delay implementation of a federal court order restricting environmentally damaging grazing on National Forests in New Mexico and Arizona. Another rider would prevent the Forest Service from undertaking new forest planning activities until the Clinton Administration releases proposed revisions to the planning regulations. This rider is an effort by Sen. Larry Craig (R-Idaho) to force the administration to release regulations drafted in the 1980s that would substantially limit the public’s involvement in forest planning and that would weaken key environmental provisions, such as the requirement that species be maintained in viable populations across their range.

The Conference Report has been working to improve the regulations. As of the writing of this article, the Interior Appropriations Conference Report has not yet been filed because of ongoing negotiations between the Administration and Republican leadership on the Headwaters and New World Mine acquisitions.

Other Actions

Under a compromise Tuna/Dolphin Bill, the effects on dolphins of encircling nets that do not have ways for dolphins to escape will be studied. However, the bill gives scientists only a year and a half to complete the study despite statements by the scientists that it would take at least three years of field study to reach any conclusions. While most of us are worried about the increase in global temperatures, Congress acted to prevent the President from adopting the Corporate Average Fuel Efficiency (CAFE) standards for the third year in a row, ensuring that carbon dioxide emissions from automobiles will not decrease.

The House once again adopted the so-called “Mexico City” funding restrictions in its version of the Foreign Operations Appropriations Bill. The Mexico City policy prohibits funding for international family planning organizations that counsel or perform aborions. The conference committee is reportedly deadlocked on this issue.

The House has passed the National Monument Fairness Act, H.R. 1127, which requires the House and Senate to specifically approve Presidential designations of National Monuments of more than 50,000 acres within two years. This bill attacks the power granted by the Antiquities Act that was used by President Clinton to designate the Great Staircase-Escalante National Monument last year and that has been used by other presidents to originally protect the Grand Canyon, Zion, national parks in Alaska, and many other areas. The Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1997, H.R. 1270, would authorize the shipment of high level nuclear waste to Yucca Mountain, Nevada. The bill was passed out of the House Commerce Committee’s Energy and Power Subcommittee on a 21-3 vote.

Rep. Smith (R-Ohio) has introduced the Forage Improvement Act of 1997, HR 2493, which creates a new forage irrigation grazing fee formula, gives ranchers a virtual veto power over proposed actions to address resource damage, and limits the ability of others to gain access to resource management decisions. The bill could come to the House floor for a vote before the end of October.

Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt has stated that the President will veto the bill should it reach his desk. Both the House and Senate are expected to continue funding for the Animas-La Plata project.

Contact your Representatives

Call the Capitol Switchboard and ask for your Congressman or Senator:
(202) 224-3121
Call President Clinton at:
(202) 456-1111
Call Newt Gingrich at:
(202) 225-0600

Write your representatives at these addresses:
Congressman Steve Schiff (R-NM)
Congressman Joe Skeen (R-NM)
Congressman Bill Redmond (R-TX)
Congressman Silvestre Reyes (D-TX)
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Write the President at:
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Senator Jeff Bingaman (D-NM)
Senator Pete Domenici (R-NM)
Senator Phil Gramm (R-TX)
Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX)
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Fax to these numbers:
Sen. Bingaman (202) 224-7652
Sen. Domenici (225) 7371

On the Internet:
Visit: Jeff Bingaman:
Senator@bingaman.senate.gov
Newt Gingrich:
georgia@gaha.house.gov
The White House:
http://www.whitehouse.gov

RAINBOW EXPEDITIONS II
7125 W. 17th Ave, West Ridge, CO 80215
Terry Gianfagna (303) 236-9977

WINTER 1998

COPPER CANYON BURRO TREK
Jan 21-30 Sponsored by Adventure Specialties and the Sierra Club
Making a “cliff” trip on a donkey is a unique part of the Mexican experience. The Copper Canyon is actually a group of canyons running north to south in the state of Chihuahua. The trip is self-sufficient, with tents and sleeping bags and provisions for the entire trek. Travelers are expected to carry their own gear and food.

SONORAN DESERT BACKPACK
Feb 7-14 A trip into the Sonoran Desert in southeastern Arizona, minimum of eight days. Mexico, the third largest country in the world, is one of the most environmentally diverse country in North America. The Sonoran Desert is known for its diversity of desert, montane and riparian ecosystems. The trip is self-sufficient, with tents and sleeping bags and provisions for the entire trek.

BACKCountry SKIING
Feb 7-14 A trip in the backcountry to the Grand Canyon. Skiing through untracked snow. Will ski about 20 peaks in the Grand Canyon during this trip. About 40 miles to the rough country.

WILDS HELIHELICOPTER CANYONS BACKPACK
Feb 9-14 A trip in the helicopters to the Grand Canyon. The trip is self-sufficient, with tents and sleeping bags and provisions for the entire trek.

Information: P.O. Box 3261, Santa Fe, NM 87504 / Phone 505-820-6401 / Fax 505-993-0941

All tickets are only $5.

"I see nobody on the road," said Alice.

"I only wish I had such eyes," the King remarked in a fretful tone.

"To be able to see Nobody! And at that distance too!"

Lewis Carroll
Through the Looking Glass

There is no one word in this bill that says anything about black leopards.

-Helen Chenoweth (R-ID)

Amid talk that the United Nations “world government” is running roughshod over private property rights, the House passed the American Land Sovereignty Act, which would block U.S. funding of the United Nations World Heritage Convention and Biosphere Reserve programs. Reps. Schiff, Redmond, and S vene co-sponsored this bill.

On The Bright Side

The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee approved a reauthorization of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act, S. 1173, that preserves critical funding for transportation projects designed to improve air quality in congested urban areas. Rep. George Miller (D-California) has introduced the Endangered Species Recovery Act, a good reauthorization of the Endangered Species Act.
BLM to designate 6 Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)

by Marianne Thauber

While Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, lands dominate northern New Mexico, the Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management, lands dominate southern New Mexico. The Las Cruces District, Caballo Resource Area of the BLM will be signing the Decision Notice by January next for the County which borders Texas. ACEC-designation in the highest level of protection that the BLM can give with out going to the Congress for Wilderness designation. The new ACECs will be Three Rivers ACEC, Sacramento Encampment ACEC, Cornudas Mountain ACEC, Alamos Mountain ACEC, and Wind Mountain ACEC.

Although not perfect, these ACECs have had the support of local ranchers, environmentalists, and hunters alike.

Our El Paso Regional Group made very meaningful comments during the NEPA process for these designations, showing where there can be future improvements.

As one who has objected often to the management of public lands in southern New Mexico, it please me not end to be able speak positively.

JOE CABALLO
Most of the credit goes to Tim Murphy the Resource Area Manager. Tim was promoted this fall to District Manager in Montana (where we already sorely miss Tim). Perhaps he will be an example to other BLM employees to always put the resource first.

And speaking of BLM employees worthy of commendation, Ron Dunton, the Las Cruces District, Sycamore Resource Area Manager, has also been promoted and has left New Mexico. Ron has put in charge of the Fire Station in Idaho. Ron land exchanges in the proposed Continental Divide Wilderness Study Area, with the full support of our Sierra Club members in Socorro and the BLM Wilderness Coalition.

Los Alamos National Labs Plans Workshop on Sustainability Science

Scientists at Los Alamos National Laboratories are planning a one-day workshop to explore sustainability science. The workshop is open to all and features an impressive list of nationally recognized speakers.

December 16, 1997
Sweeney Center, Santa Fe

Purpose: Dialogue on sustainability science. Shared understanding and vision of sustainability roadmaps Communication of commitment to sustainability and results

Speakers

John Elter, Vice President, Xerox Corporation: Pollution Prevention and Design for the Environment;

Gil Friend, Gil Friend & Associates: The Natural Step - Strategic Sustainability;

Mark Weidler, Secretary, New Mexico Environment Department: Welcome and New Mexico’s “Green Zia” Program;

Jessie Harris, DOE Deputy Assistant Secretary for Technology and International Technology Administration Policy on Global Sustainability (if nominated and confirmed, and Mr. Goo, DOE Assistant Secretary for Policy will give the presentation);

And Michele Leslie, The Nature Conservancy: Conserving Biodiversity.

For more information or to register, contact Wes Hartwell or Bob Vocke, TEL 505-665-1284, EMail vocke@lanl.gov

Thinking about the Future of the Middle Rio Grande Basin

by Susan Gorman

The San Mateo bus was nowhere in sight. One of the other writers, a Native American man who turned out to be a jeweler maker from Santo Domingo, and I started talking about Mesa Verde.

He said that scientists still ask “What happened to the Anasazi?” and that’s a silly question. “Why?”, asked. “Because we are the descendents of the Anasazi, but why did they leave Mesa Verde?”. Persisted. “Oh, for water,” he said. “They burned, there were so many people and then there were many dry years. They needed more water so they moved to the river.”

His words made me thoughtful. Could the Mesa Verde story be an analogy for Albuquerque? Will we grow and then, in some future time, when there are many dry years will we all move away? That does not seem likely. After all we have technology. We have a pipeline to move water over the Continental Divide to replenish the river. We have powerful pumps to lift water from the aquifer and send it to our homes. We have other ways to move water from the river, systems to purify it so we can drink it, and pumps to send it to our homes. Things are different now.

Still, his words stay in my mind. After we have built the systems to deliver all of the water from the San Juan-Chama diversion Project to our homes and businesses, after we have met the 30% conservation goal, after we have reduced our pumping from the aquifer to save it for a drought reserve, will we have the sustainable water supply which eluded the Anasazi? Not necessarily.

Because when all of that has been accomplished, we will have all of water there is for us; we will still have a finite water supply. We must not grow so large that we need more water than that finite supply. So, we must think carefully about how many people, homes, businesses, farms and other water using amenities we have here. We must remove a portion of the water to keep the river and the bosque alive. Perhaps that means limiting growth.

But is that really possible?

The Middle Rio Grande Basin cannot build a wall around itself and stop growth. How can we modify the home grown increase in population and lessen the number of people who want to come here? This is a major question which we must someday answer, before there are so many of us that there is no longer enough water for all.

I write these words reluctantly. For the past 20 months, I have been spending many hours reading about ways, that communities are working to become sustainable. I have been working with the other members of the City’s Sustainable Community Committee to research and write sustainability indicators for Albuquerque. Our report has been submitted to the City Council for approval and we are looking forward to the public and wide distribution. The sustainability indicators provide the baseline data needed to understand where we are now, the trends to explain how we arrived here and, as time goes on, to measure whether we are changing conditions in ways which enable future generations to enjoy healthier and happier lives.

And yet... Even while I have been working so hard to help everyone to understand what we must do if we are to become sustainable, deep in my soul, I question whether we can really succeed.

Why am I writing this, I wonder. I do not want everyone to become discouraged or to stop trying. It’s just that it is so essential for us to acknowledge that we are not sustainable. In fact, we are producing resources faster than they are renewed, producing more wastes than natural systems can process and we rely on distant sources for our basic needs. Once we freely acknowledge this, we can begin to work together to make changes that will move us toward sustainability.

Right now is a great time to begin. We have just elected a new Mayor for Albuquerque and Jim Baca shares our vision of a sustainable community. There are three new initiatives that offer opportunities for participation in regional planning:

1. The Middle Rio Grande Council of Governments’ regional plan, Focus 2050, which will take a truly long range view of the region’s potentials for growth and sustainability.

2. The Middle Rio Grande Water Planning Process, which is a process for inclusive, integrated strategic water planning.

3. The Regional Transit Plan, which is designing the transportation system of the future.

So, let’s be dialogs! We must boldly take action to ensure that Albuquerque will continue to be a good, safe and healthy place to live with a vital economy and enough pure water, clean air and energy to sustain us and our children and their children.

Get involved! Contact Susan Gorman, TEL 505-265-3331, FAX 505-256-0373, E-Mail bbbal@al.com

New Mexico Recycles Day Saturday, November 15
Keep Recycling Working: Buy Recycled!

This is a wonderful opportunity to learn about the many ways recycled materials are converted back into useful products. Come to the Balloon Fiesta Park on Saturday November 15 from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM and join the fun!

For more information call Gal Mumin, Waste Management of New Mexico, 892-1200.
Albuquerque Group News

ExCom Candidates

David Ther

I have been a member of the Sierra Club since 1979. During the 1980's I was active with the Fugel Sound Chapter, leading outings and supporting wilderness and wildlife issues, including the successful campaign for the Washington Wilderness Act of 1984. I am especially interested in endangered species protection. I have lived in New Mexico since 1987 and have become familiar with local issues and politics. I look forward to an opportunity to serve on the ExCom.

Gary Simpson

I am running for the Executive Committee of the Central New Mexico Group of the Sierra Club. I hold a Masters Degree in Biology from the University of New Mexico and have served as the Rangelands Issues Chair for the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club for both 1.5 years and on the ExCom of the Rio Grande Chapter for 1 year. I am a past president of the New Mexico Chapter of Wilderness Watch.

We of New Mexico, like most of the West, are at the nexus of several forces that will determine the future quality of life for New Mexicans and its wildlife for decades to come. Water, wildlife, wilderness, soil, air and all things wild are being threatened as never before by increasing population pressure and increased exploitation. We must stand firm for the wilderness of New Mexico and articulate how these threats will adversely affect our quality of life in New Mexico. It will take an organized, concerted, impassioned effort to resist the forces that propel us towards becoming a fractured, artificial society. The Sierra Club can and must do both. I am prepared to do my part to restore wilderness to our state. We must focus on what is important to the Sierra Club, namely wild places, environmental integrity and quality and most importantly, proper watershed management. If I am elected, I will be able to contribute to this effort.

Matt Allen

I am a recent transfer to New Mexico and a long-time active Sierran, having served as an officer at the Group level in Virginia. I am a Technical Writer at UNM and have recently volunteered to serve as the Interim Editor of the Rio Grande Sierran (with mixed results).

Powell Submits Mesa Del Sol Master Plan To City of Albuquerque

by Ed Moreno

New Mexico Commissioner of Public Lands Ray Powell has submitted to the City of Albuquerque the initial master plan for the development of Mesa del Sol. Mesa del Sol is the 13,000-acre parcel of state trust land that is bounded on the north by Tijeras Arroyo, on the west by Interstate 25, on the south by Isleta Pueblo and on the east by Kirtland Air Force Base. "Mesa del Sol is one of the best alternatives Albuquerque has for 'close-in' development, which will be needed to satisfy the need for employment centers, affordable housing, recreation and urban open space," Powell said. "Most of Albuquerque's population growth will be our own children and grandchildren."

The first public meetings on the plan are before the Environmental Planning Commission, beginning with a study session on December 4, and the first public hearing on December 11. If the plan is approved, it will be forwarded to the Albuquerque City Council.

The Level A Master Plan for Mesa del Sol is the first ever submitted to the City of Albuquerque under the Planned Communities Criteria adopted by the city several years ago. It was annexed by the city in 1993 for exchange for then-land commissioner Jim Baca agreeing to abide by the Planned Communities Criteria. All income from the land development will benefit The University of New Mexico and the state public school system. The Planned Communities Criteria is a performance-based development code that emphasizes sustainable growth.

Powell said the Mesa del Sol plan preserves natural land features, requires optimum energy and water conservation and provides an integrated trail system. At the same time, the code minimizes the need for automobiles for internal transit and provides designated corridors for mass transit, which will result in less infrastructure cost and help preserve the air quality of Albuquerque. More than 4,000 acres will be open space, said Powell. Powell said the plan will be implemented in sustainable stages, beginning with recreation, then jobs, then housing. The result is that most of the residents of Mesa del Sol will be able to live within walking or bicycling distance of their jobs. The plan was developed by NMSU planner Tom Leatherwood. Interested parties can call him at 505-827-5724 for more information.

CALENDAR

Unless otherwise noted, meetings take place at the Albuquerque Group’s Sierra Club office, 207 San Pedro NE

Nov 15 New Mexico Recycles Day, Balloon Fiesta Park, 9AM to 2PM - see notice below
Dec 3 Open House At Earthwises, the Sierra Club Store, 11200 Montgomery NE, 5:00-7:00 PM
Dec 3 Deadline for agenda items for Group Excom Meeting Call Jack Humphrey, 243-5319
Dec 8 Group Excom Meeting 7:00 PM
Dec 8 Sustainable Albuquerque Team Meeting 7:00 PM
Dec 15 Deadline for submission of Sierran articles
Dec 16 Sustainability Workshop for Los Alamitos National Laboratory, Call Susan Gorman, at 265-3223

Group Directory

1997 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
207 San Pedro NE
Albuquerque, NM 87108
Office: 265-5506 Fax: 265-0773

Jack Humphrey, Chair 243-5319 jkh@wscorp.com
Martin Heinrich, Conservation 345-7832 mtheinrich@adcom
Blair Brown, Secretary 265-3231 bblair@siad.com
Kathy Love, Treasurer 243-5319 jkh@wscorp.com
Richard Barish 247-8079 rbarish@siad.com
Julie Hicks 345-7832 mtheinrich@siol.com
Jamie Grebowski 851-6455
Beth McDonald 254-2010

Mailing List: banma@listserve.nm.rr.com

SUSTAINABLE ALBUQUERQUE TEAM

CONSERVATION
Conservation Chair Martin Heinrich 345-7832 mtheinrich@siol.com
Campaign Team Leaders

Envision a Great Future for the Sandia Mountains: Bob Gutiérrez, Juanita Newton, Sue Wimbush

Sustainable Albuquerque Team

War on the Environment
Richard Barish 247-8079
Western New Mexico Wildness
Barbara Leonard 862-7915
Jack Humphrey/Kathy Love 243-5319/John Wright 267-4353
Wildlife
Martin Heinrich 345-7832

SUSTAINABLE ALBUQUERQUE TEAM

BANMA@LISTSERVE.NM.RR.COM
Sierra Club Store

Earthwares

1120 Montgomery NE at Atanado

We feature organically grown cotton and natural fiber hats and clothing from Blue Fish Fashions, Magriel, Clean Clothes, and others. We also have a selection of bed & bath, aromatherapy, recycled papers, baby & pet products, and unique gifts.

Earthwares offers you two ways to help the planet:
- By purchasing our natural, recycled and earth-friendly products
- By donating your old and unwanted treasures to the Sierra Club Store

And, of course, we sell Sierra Club books, cards and T-shirts!

Tuesday, December 3 from 6:00 to 7:00 PM
We'll have munchies and Holiday Cheer to help you catch the spirit!

They're especially beautiful!

The 1998 Sierra Club Calendars are in and

Come to the Christmas Open House
at

Earthwares

1120 Montgomery NE at Atanado

and

Sierra Club Store

and

You're invited!

Please mark the date in your calendar:

Earthwares is pleased to be a member of books and calendar

New Mexico Volunteer Organizations!

Organizing the House Committee

Sierra Club.

Program: Daily Calendar "The New Mexico Volunteer Calendar"

and other activities

Volunteer Opportunities

We also need you!

Contact: Volunteer Coordinator, 1201 Santa Fe Drive NE, #205, Santa Fe, NM 87501

or call 505-982-7100.

Thank you for your support.

Albuquerque Group News - Outings
Upcoming Meetings

The following Committee Meetings will take place at 7 P.M. at the Environmental Center, 800 South Piedras in El Paso:

November 4: Inner City Outings. Contact Richard Rheder at 544-5659 (H).
November 5: Executive Committee. Contact Gary Williams at 593-3624 (H).
November 12: Conservation Committee. Contact John Sproat at 532-9645 (W).

Outings

Oct 25: Trail of 1000 Steps/Comanche Peak Loop Dayhike
Place: Franklin Mountains
Class: Moderate
Leader: Richard Rheder; 544-5659 (H)

Oct 26: McKittrick Canyon Dog Canyon Loop Backpack
Place: Guadalupe Mountains National Park
Class: Moderate to strenuous
Leaders: Rollin Wickenden 534-6394 (W)
Laurence Gibson 594-7342 (H)

Nov 8-9: McKittrick Canyon Dog Canyon Loop Backpack
Place: Guadalupe Mountains National Park
Class: Moderate to strenuous
Leaders: Rollin Wickenden 534-6394 (W)
Laurence Gibson 594-7342 (H)

Nov 15-16: Williams Ranch Backpack
Place: Guadalupe Mountains National Park
Class: Strenuous
Leader: Alice Anderson; (505) 523-5179

Nov 28-30: Big Hatchet Car Camp & Day Hikes
Thanksgiving Special
Place: Big Hatchet Mountains, NM
Class: Moderate
Leader: Alice Anderson; (505) 523-5179

Dec 5-7: West Fork of Mogollon Creek Early Winter Backpack
Place: Gila Wilderness, Sacaton Trailhead
Class: Moderate to strenuous
Leader: Rollin Wickenden 534-6394 (W)

Dec 13-14: Cooke’s Peak International Dinner Campout
Place: Cooke’s Peak Ridge
Class: Moderate+
Leader: Joe Rodriguez; 833-9655 (H)

Cooke’s Peak Range is an area designated by the Bureau of Land Management as a wilderness study area. Joe urges members to join the group on this fun issues outing. On Saturday we’ll drive to the campsite. Please bring your camping stoves, firewood, wine or beer, and fixings to prepare a gourmet international dish to be shared with others at this adventurous outdoor dinner party. We’ll give away a bottle of premium white wine for the most exquisite dish. On Sunday morning, those who want to will ascend the peak. Expect to see our group from the air. Please call with recipe choice preferences or select one from the list of recipes.

Candidates for Executive Committee

Bill Phillips
I am a retired printer by occupation and an environmentalist by inclination. Member of Sierra Club for 17 years, co-editor of the LORAX for 8 years. Have served past stints as ExCom member, Membership Chair, Outings Chair, Nominations Committee Chair and other posts. At present I am the assistant Outings leader. I believe in the Sierra Club and its goals “To Preserve, Protect and Enjoy”. As an ExCom member, I would work to further these principles.

Joe A. Rodriguez
I have been an active member of the El Paso Regional Group of the Sierra Club for over seven years, as well as a member of other environmental organizations. My goals and objectives are in the area of conservation as they related to public lands. I am on the Board of the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance, an organization created to protect and preserve federal public lands in the state of New Mexico. I would like to promote and urge local members of the Sierra Club to take a more active role in the participation of local and regional conservation issues.

Ann Falknor
Though better suited to be a drone, I step forward this year and offer myself for membership approval to serve on the ExCom in an at-large capacity. I have served at the Sierra Club El Paso Group as a member of the steering committee for the Inner City Outings Program (ICO) and have fulfilled all requirements to be an ICO outings leader. Also, I have been active in the El Paso Group outings program as a leader and participant.

GROUP DIRECTORY

Executive Committee
Chair (Revolving) Gary Williams 593-3624
Vice Chair Jim Bell 581-8864
Treasurer Kelly Sunday 584-9301 sunday@poop den nmc.com
Member Lawrence Gibson 594-7342 gibson@ece.utep.edu
Member Ted Merig 802-5011 merig@ucom
Member Bill Phillips 772-6503
Member Gary Williams 593-3624
Member Joe Rodriguez 833-9655

Administration
Chapter Rep Liz Walsh 584-1471 ewalsh@utep.edu
LORAX Sally Savage 833-6899
Secretary OPEN

Project Chairs
BLM Wilderness Joe Rodriguez 833-9655
Enviros Center & Frankfurt Mtns John Sproat 545-1517 aa449@gsf.epcc.org
Grazing & Timber Liz Walsh 584-1471 ewalsh@utep.edu
Membership OPEN
Outings Laurence Gibson 594-7342 gibson@ece.utep.edu
Political Action Jim Bell 581-8814
Programs Gary Williams 593-3624
Publicity Gary Williams 593-3024
ICO Chair Richard Rheder 544-6659 aiko3@gsf.epcc.edu

Sierra Club Environmental Center
200 South Piedras @ Paseo
Phone: 532-9665
Fax: 532-4975
LORAX Information:
Sally Savage
29 Cloudy Drive
El Paso, TX 79912
Phone: 833-6899

Gary Williams
I have been a Sierra Club member since 1983 and have served on the ExCom for a total of 10 years. Offices held include Chairman (four years) and Program Committee (eight years). I am employed as the Executive Director of the El Paso Rehabilitation Center, a non-profit organization that serves children with disabilities. My goals include: 1) working closely with the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance on public land issues in New Mexico and 2) to increase participation by our members in group activities, especially outings, monthly programs and any programs which serve to involve the greater community in the Club’s mission “To Preserve, Protect and Enjoy”.

Liz Walsh
An Assistant Professor of Biological Sciences at The University of Texas at El Paso, I focus my research on the ecological and evolutionary genetics of freshwater invertebrates. I am the faculty advisor for the Environmental Conservation Organization (ECO) at UTEP (1995 to present). I have been a member of the Sierra Club for 18 months and I am a member of Rainforest Action Network, The Nature Conservancy, National Wildlife Federation, Forest Guardians, Gila Watch, Southwest Center of Biodiversity, Wildlife Damage Review, and West Texas Toxic Watch. I believe people need to apply in their personal and political lives what they ask society to do. I want to serve on the ExCom to gain experience in environmental matters which are of importance to me and, ultimately, to society. I would like to help the Club meet its potential to be the greatest grassroots force for environmental conservation in the U.S. ExCom members make decisions on activism priorities, and are responsible for motivating members on these issues by setting examples of active participation.
Pajarito Group
ExCom Candidates:
Individual Statements

Bill Atkins

I have lived in Los Alamos 8 years and have become involved with the Sierra Club since the local chapter was formed. I have been impressed with the enthusiasm and efforts of the local chapter, and I wish to help. I spend a lot of time outdoors, hiking, kayaking, and canoeing, and I have a strong interest in conserving and improving the environment. I would like to see the local chapter continue to concentrate on local issues. I think this is where our power lies, and our local area—the Jemez Mountains, the Rio Grande, and the rest of northern New Mexico is worth as much effort as we can muster. It seems to me that sparsely populated areas like ours, local residents’ opinions are easily drowned out by commercial interests. I’d like the club to grow, and maintain a respected reputation as a resource and a voice in the community.

Karla Atkins

As a lifelong nature lover and SC member since 1979, I harbor a deep concern for human impacts on the environment and have always been an advocate for preservation of natural resources, wilderness, and wildlife. In the last year, I have participated in efforts to stop the indiscriminate slaughter of the Yellowstone bison herd and, more locally, to obtain state Fish and Game policy that might offer new conservation for the New Mexico black bear. As one fortunate enough to live in northern New Mexico, and in particular Los Alamos, I see an increasing need for public involvement regarding local growth issues. In a small community like ours, seemingly small changes in population and infrastructure can have significant impacts on quality of life. Through a position on the Pajarito Group ExCom, I hope that I can make a greater contribution as an environmentalist and provide much needed support for other club members who are working so hard to make a difference.

Beth Gerhardson Walter

I have been a member of the Sierra Club since 1991, but was not active until the formation of the Pajarito Group. I currently monitor wildlife issues for the group. I have lived in Los Alamos for 4 years and truly appreciate the surroundings in which we live. I hope to help preserve our community so we can continue to enjoy our quality of life. I believe the Sierra Club has an obligation to act as a watchdog for the environment not because I believe that the government and industry are inherently bad, but because without such watchdogs the rules often become bent and are eventually broken. I also believe the Sierra Club has a responsibility to the communities in which we are active. We must educate the public about the virtue of our goals and allow them to be active participants in the decision-making process. As an ExCom member, I will strive to keep public education a priority.

Mat Johansen

I have an ongoing and earnest interest in issues of conservation, land use, recreation, wilderness, ecology and human interaction, etc. I’ve been active in some Jemez Mountain issues and assure that membership on the executive committee of the Pajarito Group would motivate me to become more involved. My professional experience consists of about ten years of environmental cleanup and compliance, particularly at nuclear sites, and hydrology & water resources.

Miriam Oudejans

A recent newcomer to Los Alamos and New Mexico (four years), I’ve had a life-long concern for the environment. During my college years I worked summers as an interpretive naturalist in three Canadian provincial parks. My work as a student biologist and as a wildlife service, as a volunteer ranger in an Australian National Park and locally at Bandelier National Monument, has given me insight and experience in a variety of conservation and resource issues. As a technical writer, I am a leader on the outings committee, an interim executive committee member, a birder and an outdoor enthusiast. I see the Sierra Club as instrumental in continuing to educate the community about the importance of conservation and preservation, and I want to be an active participant in this process.
Group Directory
Executive Committee
P.O. Box 3795 UPB
Las Cruces, New Mexico 88011
Wayne Suggs, Jr., Chair 523-5635 (H)
Mexican Wolf 526-5442 (W)
coeus@aol.com
Cherrily Blevins, Vice Chair 526-6230(W)
524-4686(H)
spotties@jaws.gratefulwhite.com
Kiki Suggs, Secretary 523-5635 (H)
526-5442(W)
coeus@aol.com
Lesa Wilson, Treasurer 647-4298
dwilson@totacc.com
"Dutch" Salmon, Rural 388-3763(H)
Forum, Political Issues 388-5705(Fax)
Larry Hughes, Outings 522-4600 ext270(W)
Chair larry@tcsisoft.com
Lolina Alvarez, Outings 521-1152(H)
Co-Chair jalvarez@nmsu.edu
Mario Ruiz, Inner City 589-4622(H)
Outings Chair mruiz@nmsu.edu
Margot Wilson, Warm 744-5860(H)
Springs Section, Chapter 934-7152(W)
Delegate bshs2@riolink.com
Jim Ikos, Chihuahuan 525-2059
Desert Protection jickes@nmsu.edu
Marianne Thaeler, 522-3421
Military Affairs marianne.thaeler@serraduch.org

outdoor equipment to donate, contact Mario at 505-589-4622 or mruiz@nmsu.edu.

Warm Springs Section Report
Some Thoughts on Sustainability
by Margot Wilson
Recently, I have obtained a copy of the Task Force Report on Population and Consumption put out by the President's Council on Sustainable Development. It contains many items already known to impact the environment, but it also includes some surprises and revelations.
We all know of many practices that are not sustainable and are harmful to the environment. For example, soil erosion, depletion of groundwater, degrading rangelands, destruction of habitat, loss of species, deplet'ion of the protective ozone layer, and over harvesting, are certainly not sustainable and are harmful to the environment. This is not surprising. Environmentalists have been trying to curtail these practices for years.
There are many economic practices that are also known not to be sustainable. Among them, a negative trade balance, deficit spending, inefficient use of resources and production of large amounts of waste, are practices that undermine our economy. Big corporations often claim that solving these problems will be a drain on the U.S. economy. In the long run, ignoring these and other problems will be much more of a drain on the economy than investing now to solve them.
Surprisingly, the Report points out that there are aspects of our social lives that are not sustainable. Perhaps this is the area where many of us can make significant changes in our behavior, which will greatly contribute, not only to sustainability, but also to personal satisfaction. For instance, the Task Force urges us to be fiscally responsible and to live within our means. There are many people in the U.S., who need to save more money rather than spending all they earn and then some. Those who value savings and know how to save money understand sustainability at a personal level.
The Report also points to a need to change our work patterns. Almost all of us feel rushed and overworked. We have to learn that the excessive accumulation of material goods, to the exclusion of nonmaterial sources of satisfaction such as family and community connections, is not sustainable. Coincidentally, we would also save resources, produce less garbage, the environment would be less impacted and, perhaps best of all, we would be happier. This is an unexpected and welcome link to sustainability.
You can obtain a copy of the Task Force Report on Population and Consumption by calling 202-408-5296.

So. New Mexico Group News
Outings
Sunday, November 22 - Organ Needle Dayhike
Place: Organ Mountains
Class: Strenuous
Limit: 12, reservation and leader approval required
Leader: Larry Hughes 522-4600 ext. 270, larry@tcsisoft.com
or Lolina Alvarez 521-1152, jalvarez@nmsu.edu
We will hike to the Organ Needle via Fillmore Canyon. This is a strenuous dayhike with some 4th class scrambling. About 3500ft. elevation gain, most of it in the last 2 miles. Call for more information.

Saturday, December 13 - Dog Canyon Dayhike
Place: Sacramento Mountains at Oliver Lee State Park
Class: Strenuous
Limit: 12, reservation and leader approval required
Leader: Larry Hughes 522-4600 ext. 270, larry@tcsisoft.com
or Lolina Alvarez 521-1152, jalvarez@nmsu.edu
Starting from Oliver Lee State Park, 20 miles south of Alamogordo, we will hike up Dog Canyon to the old cabin. From there we will go up and out of the canyon gaining great views of the Tularosa Basin. About 13 miles round trip with 3000ft. elevation gain. Call for more information.

ICO UPDATE
Our Inner City Outings Program is under way. This is what Mario Ruiz, the ICO Chair, has to say: "I am proud to be part of ICO. Every time I get the chance to go out into the wilderness...well, it's just like the first time. I am still in awe of nature. What makes ICO worthwhile is the fact that we are able to share the wilderness with others. Sharing our forests, rivers, and mountains with grown-ups and kids alike, are the reasons why everyone in the ICO program works so hard. All the work pays off when newcomers speak enthusiastically about their adventures and can't wait to tell others about them. So join us and let's share a sunset." If you or someone you know would like to become an ICO volunteer or if you have

Looking for a few good activists
Have you ever been by the Rio Grande in winter and wondered where the water was? Do you think that your city should expand its recycling program? How about politics; are you interested in making national, state, and local politicians more aware and supportive of environmental issues? Are you concerned about seemingly uncontrolled development in Southern New Mexico? By volunteering a few hours, you can make a difference in these and other issues facing Southern New Mexico. Become a Sierra Club activist and make a difference. Come to our meetings, on the second Monday of each month at 6:00 pm in the Southwest Environmental Center, 1494 S. Solano Dr. in Las Cruces. Or contact Larry or Lolina at 521-1152(H), 522-4600 ext. 270(W), jalvarez@nmsu.edu or larry@tcsisoft.com.

Getting to know each other
The Southern New Mexico Group is organizing a group get together for early next year. We are considering a wine and cheese party or a picnic. If you have any suggestions or would like to help, contact Larry or Lolina at 521-1152(H), 522-4600 ext. 270(W), jalvarez@nmsu.edu or larry@tcsisoft.com. Stay tuned for more information.
TOO MANY BEARS?
Tuesday, November 18, 7 PM
Wally Houseman is the Big Game Research Coordinator for the New Mexico Department of Game & Fish, a position he has held for 14 years. He holds BS and MS degrees in Wildlife Science from New Mexico State University and has been a wildlife biologist with Game & Fish for 23 years.
Wally has been directing an 8-year study of black bears in New Mexico, which may prove critical in determining the future of our bears. As we go to press, State Game & Fish is considering significant moves to reduce the number of female bears taken during the 1998 hunting season. Whether these changes are too little, too late or an impediment to finding a longer-lasting answer is the center of a growing controversy.
Come and hear about the future of the black bear, our designated state animal.

ALL MEETINGS, OUTINGS, AND ACTIVITIES ARE FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.

ANNUAL HOLIDAY POTLUCK
Sunday, December 14, 6:30 PM
Join old and new friends and acquaintances at one of the best holiday parties of the season — excellent food, song, and celebration at the Unitarian Church.
For the potluck, each person please bring eight servings worth of a casserole, vegetable dish, meat, fruit, salad, dessert, bread or rolls. If you don’t feel like cooking, bring beer, wine, fruit juice, sodas, or appetizers such as chips and dip. Everyone is welcome!
There may be a speaker or entertainment of some sort, details TBD. Our annual silent auction as a Group fundraiser will be held. Services, such as massage, landscaping or whatever talent you have, are popular, and remember that one man’s trash is another’s treasure! So bring that unused present you received from Aunt Minnie last year. We’ll also collect warm clothing and blankets for St. Elizabeth’s Shelter.
Call Courtney White (982-5502) or Norma McCallan (471-0005) for more details.

The Membership Meeting and Holiday Party will be held at the Unitarian Church at 107 W. Barcelona Street (between Galisteo and Don Gaspar).

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

NOTES FROM THE CHAIR
Doug Fraser

UNFINISHED BUSINESS
I only wish to emphasize John Buchser’s article on the Valle Grande, elsewhere in this newsletter. As Stewart Udall, former Secretary of the Interior, said at our Tuesday, October 21, meeting, this remains the one natural environmental jewel from the 60’s which never got resolved. Our own Senator Anderson tried — and got many other natural scenic gems protected.
Now, Senator Jeff Bingaman takes the baton. This remains in Udall’s words “unfinished business.” Please call Courtney White, Conservation Chair, if you wish to help. We can’t lose this time.

GEORGE GROSSMAN APPOINTED TO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
George Grossman, longtime activist and one of our most influential and knowledgeable members, has agreed to come onto the Group’s Executive Committee and fill the position vacated by the resignation of Jeff Regeaol. Welcome back, George!

ELECTION TIME AGAIN!!

It’s time to vote for Group and Chapter Executive Committee members. Please peruse the statements for the Santa Fe Group candidates which follow the January outings and use the ballot at the end of the newsletter. It only takes a few minutes and a 52¢ stamp. DO IT NOW!

SANTA FE GROUP OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Chair — Doug Fraser 474-7615
Vice-Chair — Barbara Johnson 466-4035
Secretary/Treas. — Lionel Soracco 983-6715
Answering Machine — L. Soracco 983-6715
Chapter Representative — TBD
Conservation — Courtney White 982-5502
National Parks/Courtney White 982-5502
Sustainability-Barbara Johnson 474-0405
SF National Forest-Greg Pollock 982-9202
Carson National Forest-George Grossman 982-9202
Mining-Carson Larsen 982-9202
Publicity — Key Carlson 982-9202
Phone Tree — Norma McCallan 471-0005

Outings — Norbert Sperlich 983-1962
— Norma McCallan* 471-0005
Political Committee — Ned Sudborough 974-4055
— Ned Sudborough 974-4055
Membership — Ned Sudborough 974-4055
Fundraising/Education/Office/Welcome open
Don Goldman 473-2321
George Grossman 982-1024
John Buchser* 820-6221

* Member of the SF Group Executive Committee

IMPORTANT OUTINGS

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 the facing page as reference.

Group Conservation Committee meeting Tuesday, December 9, 7 PM
Group Executive Committee meeting Tuesday, December 9, January 6, 7 PM

HELP SAVE THE VALLE GRANDE!
Perhaps the most important conservation opportunity in a decade or more now confronts us: how to get the magnificent Valle Grande property into public lands. The owners are willing to sell, legislation has been introduced in Congress, editors are being published. But the push is just beginning! PLEASE HELP the Sierra Club preserve this land. If you are interested in joining a Valle Grande Task Force, please call Courtney (982-5502), or come to our next Conservation Committee meeting in December. Thanks!!

WILDLIFE CHAIR STILL NEEDED
The Conservation Committee is still looking for someone to fill its Wildlife Chair. Got a yen to save the birds and bees? Want to raise a fuss in front of the Game Commission? Or would you rather write letters from the peace of your home? This may be a job for you!
Please help. No experience is required. Only enthusiasm. Call Courtney (982-5502).
SANTA FE GROUP OUTINGS

Sat  Sun  November
1  John Jasper (466-8572) Moderate Hike in SF National Forest. Call for details/reservations.
2  Art Judd (982-3212) Moderate Hike in Bandelier National Monument. Leave 8 AM. Spot parking fee.
8  Carolyn and Arnold Keskiula (982-9570) Easy Hike in the Cerrillos Hills. Leave 9 AM from Villa Linda Mall.
9  Lee Sullivan (662-6185) Moderate Hike in the Jemez Mountains. 8 miles. Carpool from Santa Fe office at 8 AM, or meet leader 9 AM at the Los Alamos National Bank, across from McDonald’s, on Trinity Drive.
15  Julie Montoya King (438-7197) Easy Hike up La Jadada. Slow pace. Leave 9 AM.
16  Bob McKee (672-3426) Moderate Hike in Bandelier National Monument. Call for details. Carpool from Santa Fe office at 8 AM or meet leader at 9 AM, Smith’s parking lot in White Rock.
22  Ned Sudborough (474-4055) Easy Hike in the near foothills of Santa Fe. Leave 9:30 AM.
29  Jeff Regenold (661-6707) Moderate Hike near Cabezon Peak, to Calabasas Cider Cone and Cerro Cuate. May climb Guadalupe, as desired. A remote Wilderness Study Area, interesting to explore. Dogs allowed.
29  Lionel Soracco (983-6715) Moderately Strenuous X-Country Ski Tour whenever the snow is good, or hike if no snow. Call leader.
30  Norbert Sperlich (983-1962) Moderate Hike into Alamoso Canyon in Bandelier National Monument. Leave 8 AM. Call leader if not familiar with hike.

Sat  Sun  December
6  Carolyn and Arnold Keskiula (982-9570) Easy Hike on trail near railroad tracks at 9 Mile Road. Leave 8:30 AM at Sierra Club office. Call leaders for details.
13  Sherry Evans (473-9632) Moderate Snowshoe Trip if enough snow, otherwise moderate hike. Call leader for information.
13  Lionel Soracco (983-6715) Moderately Strenuous X-Country Ski Trip. Call leader for information. Leave 8 AM.
14  Julie Montoya King (438-7197) Slow/ Easy Hike from Diablo Canyon to Rio Grande. Extension of hike to Buckman Mesa, if weather permits. Leave 8:30 AM. Call leader for reservation.
20  Jeff Jones (466-2389) Easy Hike to Tsankawi Ruins. Kids welcome. Leave at 9 AM.
21  Bob McKee (672-3426) Moderate Hike on mesa top near White Rock, about 7 miles RT. Call for reservation. Meet leader at 9 AM at Smith’s Market in White Rock or carpool from Santa Fe office at 8 AM.
27  Lionel Soracco (983-6715) Moderately Strenuous X-Country Ski Trip. Call leader for information. Leave 8 AM.
28  Norma McCallain (471-0005) Easy Hike on Nuns Corner Loop. Wear boots (snow possible). Dogs allowed. Leave at 10 AM.

SANTA FE GROUP CANDIDATE STATEMENTS

JOHN BUCHER — The last two years as a member of the Santa Fe Group ExCom has been enjoyable; I have had the opportunity to further develop working relationships with some great environmentalists and want the opportunity to continue for another two years. The SF Group has lively discussions, which are (mostly) thought-provoking, and a level of camaraderie that has enriched my personal life.

A large part of what I hope to do for the Santa Fe Group is tied into my goals for the Chapter. I believe it is crucial for us to unseat Bill Redmond from his position in Washington. The past endorsement of many of the Democratic candidates for this seat will likely put us in a position to not endorse any candidate in the primaries. I believe we can provide an essential member and public service by helping folks make their primaries decision.

Earlier this year, I observed a near-miracle when the SF City Council voted unanimously to support the City’s new water ordinance. Thank you to fellow Sierran Craig O’Hare for his excellent presentation to the Council in his role as an employee of the City. SF now has some policies that are comparable to that perennial example of good water policies, Tucson. We will have further work to do here on water, and I hope to be able to help.

I would like to thank Courtney White for his efforts, both paid and volunteer, for the SF Group. He has brought to SF a number of excellent workshops over the last several years. I’d like to offer some workshops on water issues, and I’m sure Courtney and the SF Group will help.

One of my goals is to take my personal perspective of the functioning of the SF Group ExCom to the other Groups, compare how they function, and share their strengths. We are fortunate to have a steady stream of new members, and I’d like to encourage the work of Ned Sudborough in his role as membership chair.

My background in conservation is about four years of activities with the SF Group, and more recently, chair of the Chapter. I hold a full-time job with the State General Services Department supporting their web servers and geographic information systems.

My nearly 20 years in the Club have been involved, until recently, primarily in leading local hikes and National trail maintenance trips with my wife Linda. She and I have been fortunate to receive two awards for our efforts, 2nd place in Take Pride in America and Vice President Gore recently awarded us the Hammer Award (we were hammered) for our efforts in maintaining the Southwest’s trails.

TURN PAGE FOR MORE GROUP CANDIDATE STATEMENTS
ELEANOR C. EISENMENGER — Place of birth: New York City  
Education:  
Barnard College (Columbia University) New York  
Mozarteum Music Academy, Salzburg, Austria  
Salzburg University  
Salzburg Summer Academy  
Profession: Musician (conductor), now executive director of 20th Century Unlimited (Santa Fe Music Series)  

Environmental Background: Sierra Club, Berkshire Chapter, Massachusetts. Active in Berkshire environmental groups.  
Moved to Santa Fe in 1994 and served as lobbyist for Sierra Club in legislature in 1995 and 1996.  
Statement: My mission is to improve the general quality of life in the Santa Fe area, both culturally and environmentally, since I feel that these two factors are the most crucial in maintaining those qualities which have heretofore given Santa Fe its unique place among American cities.

COURTNEY WHITE — I am seeking reelection to the ExCom because I feel there is a ton of unfinished business to complete. In the last two years, I have been one of the principal organizers of four educational workshops: on mining, wildlife, wilderness, and grazing. We are planning at least two more this year. As chair of the Conservation Committee, I have tried to bang the drum steadily on numerous fronts — national parks, wildlife, mines, wilderness in Southern Utah, etc. I was recently asked by the Club to author Congressional testimony opposing the Paseo del Norte extension through Puye Pueblo National Monument. This term I would like to focus on economic and ecological sustainability in Northern New Mexico. I respectfully request your support for this, and other, good work.

* VOTE * VOTE * VOTE * VOTE * VOTE *

NORMA MCELHINNEY — I have been on the Group’s ExCom a number of years and seen a lot of good people come and go. I have been our Outings Co-Chair (with Norbert Sperlich) for quite some time and also stay active with the Political, Conservation and Membership Committees and the phone tree. I again serve on the Chapter ExCom, where I also am Chair, and currently on the National Group and Chapter Outings Committee.

I have lived in Santa Fe 22 years and worked at the State Library almost that long. Managing the Southwest Reference Desk and being responsible for State Publications is a harmonious fit with my long-term interest in SW environmental issues and in the geography/topography of the SW.

In addition to our ongoing conservation issues and need to strive hard to get environmentally good political candidates into office, there are three things I would like to see the Group concentrate on in the next several years: 1) In an era of accumulating environmental problems and less federal & state money available to remedype them, it behooves us to work as closely as possible with the various other environmental and citizen groups and organizations in the state. 2) We bemoan our lack of activists within the Group and Chapter and need to figure out more sustainable ways of getting our members involved. 3) I see too much backbiting and infighting among members at all levels of the Club. We need to be kinder and gentler with each other and to remember that, although we may disagree on individual issues, we all care deeply about the environment.

LIONEL SORACCO — I have been a member of the Sierra Club since 1967. Since coming to Santa Fe in 1989, I have been active with the local Group. For the past few years, I have been Group Secretary/Treasurer, an outings leader, and in charge of distributing the Group’s hiking book. I hope to continue in these activities and ask your support.

* VOTE * VOTE * VOTE * VOTE * VOTE *

Visit our homepage on the World Wide Web: http://www.nm.org/-sierra/  
You can contact other activists via E-mail by using our List Serve: sierra@www.nm.org

Chapter Outings Notes from Norma  
by Norma McCallan

Get Out There! The Outings List

Saturday-Sunday 
Dec 13-14  
Cooke's Peak Range WSA car camp, Joe Rodriguez, 915-533-9655. 
Explore this remarkable land/mark and enjoy an international food cookout Sat night. Call for details/see writeup El Paso group page.

Sunday  
January 4  
Lee Sullivan  
Moderate hike, 7-8 miles, Embudo area, weather permitting. Call Santa Fe Group for time/meeting place.

Saturday-Sunday  
January 24-25  
TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES AREA HIKING  
Margot Wilson 505-744-5860. 
Enjoy the balmy air of Sierra County, "camping out" at Margot’s house, sharing potluck supper Sat night, and exploring nearby lands, with a longer moderate hike on Sat, and shorter hike on Sun. Possible visit to Armendaris Ranch. Call leader for details, reservations.

Outings Leaders  
The National Group & Chapter Outings Committee (of which I am a member) is making revisions to the Outings Leaders’ RED BOOK. They are soliciting comments & suggestions & information to add, items to delete, clarification of unclear wording, etc. Please send me any ideas by mail (2118 Viajo Pano Real,Santa Fe 87505), phone (505-671-0005), fax (505-827-3888). Since National has run out of copies, and needs to reprint soon, the sooner I receive your suggestions, the better. — Norma.
Barbara Leonard
My name is Barbara Leonard. I live in Continental Divide, New Mexico, near Gallup. I have been a member of the Sierra Club for over 20 years. I was active with SC groups in Baltimore and the metropolitan D.C. area in the past. Currently, I am co-founder and co-chair of the Western New Mexico Section.

I am now interested in becoming a member of the Executive Committee of the Rio Grande Chapter. As we approach the millennium, we face a number of critical environmental issues. We would like to work with the Chapter as it focuses on how to best use its resources to deal with problems that have increasing urgency: water conservation, wilderness, and wildlife protection; and sustainability in both rural and urban environments. I would like to see us use an ecological, integrated approach as we become more aware of how each issue and geographic area impacts the others. In addition, I would be happy to bring the issues of Western New Mexico into the overall picture.

I thank you for your vote.

Larry Hughes
Hello. My name is Larry Hughes. I am currently a member of the Executive Committee of the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club. I was appointed by the Executive Committee to fill a vacancy, and I would like to have the opportunity to continue serving on the Executive Committee. I am also Outings Chair of the Southern New Mexico Group. I have lived in Las Cruces since 1979; spent a dozen or so years as an undergraduate and graduate student at NMSU, earning a Ph.D. in mathematics. For the past 5 years, I have been working as a programmer for a company called TCI Software Research. We produce a scientific word processor. Even though I work as a programmer, I am not a computer nerd. In fact, I don’t even own a computer. I joined the Sierra Club 3 or 4 years ago mainly to go hiking. My wife Lorna and I (and our dog Toto) are hard core hikers. We love to walk in wild lands. Over the last few years we have become more and more concerned about threats to our wild lands and the environment in general. This has led to our increased involvement with the Sierra Club.

I believe that one of the biggest challenges facing the Sierra Club in general and the Southern New Mexico Group in particular is the recruitment of new activists. I have made it a priority for myself to recruit activists. There are many areas of environmental concern in Southern New Mexico, for example, water conservation, sustainability, recycling, mining, desert dumping; I believe that in order to have a viable group in Southern New Mexico and to make a difference we need more activists.

In the past few months as a member of the Executive Committee, I have been very impressed with the members of the Executive Committee and the activists throughout the Chapter. They are a very knowledgeable, extremely smart, savvy, and dedicated group. There is much I can learn from them and I would be grateful for the opportunity to do so.

To quote John Muir, if elected to the Executive Committee, I will do my best “...to make the mountains glad.”

John Buchser
The coming year is going to be a very important one for the Rio Grande Chapter. We can end up with all three seats in the U.S. House of Representatives being replaced with new faces. We have a governor’s race which will probably be essentially determined during the primaries. There are numerous local races that have major implications for local communities and the manageability of urban growth.

My personal priorities, if re-elected to the ExCom, will be:
1. To seek re-election to the chair’s position for another year.
2. To seek leadership for the political committee of the chapter, and encourage political leadership in each of the groups.
3. To ensure that our mining manual gets printed and distributed.
4. To raise the visibility of water issues, both to the public and to the legislative and the executive branches of government.
5. To keep our issue committees viable, visible, and functioning.
6. To encourage active local groups, and to personally meet with them, and
7. To maintain active and lively discussion of the issues within the ExCom.

Barbara Johnson has been spearheading an effort to find sufficient funding for a permanent full-time employee. There are two major areas which require continued attention—conservation and political. To do this, we need the backing of the National Council (we have that) and fiscal backing (we’re looking for that). We’ll need millions out of our own budget, and some creativity—like publishing a chapter book on hiking in New Mexico—to ensure the longevity of funding (the Santa Fe Group largely supports its activities through its hiking book).

My background in conservation is about four years of activities with the Santa Fe Group, and more recently, chair of the Chapter. Prior to that, I worked on fire management and wilderness issues about 20 years ago, during the RARE II di. I was elected to chair the Santa Fe Group’s ExCom about a year ago, and this June I took on chair of the Chapter (and resigned as chair of the Santa Fe Group’s ExCom). Chairing the Chapter has been a considerably larger challenge. I hold a full-time job with the State, in the General Services Department, supporting web services and geographic information systems. The chair of the chapter can be a full-time job. I hope to successfully structure the task into a job that is possible to do successfully part time— which I believe will result in other folks being interested in the position.

My nearly 20 years in the Sierra Club have been involved, until recently, primarily in leading local hikes and Na-torial trail maintenance trips with my wife, Linda. She and I have been honored to receive two awards for our efforts, and place in Take Pride in New Mexico, and more recently, Vice President Gore awarded us the hammer award (we were hammered) for our efforts in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service to maintain the SouthWest’s trails.

John Wright
Over the past several years I have worked on several issues for the club but have primarily focused on wilderness issues. Most recently I have been working on the Petroglyph Protection Project. I think it is important for the Club to develop a multi-cultural approach especially to public lands issues. I have worked to develop ties with various people throughout New Mexico. I will continue to work towards a true grassroots effort on environmental issues if re-elected.

Liz Walsh
An Assistant Professor of Biological Sciences at The University of Texas at El Paso, I focus my research on the ecological and evolutionary genetics of freshwater invertebrates. I am the faculty advisor for the Environmental Conservation Organization (ECO) at UTEP (1995 to present). I have been a member of the Sierra Club for 18 months and I am a member of Rainforest Action Network, The Nature Conservancy, National Wildlife Federation, Forest Guardians, Gila Watch, Southwest Center for Biodiversity, Wildlife Damage Review, and West Texas Tropic Watch. I believe people need to apply in their personal and political lives what they ask society to do. I want to serve on the Chapter’s ExCom to gain experience in environmental matters which are of importance to me and ultimately to society. I would like to help the Club meet its potential to be the greatest grassroots force for environmental conservation in the U.S. ExCom members make decisions on activism priorities, and are responsible for motivating members on these issues by setting examples of active participation.
BLM Statewide Resource Advisory Council
To Meet In Albuquerque

The New Mexico Resource Advisory Council, the 15-member council of New Mexico citizens that advise the Bureau of Land Management on public land issues in the state, will meet in Albuquerque on November 20-21, 1997. This will be the first meeting to include the 10 members (eight of whom are new, two were reappointed) selected to New Mexico's Council this fall.

The two-day meeting will be held at the Amberley Suites Hotel at 7620 Pan American Freeway NE in Albuquerque, beginning at 9:00 a.m. on November 20, and at 8:00 a.m. on November 21. The public is invited to observe the meeting, and may call the BLM in Santa Fe at (505) 438-7514 for more information. For anyone wishing to address the Council, a public comment period is scheduled for Thursday, November 20, from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m.

The meeting will include a transition and orientation session for new members. The Council members will review the past work of the Council and hear briefings by BLM staff. As its first order of business, the Council will approve the agenda for the meeting, which tentatively includes:

- Update on planning process: Standards for Public Land Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management EIS
- Discussion of past Council actions and future events
- Off highway vehicle use
- Noxious weeds
- Updates on current BLM field office issues
- Recognition of past Council members

Contact: Rom Hawes Phone: (505) 438-7514

---

DECEMBER 15 & DECEMBER 15
(Say it twice, fast)

BALLOTS
due Dec. 15!
Chapter/Group elections

Don’t forget to mail yours in.

CONTRIBUTIONS
due Dec. 15!
for the next issue
of the Rio Grande Sierran
(Jan/Feb. ’98 issue)

Guidelines for contributors
appear on page 2.
## Chapter Executive Committee

**Instructions:**
- Vote for no more than 3 candidates for Chapter Executive Committee. Two boxes are provided so that each member of a joint membership may vote. Blank lines are for write-ins. You may vote in both the Chapter election and the election for your Group. The Group Ballot for the Southern New Mexico Group will appear in a future issue of the Sierra Club's newsletter. Do not cut this page—it contains your mailing label for verification (which will be removed before your vote is tallied) along with the Group ballots. (Any member who did not get this issue in the mail may submit a ballot with the membership information written on it for verification.)
- Return this page to:
  - Ned Sudborough
  - 275 Via Caballero del Sur
  - Santa Fe, NM 87505

**Ballot must be postmarked by December 15, 1997**

### Group Executive Committee

Members of the Rio Grande Chapter can vote for both the Chapter ExCom and for their Group ExCom (one group only, as indicated by the code on your mailing label. Again, the Southern New Mexico Group ballot will appear in a future issue of the Sierra Club's newsletter. Two boxes are provided so that each member of a joint membership may vote. Blank lines are for write-in candidates. Do not cut this page. It contains your mailing label for verification. It will be removed before your vote is tallied. Any member who did not receive this issue in the mail may submit a ballot with the membership information written on it for verification. Return this page to Ned Sudborough, 275 Via Caballero del Sur, Santa Fe, NM 87505, by December 15, 1997.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Albuquerque Group (1701)</th>
<th>Santa Fe Group (1704)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vote for no more than 3 candidates</strong></td>
<td><strong>Vote for no more than 3 candidates</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gary Simpson</td>
<td>John Buchser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Ther</td>
<td>Eleanor C. Eisenmenger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matt Allen</td>
<td>Courtney White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>El Paso Group (1702)</th>
<th>Pajarito Group (1708)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vote for no more than 3 candidates</strong></td>
<td><strong>Vote for no more than 3 candidates</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill Phillips</td>
<td>Beth Gerhardtson Walter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe A. Rodriguez</td>
<td>Bill Atkins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann Falknor</td>
<td>Karla Atkins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gary Williams</td>
<td>Mat Johansen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liz Walsh</td>
<td>Miriam Oudejans</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Rio Grande Chapter**

**Sierra Club**

**P.O. Box 9191**

**El Paso, TX 79983**

---

**Non-Profit Org.**

**U.S. Postage Paid**

**El Paso, TX**

**Permit No. 2370**

---

**Official Ballot**

**Here's your chance to**

**VOTE**