

Rio Grande Sierran

September / October 2000

News of the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club

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Santa Fe Group, Rio Grande Chapter Honored with Awards

by Barbara Johnson

The Santa Fe Group will receive the Denny and Ida Wilcher Award for Achievement in Fundraising at the Club's annual Awards Banquet September 23 in San Francisco. This award carries with it a \$1500 cash prize.

The Rio Grande Chapter will receive a Special Achievement Award for its book, *Sprawl Costs/Sprawl Solutions for New Mexico and El Paso*. The Chapter compiled and printed a comprehensive discussion of sprawl and growth issues in the area, offering a look at the problem and suggesting a plan

See *Awards* on Page 5

A Time for Statesmanship on the Rio Grande

by Bill deBuys

Thirty years ago, the Albuquerque community allowed the Alvarado Hotel to be torn down, and its site became a parking lot, which it remained until very recently. No one, looking back, can call the demise of the Alvarado a good thing. If the wrecker's ball had not claimed that venerable railroad hotel of deeply shaded arcades, the Alvarado might today be a Southwestern equivalent to Faneuil Hall or Ghirardelli Square. It would anchor Albuquerque's most distinctive urban spaces and would epitomize for residents and tourists alike the continuity of the city's past with its busy, diversifying present. The challenge of preserving the Alvarado was a test of character for Albuquerque, and, sad to say, the city

See *Statesmanship* on Page 10

October Rio Grande Sierran Political Endorsements Issue

The political committees of the Groups and Chapter are hard at work making endorsement recommendations to the Executive Committee (ExCom) of the Rio Grande Chapter. The political committees generally start with questionnaires, and then individually interview candidates if the questionnaires are returned. Based on these interviews and the track record of the candidates, recommendations are made to the Chapter ExCom. The Chapter then votes on these recommendations. Ultimately, 2/3 majority approvals of two entities are required to endorse a candidate.

So, as you can see, it is a laborious process. Since many of the decisions that affect the environment are made by our elected officials, we take this very seriously. In October we will mail a special Political Issue that will give our members guidance in voting for November 7.

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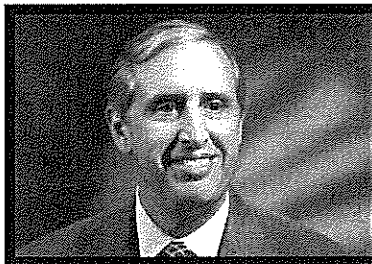
	Member	Spouse
I approve the new bylaws	_____	_____
I disapprove the new bylaws	_____	_____

Mail To Cecily no later than October 11:

Cecily Vix, Secretary
244 Carlisle NE
Albuquerque, NM 87106

John Kelly

Enthusiastically Endorsed
in First Congressional District



by Richard Barish

Central NM Group Political Chair

There is great news in New Mexico's first congressional district. One of our own is running for Congress. John Kelly won the Democratic primary and has now been endorsed by the Club in his bid to unseat environmental thug Heather Wilson.

Kelly has been a long-time member of the Sierra Club. An attorney by trade, Kelly began his career by forming a public interest

See *John Kelly Endorsed* on Page 5

New Chapter Bylaws Ready for Member Vote

New! Clearer!

Ready For Your Enjoyment.

For several years, Ford Robbins, Barbara Johnson, and George Grossman have been working to conform with new guidelines for Chapter bylaws. These guidelines have been implemented to bring more uniformity in all the Chapters' and Groups' bylaws. Prior to the current set of changes, our bylaws have undergone minimal changes since the Chap-

ter was formed as one of National Club's sub-entities nearly four decades ago. California laws have changed, the National Club's bylaws have changed. The new language is clearer, and with your help, we are about to complete the process!

Rio Grande Chapter Directory

Executive Committee

Gwen Wardwell, *Chair*
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Jennifer Johnson, *Vice Chair, Conservation Chair*
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243-7767 nmex.field1@prodigy.net
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202 Central SE, Suite 101, Albuquerque, NM 87102

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 largest part of the Chapter's budget goes to the salary and expenses for Jennifer and a part-time lobbyist, followed by the printing and mailing of this Newsletter.



www.riograndesierraclub.org

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Activism

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Regional and National Representatives

Southwest Region Conservation Committee (SWRCC)
Ted Mertig, Gwen Wardwell; Alternates: Elizabeth Walsh, Jennifer Johnson

Council of Club Leaders Delegate
Barbara Johnson; Norma McCallan (alternate)

Sierran

Editor	John Buchser	820-0201	jbuchser@earthlink.net
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All phone numbers area code 505 unless otherwise noted.

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Make address changes by contacting Membership Services at 415 977-5649 or send member name and number to address.changes@sierraclub.org

Non-member subscriptions at \$10.00 per year are available. Send checks to Blair Brown, Treasurer; 2226B Wyoming NE, PMB 272, Albuquerque, NM 87112. Please allow 8 weeks for processing.

The opinions expressed in signed articles in the Rio Grande Sierran 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 Rio Grande Sierran (Please let us know if you reprint.) Products and services advertised in the Rio Grande Sierran are not endorsed by the Sierra Club.

Contributions are welcome from members. Email contributions preferred. Send to jbuchser@earthlink.net or mail to John Buchser, 223 N. Guadalupe #419, Santa Fe, NM 87501. All submissions MUST 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. Letters and articles are subject to abridgement.

Editorial practices as developed by the Grand Canyon Chapter and adopted by the Rio Grande Chapter will be used in production of the Rio Grande Sierran. Letters to the editor over 500 words will be edited for length or returned to the author for editing. Submissions of Rio Grande Chapter members will take precedence over other submissions.

Content of Group pages are the responsibility of the editor for that group and any policies that are in place from the applicable Group.

Contact editor for advertising policy and rates.

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Living on our Planet

Waste Reduction Committee Formed

by Jay Morrow

[Note from the Conservation Chair: Jay Morrow recently moved here from North Carolina. He attended the June Executive Committee (ExCom) meeting and presented his proposal to start a Waste Reduction Issue Committee. The ExCom is delighted and would like to encourage our members to give Jay a call and get involved. Our American lifestyle is extremely detrimental to the environment, here's a chance to make a change. -- Jennifer Johnson]

This is going to be a good one because it covers a lot of ground and touches every one of us personally everyday. It could have been called many things but because I work in the solid waste reduction field, I requested this title. We are going to look into the following areas and I need to mention up front that right now this is a committee of one and I need help!

1) **Solid Waste Reduction.** Because landfill space is so cheap (just stick them out in the desert where no one cares) there is no real push from state or local governments to reduce the volume of the waste stream. Tipping fees can be below \$20 per ton for disposal in the Southwest and unfortunately that cost per ton is what drives diversion efforts in many quarters. We are going to try to change that mindset and work on the philosophy of only landfilling what's left. What's left after trying to reduce the volume we generate, after recycling, after re-using, after composting. The scientific community can now confirm that landfill gas is an easily targeted contributor to Greenhouse Gasses. The less we put in, the less gasses that escape. Green waste is one of the easiest materials to divert and one of the greatest contributors of methane once landfilled. The New Mexico Recycling Coalition currently has 60+ members statewide.

We are going to try to double that number by the end of the year. Our goal is to make that organization a credible force to lead the State toward acceptable diversion rates and to adopt programs that promotes reduction in all solid waste departments statewide. Like you, it is a great bunch of folks and while bigger does not necessarily make better, bigger can make stronger. If you might be interested, let me know. As a member of that Board I can tell you straight up that we need you.

2) **Consumption Reduction.** There may not be another issue that so negatively effects so many concerns as global consumption. It is the heart of all of those problems that we struggle to grasp and develop solutions for. It is as complicated as the great treadmill that commercialism tries to trap us on, and is as simple as how you buy and use tis-

See Waste Reduction on Page 13

Middle Rio Grande



Paul Tahjian

Fish And Farmers, Not Fish Versus Farmers Minnow Gains Some Time

by Richard Barish

[Late last year, the Sierra Club and five other national and local environmental groups filed suit against the United States Bureau of Reclamation over the Rio Grande silvery minnow, a federally listed endangered species. Facing the prospect of drying in the river this summer, the environmental groups filed a motion for a preliminary injunction to ensure that there would be water to prevent the minnow's extinction during irrigation season. The judge then ordered the parties, which now included the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District, the City of Albuquerque, and the State of New Mexico, to mediate the motion before federal Magistrate Judge Robert DeGiacomo. Following two weeks of intense discussions, a settlement of the preliminary injunction motion was reached. This article will update Club members on what the settlement does - and does not - mean for the minnow, the Rio Grande, and the lawsuit.]

In order to understand the Club's objectives for the minnow, it is important to understand a bit about the silvery minnow and its current status. The Rio Grande silvery minnow is the last of five native minnow species that once thrived in the Rio Grande. The silvery minnow was once widespread in the Rio Grande from its headwaters to the Gulf of Mexico and in the Pecos River drainage as well. The minnow now finds its last refuge - officially, at least, in the 160 miles stretch of the Rio Grande between Cochiti Reservoir and Elephant Butte Reservoir.

See Minnow Safe For Now on Page 11

Preludes to War or Preludes to Peace?

by Gwen Wardwell

No one wants to feel the suspicion and hostility of another, especially when you believe your mission to be a noble one, benefiting all. For the past decade, environmentalists have come to realize that their goals, their projects, their initiatives do not have the support of many land-based communities in northern New Mexico. Assuming that environmental initiatives would automatically bring with them allies among the Native American and Hispanic communities, many environmental activists have been forced to rethink these assumptions. They have learned the hard way -- through the written and spoken word, through defeats in the legislature, through demonstrations -- that their efforts are not winning the allies they expected in rural New Mexico.

In fact, many native New Mexicans living close to the land see the environmental movement as the latest in a long string of colonial takeovers. Here is yet another wave of outsiders, with their own agenda, at best ignoring the local interests, and at worst exploiting them. Acequia members, local loggers, and small subsistence communities fear that environmentalists will compete with them for limited resources, will lobby for changes in policies and laws that will restrict their ability to make a living, and will in unpredictable ways undermine a fragile way of life. They sense a lack of respect for their history and role in the protection of natural resources, and a lack of interest in their problems.

In reality, both the environmentalists and the local land-based communities are fac-

See Conflict Resolution on next page



Living on Our Planet

The Circle Of Life

Conflict Resolution from previous page

ing common threats -- rapid growth, increasing competition for resources, a dominant culture which emphasizes materialism at the expense of the natural environment. So, why are examples of mutual support so rare?

Five veterans and observers of this conflict have been working to develop a new way for environmentalists and land-based northern New Mexicans to become allies. David Benavides, an attorney with Community and Indian Legal Services, Conci Bokum with 1000 Friends of New Mexico, and Gwen Wardwell, Sierra Club, formed a planning team with Roberto Chene and Lucy Moore, mediators and trainers with extensive experience in cross-cultural communication and alliance building. The five designed a training program for environmentalists interested in working more successfully with local groups and communities, and opened the sessions to activists from several organizations, including Rio Grande Restoration, 1000 Friends of New Mexico, New Mexico Environmental Law Center, Forest Guardians, Sierra Club, Animal Protection of New Mexico, and others. The Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club has taken on fund raising duties for recent sessions, and is eager to see the project evolve.

The sessions are designed to build the kind of communication and understanding that can create a good working relationship based on trust. The planning group chose to begin the process with a series of training sessions to help environmentalists understand the depth of problems underlying the surface conflict -- history, colonization, racism, economics, differences in relationship to the land. "These are tough issues to talk about, and we spent time with the environmentalists building a foundation of awareness before we invited people from the land-based communities to join us," explained David Benavides. "We felt this was important in order to be taken seriously by those folks we are hoping to ally with," added Gwen. "We need to be ready to listen and talk in a new way, a way that is open, respectful and committed to helping our new allies achieve some of their goals." In the new model for alliance-building, environmentalists and land-based people will negotiate as equals, respecting their differences, and seeking a solution together which meets both sets of needs.

At the last meeting on May 9, the project was joined by co-trainers from Native American and land-based communities. Lila Bird, New Mexico Environmental Law Center, Paula Garcia, New Mexico Acequia Association and Carl Tsosie, Picuris Pueblo, helped the group begin a dialogue about the realities of cross-cultural environmental work. Roberto Chene suggests it is time to "stop being naive about the legacy of the institutionalized historical trauma in New Mexico. We all can benefit from applying some new knowledge about intercultural relationships to problem solving around environmental issues." There is hope that in upcoming sessions these kinds of relationships will form, and some specific joint projects may emerge.

[Anyone interested in learning more about this project, or joining in a future round of trainings, please call Gwen Wardwell at 984-8860.]

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Man Has A Poor Understanding Of
Life. He Mistakes Knowledge For Wisdom.

He Tries To Unveil The Holy Secrets
Of Our Father, The Great Spirit.

He Attempts To Impose His Laws And
Ways On Mother Earth.

Even Though He, Himself, Is Part Of
Nature, He Chooses To Discard And Ignore
It For The Sake Of His Own Immediate Gain.

But The Laws Of Nature Are Far
Stronger Than Those Of Mankind.

Man Must Awake At Last, And Learn
To Understand How Little Time There Remains
Before He Will Become The Cause Of
His Own Downfall.

And He Has So Much To Learn. To
Learn To See With His Heart.

He Must Learn To Respect Mother
Earth - She Who Has Given Life To Every-
thing; To Our Brothers And Sisters, The Ani-
mals And The Plants; To The Rivers, The
Lakes, The Oceans And The Winds, He Must
Realise That This Planet Does Not Belong To
Him, But That He Has To Take Care For And
Maintain The Delicate Balance Of Nature For
The Sake Of The Wellbeing Of Our Children
And Of All Future Generations.

It Is The Duty Of Man To Preserve
The Earth And The Creation Of The Great
Spirit.

Mankind Being But A Grain Of Sand
In The Holy Circle Which Encloses All Of
Life.

*Author unknown
Submitted by Laura Davis*

These Winter Dunes

*For Jim Gilbert, painter of the same
by Charles G. Bell*

I sit over the lake on a hill of sand;
Gold lights and purple shadows, the playing forms,
Weave on the swift shuttles and are withdrawn.
Other hills are carved in rock, these mounds of the wind
Continually melt and change, awakening
The sweet tenderness of impermanent things.

Ridge after ridge, brown leaves on the yellow blowing,
Clumps of dry grass, the bare fabric of trees-
When this detail has melted, vegetation and air,
The sand will lie like rock in the cold unmoving
Before-and-after of the moon's vacancies-
Now love like a vine works round and attaches here.

That far-off smoke is Gary, the steel mills.
Here solitude. Nobody. There is nothing at all.
But the lake and ice-hills thawing, the taller hills
Of sand that quietly shift in the mothering swell
Of the wind and soften into grass and leaves.
Geese go northward; over the water a gull grieves.

A whistle bleats at the last faint line of the woods.
This whole stretch is waiting; it is already owned
By a great corporation; they bide their time.
Soon it will be factories and apartment homes,
A well-fed people, but involved in the doom
Of shifting things, knowing no permanent goods.

If there are strangers still coming to this great land,
Tell them out of pity, and make it plain,
Not to love what they find; or if love surprise
(As we are weak), let it be of special kind,
Quick and evasive; for here all things will change
Before the fruit can ripen on the vine.

That is why I take this place and moment
An image of our being, a man alone,
Loving the shapes of sun in a bank of sand,
And over all landscapes hold these winter dunes-
Gold lights and purple shadows, the heart-breaking forms
That weave on the restless looms and at once are withdrawn.

Phoenix Gardens

*Sabra Kornhaber
Los Alamos resident*

Even as our children shouted car to car
through open windows "Did you see that
tree go up? I hope our school burns
down!" Our homes were sacrificed for the
schools.

That would give them a place to return
to, to see that friendships would not wither
with the flaring pine needles.

Yet, I won't believe in "Phoenix Gardens"
until I see it (although the sign in front of
their personal disaster was meant with
humor)

But they're not coming back. Others say
they will, like we all said this fire
wouldn't happen.

Consumed to ashes, the manmade poisons
of modern life sit stewing in stone rubble
and the trucks come.

The government will pick up their mess,
apologize and we will hear hammers.

Some will build again, some will rob old
nests and settle in, like woodpeckers driv-
ing into new wood while the frail black
skeletons of the forest shake from the
noise.

Activism

Awards from Page 1

of action to deal with the problem. In addition, the volume is clear, concise, and attractively laid out. It is extensively annotated and offers resources to the activist who is interested in sprawl issues. Information for the book was provided by Energy and Transportation Chair Ken Hughes, among others; editing was done by Ed Moreno, and the layout was handled by Barbara Johnson. Thus far, almost every copy of the book has been disseminated throughout the region, to Sierra Club members, to other activists, to legislators, and to those running for political office in this election year.

The book was debuted at a day of "Tours de Sprawl" which were held all over New Mexico to highlight the growth problems of both large and small urban areas.

The Santa Fe Group is being honored for its book, *Day Hikes in the Santa Fe Area*, which has been the Group's principal fundraiser for the last 19 years.

The original book committee was formed in 1981 and they devised the idea for the book. It was mandated that the proceeds from this book would only be used to fund conservation work (and the printing costs of the next edition, so that the book would be a continuing source of revenue). The fifth edition of the book was published in December 1999 and was debuted at a book signing March 9 at Borders Books in Santa Fe. It is selling briskly. The Group expects to receive about \$18,000 a year from this edition for its conservation work. The book is considered a classic for hikers, and tourists, in the Santa Fe area. It is sold in all local bookstores in Santa Fe and Los Alamos, and at all Sierra Club events. This is an ALL VOLUNTEER project. The only expense incurred is printing.

The Hiking Book Committee structures the implementation of this project, with input from the Executive Committee. The Hiking Book Committee organizes volunteers to walk the hikes, edit the descriptions, come up with ideas for new hikes, and research other problems with hikes, like changes in land status. Lionel Soracco, Group Secretary-Treasurer, put the fifth edition together and worked with the printer. Dorothy Grossman has drawn the artwork for the covers of all five editions. Norma McCallan, our Outings Chair, has been involved with all five editions.

The National Honors and Awards Committee apparently agreed with the Santa Fe Group that this appears to be an excellent, and innovative, method for fundraising. There is a similar hike book (not as extensive as Santa Fe's) put out by the Ventana Chapter in California. The Santa Fe Group has funded 19 years of conservation work and made new friends and gained members from the book. It is hoped that other groups will follow their lead.

John Kelly Endorsed from Page 1

law firm, where he fought polluting power plants, coal mines, airports, and low-level supersonic military flights. While serving as the United States Attorney for New Mexico over the last eight years, Kelly successfully prosecuted numerous cases involving violations of the Endangered Species Act, hazardous waste discharges into the Rio Grande, and violations of the Bald Eagle Protection Act. He successfully represented the U.S. in support of the right of Pueblos to set strict water quality standards.

Kelly enthusiastically supports Chapter priorities of restoring the Rio Grande and passing a New Mexico wilderness act. He has committed to introduce legislation to fund Rio Grande projects and to co-sponsor a New Mexico wilderness bill with Tom Udall. In addition to the Rio Grande and New Mexico wilderness, another environmental priority is sustainable urban community issues, including sprawl, renewable energy, transit, raising fuel efficiency standards, and sustainable agricultural practices. Other highlights of his commitments to the Club include support of full funding of Land and Water Conservation Fund; opposition to "fast track" authority to negotiate an agreement for a Free Trade Area of the Americas that would perpetuate the corporate assault on our environmental laws; and strong support for campaign finance reform.

John is married to Suede Kelly, who is also an environmental lawyer. As a staff attorney for the Natural Resources Defense Council, Suede represented NRDC in connection with the banning of chlorofluorocarbons in the United States. In New Mexico, Suede has represented environmental clients in numerous matters, including rulemaking and lobbying to establish stricter air quality standards and to establish uranium mill tailing regulations.

It has a long two years in this district. Heather Wilson has distinguished herself only by her unmitigated disdain for environmental protection. No extractive industry has been too rapacious, no polluter too dirty, no special interest too greedy, for Wilson to decline to support their positions.

John Kelly is a strong candidate who can stop Wilson. As a former prosecutor and an independent thinker, Kelly should have great appeal to the middle ground that typically controls this district. Early polls suggest that this will be a very tight race. However, money has been pouring into the Wilson campaign from the corporate special interests who know they have a friend in Heather. Kelly will need a strong grass roots campaign to overcome the television ads that Wilson's money will buy. If you spare a couple of hours this fall to help ensure that we have a strong pro-environment voice representing central New Mexico in Congress, please contact Richard Barish at 232-3013.

Chapter ExCom Candidate Slate

The nominating committee (NomCom) has announced the Chapter's slate of candidates for the upcoming election of Executive Committee (ExCom) Members. The ExCom consists of 14 members. Nine of these are elected by you, our chapter member. The other five are appointed by the Executive Committees of the five groups that comprise the Chapter.

The NomCom members were Cheryl Blevins, Abe Jacobson, Cecily Vix, and Ann Falknor. Doug Fraser was chair.

The list of folks that they nominated follows. There are 3 elected this year, for 3-year terms. In the November/December issue of the Rio Grande Sierran, there will be candidate statements and a ballot.

All Rio Grande Chapter members are eligible to run for the executive committee. If you or a friend is interested in running, you can get signatures of Chapter members and submit these for verification. Please contact a member of the ExCom for details. These petitions are due in to the chair of the election committee by October 5, which will allow for time for authentication of all signatures.

The nominated candidates are:

John Buchser, incumbent

Laurence Gibson

Ted Mertig

Edward Sullivan, incumbent (by appointment)

Elizabeth Walsh, incumbent

Rio Grande Chapter Annual Retreat

Meet with others who care about our environment.

Identify the most important threats to our environment.

Plan Sierra Club actions and reactions regarding these threats

What: The annual retreat of the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club.

When: Friday evening through Sunday afternoon, September 15, 16, and 17.

Where: Sevilleta Research Center, off Interstate 25 about 10 miles north of Socorro.

If you plan to attend or want more information, contact Gwen Wardwell by phone at 984-8860 or 438-3060. edenland@earthlink.net, or mail to 945 Camino de Chelly, Santa Fe NM 87501

Saltamontes Grasshopper Hill

Retreat Lodging for Artists, Writers & Explorers.

In PECOS, 26 miles N.E. from Santa Fe, on the Mora - Taos Hwy. 581 Loop, bordering Santa Fe National Forest. Mountain views of Pecos Baldy

Intimate & Informal: hot tub under the stars, bird watching, hiking, X-country skiing, fishing, backpacking, mountain biking.

Rural Residence with 3 Guest Rooms Communal Kitchen/Baths

Affordable Seasonal Rates: Weekly, Monthly, & Family Discounts

Pamela Canyoniers, Proprietor
P.O. Box 374 • Pecos, New Mexico 87552
(505) 757-2528

Diversity Encouraged



Bylaws

Rio Grande Chapter Bylaws

1. Organization. 1.1 **Name.** The name of this Sierra Club unit is the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club (Club).

1.2 **Establishment.** This Chapter is established by action of the Board of Directors of the Club (Board), and is governed by these Bylaws, consistent with the provisions of the Bylaws and Standing Rules of the Club, by applicable law, and by the policies and directives of the Board. This Chapter is an integral part of the Sierra Club and is not a separate legal entity.

1.3 **Purpose.** The purpose of this Chapter is to foster within its territorial limits the purposes of the Club. The chapter is authorized to undertake activities that are consistent with the purposes of the Club and are not prohibited by the Board by a general rule applicable alike to all chapters. The Chapter shall act on questions of public policy only in pursuance of Board policies or in a manner consistent with them.

1.4 **Boundaries.** The territorial boundaries of this Chapter shall be as specified from time to time by the Board, with due consideration of the wishes of Club members residing therein.

2. Membership. 2.1 **Members.** Chapter members shall be those Club members of record who reside within the Chapter boundaries, except as otherwise provided in the Club Bylaws. Only Chapter members in good standing may vote or hold Chapter office. Only Sierra Club members in good standing may act on behalf of the Chapter.

2.2 **Powers of Members.** By voting in annual or special elections, members shall elect and may recall members of the Chapter Executive Committee (ExCom) other than group representatives, and may determine Chapter policy. Through petition, members may require the ExCom to call membership meetings.

2.3 **Membership Meetings.** Upon petition by 2% of the members, the ExCom shall call a membership meeting with at least fourteen (14) days written notice to the members stating time and place to consider subjects specified in the petition. No binding action may be taken at a membership meeting, but resolutions addressed to any Club entity may be adopted. The quorum for a membership meeting shall be 1% of the Chapter members.

2.4 **Election Petitions.** The members may petition for a special election by obtaining signatures from 3.5% or more of the Chapter

members. Petitions shall state separately each issue to be decided. If the issue is the recall of ExCom members, candidates who shall take office if the recall is successful may be nominated in the same petition.

3. Executive Committee (ExCom). 3.1 **Number.** Subject to the powers of the members as provided by these Bylaws, the management of the affairs and activities of the Chapter shall be in the hands of an ExCom of nine (9) members elected by the Chapter membership for terms of three (3) years, plus one representative from each Chapter group selected according to the group's bylaws, and the Council Delegate, Ex Officio (if needed). Group representatives may vote and hold any office except Council Delegate or Alternate. Groups may designate alternates who may vote in the absence of the representative. In any election, up to three (3) members may be elected for full terms, as long as the size of the ExCom does not increase as a result and no fewer than three (3) terms will expire in any future year.

Members elected shall take office at the first meeting following the counting of the ballots.

If not otherwise members of the ExCom, the Secretary and Treasurer shall serve as non-voting members.

3.2 **Powers.** Only the ExCom or those specifically authorized by it or its designees shall act in the name of the Chapter. The ExCom shall have the authority to make rules and regulations for carrying out the provisions of these Bylaws. If any appeal arises concerning any act or decision of the ExCom, the Board or its designees shall have the power to determine the procedures to be followed. Chapter actions must be consistent with Club purposes and the policies and directives of the Board or its designees.

The ExCom may call meetings of the Chapter membership at large with fourteen (14) days written notice to all Chapter members stating time, place, and subjects to be considered. Notices shall be published in a Chapter newsletter or other publication provided to all members.

The ExCom may call and conduct special elections in accordance with these bylaws.

The ExCom may establish and dissolve groups, sections, and committees as provided in these Bylaws.

The ExCom may appoint and remove Chapter officers, representatives, and committee members at any time.

3.3 **Responsibilities.** The ExCom shall assure that the activities and services provided for the benefit of the members by the Chapter and its groups, sections, and other entities comply and are consistent with these Bylaws and any Chapter Standing Rules, policies and directives of the Board or its designees, the Bylaws and Standing Rules of the Club, and applicable law. Such activities may include but are not limited to financial management, membership services, production of publications, and conservation, outings and political programs. Authority may be delegated to carry out such activities, but the ExCom shall retain overall responsibility and control.

3.4 **Vacancies.** The ExCom shall have the power to fill a vacancy in any elected or appointed office. A vacancy in an elected position shall be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term by vote of the remaining ExCom members.

3.5 **Officers.** The ExCom shall elect from its members the following officers, who shall also be Chapter officers: a Chair, a Vice-Chair, and at its option, a Secretary and a Treasurer. The ExCom may appoint from outside its membership any other Chapter officers it considers necessary, including the Secretary and Treasurer. All such officers shall be Chapter members.

At the discretion of the ExCom, offices may be combined, provided there are at least two distinct officers. Assistants to these officers may be designated from among Chapter members.

Notice of the officers and appointees of the Chapter shall be provided to Club headquarters annually upon selection, or as required by the Board or its designees.

A vacancy in any Chapter officer position may be filled by a majority vote of the voting ExCom members present at any regularly scheduled ExCom meeting.

Any Chapter officer may be removed by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting ExCom members present at any regularly scheduled ExCom meeting.

3.6 **Representatives.** The ExCom shall elect from among its members elected by the entire Chapter membership a Chapter Delegate and Alternate to the Sierra Club Council. The term of the Delegate shall be three (3) years. The Council Delegate shall be a voting ExCom member for the duration of the appointed term as Council Delegate.

The ExCom shall appoint Chapter members as delegates and alternates to the appropriate Regional Conservation Committees (RCCs),

Continued on next page

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as provided in the relevant RCC Bylaws. The RCC delegates and alternates shall serve as ex-officio ExCom members, without vote, if not already members

The ExCom may instruct delegates and alternates before each Council or RCC meeting. Delegates or alternates shall report to the ExCom after each Council or RCC meeting.

A Chapter Delegate may be removed by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting ExCom members present at any regularly scheduled ExCom meeting.

3.7 ExCom Committees. The ExCom may establish and appoint committees of at least two ExCom members as it deems appropriate. The ExCom may appoint one or more ExCom members as alternate members of any such committee, who may replace any absent members of the committee. These committees shall have the power and authority to act for the ExCom on such matters as the ExCom may delegate, except as prohibited by law or these Bylaws. By majority vote of its members, the ExCom may at any time revoke any or all of the authority so granted. The committees shall keep regular minutes of their proceedings and report the same from time to time as the ExCom may require. A majority of the members of each committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business by that committee.

3.8 Chapter Committees. The ExCom may establish and dissolve standing and special committees for such objectives as it may set. Subject to ExCom approval, the Chapter Chair shall appoint committee members from among Chapter members. The Chapter Chair, or another ExCom member designated by the Chair, may be designated as a voting member of each committee, except the Nominating and Election committees. Standing committees shall be appointed annually. Except for the Nominating and Election Committees, the ExCom may add, remove, or replace members of any committee at any time. The ExCom may fill vacancies on the Nominating and Election Committees.

3.9 Open Meetings. All meetings of the ExCom and its committees shall be open to attendance by any Club member, but the ExCom or its committees may convene in private session for the consideration of any sensitive matter, provided that any vote or final action is taken in open session.

3.10 Quorum. A quorum for ExCom meetings shall be a simple majority of its voting members. An ExCom member shall be considered present at a meeting if physically present in the meeting room at the time. Only ExCom members physically present may vote.

3.11 ExCom Meetings. The ExCom shall hold regularly scheduled meetings at least four (4) times per year at times and places communicated in advance to all Chapter members.

3.12 Special Meetings. ExCom business may, if necessary, be conducted at a Special Meeting. A Special Meeting may be called by the Chair or any three (3) ExCom members with at least 48 hours' notice by telephone or electronic means, or four days' notice by first class mail, unless all ExCom members waive this notice requirement.

3.13 Absences. Except for group representatives, any ExCom member who misses three (3) regularly scheduled meetings over any continuous twelve-month period shall be automatically removed from the ExCom. The ExCom may reinstate the member by a unanimous vote of the voting members present at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

3.14 Standing Rules. The ExCom shall approve the standing rules annually. This shall occur immediately after the new ExCom members take office.

4. Nominations and Elections
4.1 Annual Election. An Annual Election shall be held in the fourth quarter of each year to choose ExCom members. This election and any special elections shall be conducted by secret written ballot mailed to all Chapter members of record at least four (4) weeks before the closing date of the election, and shall be conducted in such a manner as to ensure facility of voting and tabulation, and secrecy of ballot. The ballot shall allow each voter to vote for as many candidates as there are positions to be filled. A voter may not cumulate votes for any candidate.

The ExCom shall specify the calendar dates and deadlines for appointing the Nominating Committee (NomCom), production of eligible voter lists, receipt of names for consideration by the NomCom, receipt of ballot issue petitions, the NomCom report of names of nominees, receipt of candidate petitions, appointment of the Election Committee, printing and mailing dates for ballots allowing at least four (4) weeks for return of the ballots, receipt of returned ballots, and the date, time and place for counting ballots.

The ExCom shall provide written notice of this schedule and of the opportunity to nominate candidates by petition to all Chapter members.

4.2 Nominating Committee. A Nominating Committee (NomCom) of at least three Chapter members, at least one not an ExCom member, none of whom may be a candidate, shall be appointed annually by the ExCom Chair, and ratified by the ExCom, not later than four

(4) months before the designated closing date of the election. Sufficient opportunity shall be given for Chapter members to submit names for consideration by the NomCom. The NomCom shall attempt to nominate at least two (2) more candidates than the number of ExCom members to be elected, and shall report the nominees' names to the ExCom at least two (2) weeks before the deadline for submission of nomination petitions and five (5) weeks before the scheduled mailing of the ballots. Nominees shall be Chapter members who give their consent. If the NomCom chooses not to nominate a willing candidate, the NomCom shall promptly inform that candidate of the opportunity to seek nomination by petition.

4.3 Petition Candidates. The name of any Chapter member proposed in writing by at least one hundred (100) Chapter members prior to the deadline for submission of petitions, and who gives consent, shall also be included on the ballot. The nomination petitions shall be retained until the ballots are destroyed.

4.4 Election Committee. An Election Committee of at least three (3) Chapter members, ~~at least one not an ExCom member, shall be~~ appointed annually by the ExCom Chair and ratified by the ExCom prior to the scheduled date of mailing of ballots. No candidates may serve on the Election Committee. The Election Committee shall cause the ballots to be prepared and mailed, and shall count the returned ballots. Challenges of the conduct of candidates or their campaigns shall be referred to the Elections Committee. Decisions of the Elections Committee may be appealed to the ExCom.

4.5 Mailing Ballots. Ballots shall be mailed to all Chapter members of record according to the voter list obtained prior to the election.

4.6 Return of Ballots. Ballots shall be returned to the Election Committee as directed in the ballot instructions. Return of a minimum number of valid ballots shall not be required for the validity of an annual or special election.

4.7 Counting Ballots. The Election Committee shall count the ballots as soon as practical after the closing date of the election. The candidates or their authorized representatives shall be permitted to be present. The candidates receiving the highest number of votes shall be elected. Any tie shall be resolved immediately, first by a recount, then if necessary by lot at the ballot counting. The Election Committee shall report the results immediately to the Secretary. The Secretary shall immediately notify the candidates and the ExCom members and shall notify the Chap-

Continued on next page

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ter membership and other interested parties as provided in the standing rules. The Secretary shall report the results to the ExCom at its next meeting. The ballots and nomination petitions shall be retained by the Secretary for six (6) months from acceptance of the election results by the ExCom and then shall be destroyed by the Secretary unless the election is duly challenged.

5. Functions and Services. 5.1 Functions. The Chapter shall provide functions and services required by the Board, its designees and the Chapter members. The ExCom shall define from time to time the methods and procedures by which these functions and services shall be delivered.

5.2 Publications. The ExCom shall arrange for Chapter publications to be distributed regularly by print or electronic means to all Chapter members, giving notice and reporting proceedings of the ExCom, Chapter meetings, elections and other news, including announcements of social events and outings.

5.3 Conservation Program. The Chapter Conservation Program shall further the conservation objectives and priorities of the Club within Chapter boundaries, assist in international, national and regional Club actions; and provide for the development and execution of specific conservation strategies and action programs authorized by the ExCom.

There shall be a standing Conservation Committee which will administer the Conservation Program. The membership of this Committee shall be determined by the ExCom.

The ExCom shall appoint a Conservation Chair who shall provide a point of contact for the public and other Club leaders, and assist the ExCom in conservation planning, budget decisions, resolving conflicts, training, and implementation of the Conservation Program.

The Program shall be coordinated with other Club entities. Chapter leaders shall not make a statement or take a position publicly that is contrary to a policy or position established by the Board of Directors, the duly authorized chapter, group, committee or other Club entity, or the Club membership through referendum, nor shall Club leaders or staff members mention their Sierra Club affiliation if they, in their own names, make a statement or take a position contrary to established policy.

Conservation actions may not include civil disobedience. No chapter, group, nor other Club entity shall encourage, request or direct any person to violate the law.

The Conservation Program shall provide an opportunity for groups, sections, other Chapter entities, and individual members, to be-

come involved in conservation activities. The program shall also provide for recruiting and training activists to develop the necessary skills and judgment, for publication and discussion of conservation issues, and for networking and alert systems, such as phone trees and electronic mail.

5.4 Membership Program. The ExCom shall provide for a membership program that keeps a copy of the roster of current members, assists in efforts to recruit and retain members, and is responsible for recruiting and welcoming members and encouraging them to participate in Club and Chapter activities.

5.5 Outings and Activities. The Chapter ExCom shall manage any outings and activities programs in cooperation with Chapter entities that conduct such outings and activities. Such management shall include but is not limited to the establishment of codes of conduct appropriate to each type of activity, provisions for approval and publication of notices, training and certification of leaders, screening of participants, compliance with insurance restrictions and other Club policies, handling of reservations and fees, restricting group size and environmental impact, and investigation of incidents and complaints. All outings and activities shall be sanctioned in advance.

5.6 Political Action. The Chapter's political program shall include evaluating political issues and positions, planning and conducting the endorsement and support of candidates for public office, and developing and leading the efforts necessary for those processes. This program may include federal, state, provincial, territorial, and local government races as well as ballot initiatives, and shall be conducted in compliance with applicable law and the Club's electoral compliance guidelines.

6. Groups and Sections. 6.1 Groups. With ExCom approval, Chapter members residing in a contiguous Chapter area may form a group, subject to Chapter and Club approval of group bylaws. A group shall elect its own executive committee by secret written ballot provided to all group members.

6.2 Sections. With ExCom approval, Chapter members interested in special activities consistent with Club purposes, or other appropriate subsets of Chapter members, may form sections, subject to approval of section operating procedures. Because section membership is optional, sections may assess dues and also charge for activities, as permitted by the Chapter ExCom.

6.3 Reports. Each group and section shall submit an annual report of its activities to the Chapter ExCom.

6.4 Suspension and Dissolution. By two-thirds vote, the Chapter ExCom members present at a regular or special meeting may suspend or dissolve a group or section, if, in the judgment of the ExCom, such action is in the best interest of the Club. Such action shall not affect the standing of the individual members as members of the Club or Chapter. Suspension or dissolution shall only take place after written specification of the grounds for the proposed action are furnished to the members of the group or section affected and to the Board or its designees. At the same ExCom meeting, Chapter members shall have an opportunity to comment on the proposed action.

Upon dissolution, all remaining assets of the dissolved group or section shall revert to the Chapter.

As an alternative to dissolution, the Chapter ExCom may require new elections to be held for group or section office.

7. Finances. 7.1 Receiving and Expending Funds. The Chapter may receive funds from Club entities and may receive contributions directly. The Chapter may not assess or collect dues from its members, or charge additional fees for Chapter publications distributed to all Chapter members. Expenditures shall be consistent with all rules, policies and directives of the Board and its designees.

7.2 Fundraising and Fees for Outings and Activities. Consistent with rules, policies and directives of the Board or its designees, the Chapter may conduct fundraising and other activities, including outings, that require members and others to pay a fee to participate. Such fees may include both direct and indirect costs and provide for operating reserves. Announcements of fundraising events shall indicate the intended use of the proceeds.

7.3 Authority Over Deposited Funds. The ExCom shall have authority over all funds deposited in accounts in the name of the Chapter and its entities. Every bank, savings, or investment account must have on the signature list for that account at least two signatures, including the signature of a Chapter ExCom officer, generally the Treasurer or Chair.

7.4 Requirement to Deposit. Unless otherwise specified by the ExCom or the Board or its designees, all monies received by Chapter entities shall be deposited promptly in an account bearing the name of the entity, the Chapter, and of the Sierra Club.

7.5 Delegation of Authority. The ExCom may delegate financial authority to Chapter entities. The Chapter shall retain responsibility.

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Global Warming & Letters to Editor

ity and control. Chapter entities must provide satisfactory accounting at least quarterly to the Chapter Treasurer, including all reports required to satisfy Club requirements and applicable laws.

7.6 Prohibitions. The Chapter and its entities may not borrow money, own real estate, or contribute from its general funds to political campaigns, candidates, or their parties.

7.7 Fiscal Year. The fiscal year of the Chapter shall coincide with that of the Club.

7.8 Books and Reports. The Chapter Treasurer shall keep proper books of account, and shall report balances, revenues, and expenses of the Chapter and its entities to the ExCom at least quarterly, and to the Club Treasurer or designee at the end of the fiscal year. The Chapter Treasurer shall either file, or provide the Club Treasurer with timely information and funds required to file, all reports and returns required to satisfy Club requirements and applicable laws.

7.9 Review. As soon as practicable after the close of the fiscal year, the ExCom shall cause a review to be made of the books, including those of all Chapter entities. The results of the review shall be submitted to the ExCom for their approval.

8. Construction and Amendment. **8.1 Interpretation of Bylaws.** All questions as to the construction or meaning of these Bylaws are first to be referred to the Chapter ExCom for decision. Appeals from such decisions may be taken to the appropriate level, as established by rules of the Board of Directors. The decision of the highest of these entities that chooses to act shall be final. All procedures not prescribed by the Bylaws and Standing Rules of the Club, these Bylaws, or the Standing Rules of the Chapter, shall be governed by the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, newly revised.

8.2 Amendment. These Bylaws are fundamental and shall not be added to, amended or repealed except by a two-thirds vote of the Chapter ExCom and a two-thirds vote of all mail ballots cast in an Annual or Special Election. After proposed bylaw changes have been approved by the Chapter ExCom, and before they are submitted to a vote of Chapter members, they shall be submitted to the Board or its designees for review and approval.

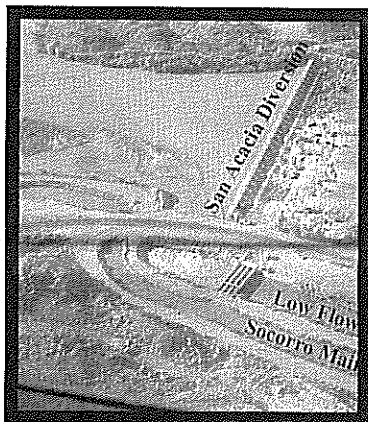
If an amendment expands the size of the ExCom, but the annual election was held for fewer members, the ExCom may appoint members or hold a special election to fill the new positions. If the amendment reduces the size of the ExCom, the elected members receiving the most votes shall serve. Approval by vote of the members is not re-

Global Warming: An Opportunity To Learn

The next meeting of the Southwest Regional Conservation Committee (SWRCC) is scheduled for October 7 and 8 in Santa Fe. At this meeting, a team of specialists in global warming will make a presentation.

The entire Sierra Club is broken down into regions that cover multiple Chapters. The chapters from Utah, Colorado, and Arizona join ours in this region. The SWRCC rotates meetings among the constituent chapters. As a conservation organization, one of the goals is to provide educational opportunities for its members.

Since the details are still emerging at press time, if you want more information, we need to our chapter chair. Gwen Wardwell, at 984-8860, will be happy to help.



The dam that blocks all those minnows -- minnows who can't swim upstream after floating downstream.

quired for amendments needed to keep these Bylaws consistent with changes in the Club Bylaws, directives of the Board or its designees, or to correct inconsequential errors or omissions. Such amendments shall require only a majority vote of the ExCom.

A current copy of these Bylaws shall be filed at the principal office of the Sierra Club.

8.3 Signatures and Effective Date. These bylaws and any amended versions shall be signed and dated by officers acting on behalf of the ExCom and by the national entity designated to approve bylaws. These Bylaws as amended shall take effect on June 1, 2000 or when the signed copy is filed at the principal office of the Sierra Club, whichever is later. A copy of the signature page shall be returned to the Chapter, and shall be attached to all reproduced copies.

Rio Grande Chapter

Gwen Wardwell, Chair
Sierra Club Bylaws And
Standing Rules Committee
Owen Maloy, Chair

Letters to the Editor

Editor,

Ralph Nader is more than an academic interest to me. I began two Nader's Raiders group in college, one as a Notre Dame senior and the other while bored in grad school at Virginia Tech. These Public Interest Research Groups are alive and well in many places around the country, including one at UNM. In the mid-1980's I worked directly for Ralph in Washington, organizing an effort to get the Maryland legislature to pass a banking reform. So, I have known Ralph as a mentor, employee and hero. And I am voting for Al Gore for president.

We have yet another presidential election where the contrasts, not the similarities, are sufficiently broad to allow voters a clear choice, at least when it comes to issues affecting the environment. Ralph Nader's candidacy could torpedo efforts to address our most important challenges to our air, water, habitat, and land. How? By taking away votes from Gore, the Teddy Roosevelt of our time, and lead to the election of George W. Bush.

To say, as Nader constantly does, that there is not a nickel's worth of difference between Bush and Gore is beyond hyperbole, it is irresponsible. On the environment, the difference is fundamental, even at the level of the running mates. Two stalwarts of the environment versus two big oil buds: no difference?

If you have a less than satisfactory taste in your mouths from 8 years of Clinton at your helm; consider how you'd feel if Vice President Gore was not there to persuade Clinton to

- protect the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge
- enact tough clean air rules
- secure more financing for programs like energy conservation research
- promote many measures to preserve diminishing wild areas.

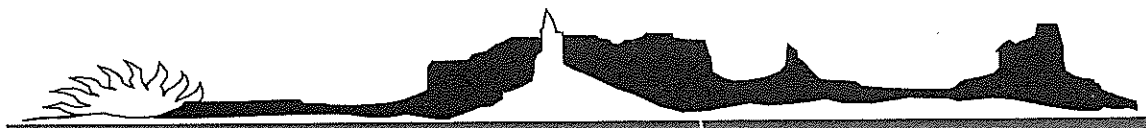
Bush's infamous record on the environment could hardly be less impressive. He has allowed Texas' biggest polluters, his contributors, to write environmental laws that make compliance voluntary. Texas under his leadership is 49th in the nation in per capita environmental spending. Houston has now surpassed long-suffering Los Angeles as the smoggiest city. Texas now claims the country's highest levels of air and water pollution and toxic releases. As for Bush's environment promises:

- hand over the Arctic Refuge to the oil industry
- dilute the Clean Water Act
- eviscerate the Clean Air Act
- lift protections on public lands.

I am dismayed at those who would turn their backs on such a clear choice. To vote for Nader in an election that truly makes a difference is merely feeding into the cynicism rampant in a country of non-voters. Far better to vote on local and state races where the third party candidate of your choice actually has a chance of winning than throw away your vote in a way that could elect your worst nightmare.

Sincerely, Ken Hughes





Water In The Rio

Statesmanship from Page 1

flunked. It allowed short term calculations of profit and loss to obscure the greater dividends of preserving integrity and sense of place. Present efforts toward downtown revitalization may yet renew Albuquerque's urban identity, but they cannot recapture the singularity of heritage that abided in the Alvarado's walls.

Now another test of character awaits Albuquerque and the entire Middle Rio Grande Valley. Its central question is deceptively simple: what do the people of the valley owe by way of care or stewardship to the river that makes possible their homes, their wealth, and their communities? To believe a recent public opinion poll, the people of the region are exceptionally loyal to their river. They say that providing clean drinking water is the only water use more important than maintaining the river as a living river, together with the plants and creatures that depend on it. Rural people say this even more emphatically than urban respondents. There seems to be agreement that although the river may no longer be Grande, it should at least remain a Rio. But to believe much of the rhetoric currently dominating the news media, one might conclude that the job of caring for the river always belongs to somebody else. Why the difference; what gives?

The Middle Rio Grande is slowly dying of thirst, and only the endangered status of one of its last native fishes, the silvery minnow, prevents it from becoming a dead ditch. The recently mediated *modus vivendi* to prevent the extinction of the silvery minnow through the remainder of the present irrigation season is a good first step toward assuring a living future for the river, but we still have a long way to go. We'll have a better chance of making wise choices if we do so in a context of accurate information and sound ideas.

Try this one: the Endangered Species Act and the silvery minnow are not a curse on the region; they are a blessing. Without them, our compounding demands for water would already have done to the Rio Grande what wrecking crews did to the Alvarado. A dead ditch and a parking lot share a common sterility. The goal we must seek is the opposite in richness. It includes a live river, healthy agriculture, and secure communities. Those who damn the minnow (this is done in legal terms by arguing that it is exclusively a federal responsibility) commit a double sin: they both curse the darkness and fail to light a lamp.

Win-win solutions exist, but we won't reach them until we abandon the distorted view of present tensions as a fight between fish and farmers. Such a characterization makes for easy copy and captions, but like all stereotyping it draws its main strength from prejudice, not from fact. It also obscures and unnecessarily delays the long-term mutual accommodation that our communities desire. Other regions are far ahead of us in learning

this lesson. In California, for instance, various agricultural districts are successfully conserving water for alternative uses -- and earning a profit in the bargain. The same thing can happen here -- but only if people lower the volume of their rhetoric and look at facts afresh.

Misinformation and missing information are as detrimental to useful public discourse as good information is essential. The outstanding recent series on the Rio Grande by the Albuquerque Journal has rendered real service toward broadening public understanding of the river's plight. Yet to believe the Journal's editorial page, one might conclude that legal actions by environmentalists have destroyed possibilities for future collaborative problem solving.

In fact they have accomplished the opposite. The force of law has clearly been necessary this summer to keep the river wet and to avoid extinction of the minnow. Only the power of the court has been able to bring the principal interests to consensual agreement in addressing the needs of the river, even if only temporarily. The challenge is to build on this foundation and for the parties to craft the longer term multi-lateral agreements on which survival of the river will depend.

Some weeks back, one might also have understood from an editorial presented here that the Bureau of Reclamation's order to the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District to keep the river wet was an imperial imposition on district farmers to bear solely the burden of sustaining the minnow. Such a view may have gratified the ire of anti-federalists, but it was no more factual than proclamations of Dewey's defeat of Truman in 1948. The facts are these: as of the day of its order, Reclamation had bought 78,000 acre feet of water with which to maintain the minnow through the irrigation season. MRGCD had meanwhile provided no more than 3,000 acre feet. Moreover, as of the issuance of the order, MRGCD had taken no action to ration water deliveries, even though, irrespective of the minnow's needs, shortages loomed. Ratepayers of the district and the general public may want to ask why drought contingencies were ignored through April, May, and June of this very tough year. Reclamation has since continued to buy water for the minnow, and farmers have borne little if any of the burden. The recent apparent shortage of irrigation water that occasioned a demonstration near Socorro was the result of delivery management problems, not the taking of farming water for environmental purposes.

Misinformation and missing information have also attended most newspaper discussions of the river's history. One oft-repeated bit of nonsense holds that in 1752 some four hundred miles of the river ran dry. Upon examination the source of that non-observation proves to be a famous teller of tall tales, James Ohio Pattie, who came though New

Mexico in the late 1820s, more than half a century after the event he purported to describe. To put the matter politely, Pattie did not know what he was talking about.

But the river does run dry, no question about that. In 1752 it appears to have run dry in the El Paso area and upstream not quite as far as Hatch. Evidence for the 19th century suggests that it went dry at El Paso about once every seven to ten years. After the large-scale development of irrigated agriculture in the San Luis Valley of Colorado in the 1880s, it ran dry more frequently and over longer stretches.

But now for the missing information: it is foolishness to say that, since the minnow prospered in times past when the river periodically ran dry, it should be able to survive a dry river now. Compare the river past and present. Once it was longitudinally whole; all its parts connected; today it is severed into shorter lengths by dams, diversions, and reservoir stillwater. Once the river meandered across a broad floodplain, often in braided channels among which ponds and sloughs abounded. When flows diminished or ceased, remnant pools sustained this complex system and offered refuge for the river's creatures. But levees, jetty jacks, and an unnatural flow regime controlled by multiple dams have narrowed and simplified the river, destroying its native resilience. As a result, the hydrological marvel that was once a twining of long liquid ropes has become a series of short, thin cords. No thinking person can doubt that the drying of the river today produces exponentially greater impacts than in the past.

Interstate Stream Commission engineer Norm Gaume has pointed out that the river does not possess enough water to satisfy everyone's desires. Clearly, we must contend with limits, yet we are not poor in alternatives. We face a range of choices, not just among uses, but among strategies for stretching supplies. If we are going to understand our options fully, we will need from local leaders, including the leadership of the MRGCD, qualities of candor, open-mindedness, and statesmanship that have not recently distinguished them. We also need for all members of the media to keep the big picture constantly before us. The enemy of understanding is the rapid jerking of the knee, and the task ahead demands cool heads and broad vision. May we all, as necessary, strap our ankles down. More is at stake than a fish. The needless loss of the Alvarado should remind us how easy it is to embrace a path, attractive in its simplicity, that is shortsighted, wasteful, and irredeemably wrong.

[William deBuys lives in Santa Fe. His latest book, Salt Dreams: Land and Water in Low-Down California, won the 1999 Western States Book Award for Creative Non Fiction.]



Water In The Rio & Stop Sprawl

Minnow Safe For Now from Page 3

Fighting Sprawl

by Edward Archuleta
Sprawl Issues Chair

In fact, however, almost all remaining silvery minnows are confined to the 55 mile stretch of river between the San Acacia Diversion Dam, a dozen or so miles north of Socorro, and the headwaters of Elephant Butte Reservoir. This is because of the presence of three diversion dams in this stretch of the river, combined with the manner in which the minnow reproduces. The minnows release their eggs into the current when they reproduce, where the eggs and young fish float downstream for about five days before the fish are able to control their movements. Under natural conditions, silvery minnows would swim back upstream in the course of their lives. However, if the eggs or young fish float over diversion dams, they are trapped below the dam.

Over the years, the surviving population of silvery minnows has in fact become heavily concentrated in the reach south of the southernmost of the diversion dams -- at San Acacia. Almost none are now found anywhere else. However, this is precisely the area that is dried up almost every year during irrigation season. In 1996, an estimated ten thousand minnows died in this stretch when the river was emptied at the beginning of irrigation season. Broadly speaking, our goals are thus first, to keep the San Acacia reach wet to prevent the extinction of the minnow; second, to remove the diversion dams to allow minnows to repopulate upstream areas, so that drying of the San Acacia reach is not so critical to the species' survival; and third, to improve upstream habitat so that it is better suited to the needs of the silvery minnow and to otherwise implement necessary measures to ensure the survival of the species.

Here are highlights of what we got in the settlement of the preliminary injunction motion and what it means for the silvery minnow:

We got 49,900 acre-feet of water for the minnow from the City of Albuquerque and the United States. While this is a considerable amount of water, it is important to realize that unless we get significant rainfall and cooler temperatures, it is unlikely that this water will be enough to keep the San Acacia reach wet through the end of irrigation season. However, the agreement permits us to go back to court if the water proves to be insufficient. Unless weather conditions significantly improve, we may well be back in court on another motion for a preliminary injunction in September.

The agreement also provided 36,000 acre-feet of water for farmers. This water also assists the minnow to some extent, because a substantial amount of water is lost to open water evaporation and evapotranspiration between the upstream reservoirs where the water is stored and the San Acacia reach where the water is needed. If the irrigation water is in the river, we will not have to bear all of those losses ourselves. This provision of the

I recently received an email message from a member, Marianne Thaeler of Las Cruces, who wanted to know what folks in Dona Ana County could do to fight sprawl. She mentioned that this southern New Mexico county was one of the fastest growing in the country, up 25.7% in population in the last ten years. In fact, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, Dona Ana now has 170,361 residents, thirty-five thousand more than they did at the beginning of the 1990's making it the second largest county in the state.

Ironically, as the newly appointed chair of the Sprawl Issues Subcommittee for the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club, and as a project director with 1000 Friends of New Mexico -- the state's leading advocacy group fighting sprawl, I didn't have an answer right off.

It really made me think, "How do you fight sprawl?" As the number one issue that the Sierra Club has taken on in the last year, it is something we should all become more intimately involved in. Sprawl is the one issue that affects everything that the Club stands

agreement also shows how minnow management can be good for farmers as well as fish. Without this agreement, farmers would have had to stop irrigating around September 10. Now they can irrigate through the end of October. It is fish AND farmers, not fish versus farmers.

The agreement provides for reconnecting the river and for upstream passage for the silvery minnow, i.e., removal of the diversion dams.

The mediation will continue in September to attempt to agree on other components of a long-term solution to ensure the survival of the silvery minnow.

The survival of the silvery minnow is by no means certain. The minnow water is being managed close to the edge to try to stretch it out. If a mistake is made, minnows could be lost, and there may be too few minnows to recover. We could end up needing more water this year, and the court might not agree with our legal theories and refuse to give it to us. Next year could be even more difficult than this year. It is unlikely that the long-term measures to ensure the species' survival could be implemented before next year, and if the drought continues into next year, it may be even more difficult to find water for the minnow. No one should feel sanguine because of the settlement this summer. The fate of the silvery minnow still hangs in the balance.

[Richard Barish is Rio Grande Issues Chair for the Central N. M. Group, as well as the Chapter Legal Chair, and the Chapter's Trade Issues Chair.] [See related photo on pg. 9]

for - protection of the environment, conservation of water, rivers and open space, defense of wildlife and endangered species, advocates for cleaner air. If sprawl wins the battle, we will have lost everything else we care about.

So what can we do? First I would highly recommend obtaining a copy of our recent publication, *Sprawl Costs/Sprawl Solutions*. It outlines what sprawl is, and what the cost is to us as citizens and taxpayers. But more importantly it offers solutions -- tools such as promoting infill and higher densities in our cities. Changing the zoning laws to allow for mixed-use developments (residential and commercial areas mixed together to lessen dependence on the automobile). Buying open space to preserve land from development. Promoting the use of transfer of development rights. Forming conservation land trusts. Insisting that our cities and counties work together in managing growth.

But none of this is possible (or at least most of it) without government intervention. Since the early part of this century the U.S. Supreme Court has upheld in numerous cases, that one role of government is to protect its citizens through planning and zoning laws, so this isn't a Communist plot.

The number one thing that we can do to fight sprawl, is to let our government -- city, county, state and federal -- know that we care about how and where we grow, about our quality of life, about preserving those things that make the Southwest a special and beautiful place to life.

Start making a nuisance of yourself at neighborhood meetings, at City Hall, in County Commission Chambers, and at the State Capitol. Tell your elected and appointed officials that new developments away from urbanized areas are inappropriate and unnecessary. Advocate for redevelopment and revitalization in existing areas, including infill. And don't become a "NIMBY" ("not in my backyard"). We're all in this together and we all have to do our part. Ask them that you want open space bond measures on the ballot. Urge them to create regional planning bodies so that overlapping jurisdictions work together on managing growth.

It's not going to be easy. But if we care about where we live, we have no alternative. Time is running out. Just look at metropolitan areas around us in our neighboring states. Do we want to become like Phoenix, or Denver, or Dallas? I think not. As members of the Sierra Club, it is our duty to become involved and help save this unique corner of our planet.

The Sprawl Issues Subcommittee is currently recruiting members to help with its efforts. If you'd like to participate, please call Edward at 820-7452 in Santa Fe, or at edarchuleta@aol.com



Living on Our Planet

Toad Time

by Kathy Roberts
Placitas

Well, it's that time of year again. The thunderstorms are booming across the mesa and that means, you guessed it, the toads are out. Just this morning, I found my first intrepid explorer staring down one of my cats and trying to figure out how to burrow into the brick floor of my pantry. After moving him to some soft, moist dirt where he could protect himself, I decided to sit down and write to all those people who called, wrote, came by, stopped me in the village, in the store, or in the post office, and asked how to best take care of our little friends.

A lot of things have happened in the year since the Boston Globe article came out. I've learned a great deal about toads in general, and our toads especially. This year it's going to be particularly tough on them, not only because of the extreme drought conditions, but because of the mindless and rampant growth forced upon us by greed motivated local developers who claim to be our neighbors and a *laissez faire* County Commission that claims to be our government.

The presence of heavy machinery, increased traffic, and paving of roads are already having a noticeable effect. Between the outright destruction of their limited habitats and the vibrations of the heavy machinery (which creates a sound wave through the ground that mimics the sound frequency of thunder and is the toads signal to emerge and feed) the population of adult, breeding age toads is diminishing quickly. If they emerge and can't find water, they're dead. Period. End of toad. Biologists in Arizona and New Mexico have already determined that heavy machinery and recreational vehicle use (ATV's, motorcycles, etc.) are one of the leading causes, if not in fact THE leading cause, of premature emergence. And then there are the roads. Paving and grading of dirt roads have drastically

changed the surface water availability. The water can't absorb into the new blacktop, so it runs off. More often than not, it runs off on to the roads the County didn't pave and into places it hasn't ever flowed before. This leaves the toads high and dry because they've burrowed in the same places for YEARS, having somehow, in some toadly way, determined where it's going to be wet enough next year to re-emerge. And as if that wasn't enough, the petroleum based asphalt is leaching all kinds of toxins into the surface water the toads so desperately require.

The importance of safe water for the toads cannot be understated. Biologically, they depend on water in a way too complex to discuss here, but suffice to say, any contamination interferes with their metabolism, and their metabolisms are far too marginal to begin with. So, if you see one of our little neighbors out in the open, on dry ground, or being harassed by a pet, please take the time to rescue the poor thing. Get it into some soft, moist soil and cross your fingers. With any kind of luck, when the rains do come, you'll be able to hear one of the most beautiful songs the mesa can offer.

I would also like to thank the many kind and generous people, without whom this project wouldn't have otherwise succeeded and those who came out and adopted toads last year. Because of the dry conditions and the changes in road drainage I am worried about being able to maintain the toad ponds this year, so if you have a good place to release them where they've got a chance to survive, or if you just want to know more about these wonderful creatures, please contact me.

Kathy "The Toad Lady" Roberts
PO Box 561
Placitas, NM 87043
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Cohousing:

A Kindred Spirit

by Shea Richland

Over six years ago a group of concerned citizens came together in Prescott to create a community where the environment and people were both highly valued. Many of these people were members of organizations like Sierra Club, Nature Conservancy and the Audubon Society. Their values are reflected in a new cohousing neighborhood where the first residents are moving their new homes this month. A Grand Opening celebration is slated for later this summer. Manzanita Village of Prescott is pedestrian oriented and within walking and biking distance to schools, shopping, hiking and entertainment. Located on 12.5 acres, townhouse-style homes are clustered around a common outdoor space. This conserves much of the land as possible for natural habitat and community gardens and contributes to a safe, congenial and ecologically sensitive environment. Energy efficient homes utilize passive solar heating and heat recovery ventilation. Living together in a cooperative community enables singles and families to take advantage of the group for things like child care, bulk food ordering and gardening. It encourages a more environmentally friendly approach to living by fostering recycling, composting, car pooling and sharing resources. This cohousing neighborhood is designed after a concept which originated in Denmark, made its way to the United States about ten years ago and definitely has taken root in America. Flagstaff, Phoenix, Shonover, Tucson, Winkelman, and Roosevelt are host to cohousing or intentional communities in some stage of development. There are about 40 cohousing communities in existence nationwide, another 40 under construction and another 150 groups in process. For more information about Manzanita Village of Prescott call 1-800-555-3810 or visit our Website mwaz.com/cohousing.

Nova

by Charles G. Bell

Two days of rest from the city; they are welcome.
Afternoon: the sky relaxing, holds the horizoned land;
Fields and oaks are brown, the elms are bare;
One sycamore lifts tattered leaves, fold
In the long light, over the whiteness of boughs.
On gusts of wind, clouds are forming and dissolving.
Through which, in slower recurrence, brightens the moon.

But look: that wood lot, felled, those farms abandoned;
Where commuter houses mushroom: there and there.
And yet we call it nature and solitude-
All things being relative to what we have.
Across earth's curve, trails a wedge of smoke,
A new power plant by the Skokie line-
Likely, they say, to become nuclear.

I have also heard-ironical speculation-
That the work of man is to make stellar explosions,
Novae of the night, flashing the record
Of such mad discovery and release as ours.
I call it doubtful; but the truth is no less bitter:

Bacteria too disrupt their habitat;
This waste and overweening is a mark
Of life-not of life only. If new stars
Are not the pyres of warring creatures,
It is only that atoms can explode without us;
They have their native ways which we inherit;
The perilous urge and chain-reaction,
From bound to unbound fated flameword.

South and west a freight train rumbles;
A flight of jets crosses overhead.
They are not even gainful wings of commerce,
But trainers of war from the Glencoe base.
Tomorrow we return to the soar of the city.
Two days of rest on a temporal island,
We watch the winter woods and enduring sky,
As we dream in the eddy of an exploding star.

[from POEMS, 2000, Collected Revived from SONGS: 1953 & '66,
pp. 26-7. "Nova" (new form): Nova (Chicago, Nov. 1951); For
Isabel Harper, our Libertyville Hostess]

Walking Gently on Our Planet

Waste Reduction from Page 3

sue paper. Food consumption for example has far ranging impacts that effect more than grocery stores and our buying habits. Transportation consumption has similar far ranging impacts. We will develop impact statements and develop education materials for our chapter and groups. I know there is someone out there that has an interest here and would take this ball and run with it. I'm starting to get some great information on consumption reduction groups nation wide and want to develop a plan for NM too. Please contact me.

3) **Lifestyle Simplification.** As I said, Waste reduction is something I know. Consumption Reduction is something that has a new twist but I understand how great the impact. This thing with lifestyle simplification intrigues and excites me to no end! I'm one of those stuck on that treadmill and they have it cranked up there where all I can do is rush from here to there trying to make ends meet, trying to get someplace that doesn't exist, trying to do what's right but knowing that this crazy life I'm leading, just in itself has negative environmental impacts. I'm going to get off that thing and something tells me it will be as difficult as stepping over a chalkline drawn on a sidewalk. That doesn't mean that I'm going to, "turn on and drop out!" I'm going to figure out how to simplify my life so that I can enjoy what's good and let the rest pass underneath. Like Consumption Reduction, there is tons of good information out there and we will bring it to you. In the 1800's Sweden was struggling with poverty and lack of education. They started forming small circles of folks working on education, 8-10 to a group. It saved their country and in 1989 they referred to themselves as a nation of circles. There is a growing movement over here called Circles of Simplicity where groups of folks get together regularly, as often as weekly. They meet in each others houses instead of other places to encourage "community" and work on ideas of simplification. People are finding that "stuff" takes money, energy and essence to acquire and then dispose of. Learning to simplify reduces a lot of clutter and gives us more time, funds, and clear thought to enjoy life. "LESS STUFF, MORE FUN"

Several churches and religious groups are involved, like the Unitarians and the Quakers. Maybe you have started. Maybe you could help me get some circles started within our membership. I think this "committee" has great potential and could be pure fun to get it going.

Contact me at: Jay Morrow 877-3137
Jmorrow@bernco.gov



Measuring Pollution: Rural-area Vehicles Emit More Particulates Than City Cousins

On top of looming tougher pollution rules for sport utility vehicles and other popular vehicles, an environmental engineer here now has devised a new measurement that is likely to have a future impact on air pollution measures and standards nationwide.

It's called ppvm — pollutant per vehicle mile — and it measures the total particulate-matter emissions a vehicle makes per mile traveled.

Jay R. Turner, D.Sc., assistant professor of chemical engineering and civil engineering and director of the University's Air Quality Laboratory, has performed an ambitious study of vehicular emissions in the St. Louis region, measuring particles smaller than 2.5 micrometers in diameter.

Results from an urban interstate site and a nearby rural Illinois site that Turner surveyed indicate that an average urban vehicle, whether a motorcycle or diesel truck, emits between 30 and 40 milligrams of particulate matter per mile traveled; an average rural vehicle emits between 200 and 300 milligrams ppvm traveled.

So much for fresh country air.

"We think there is much more heavy diesel traffic outside the city, and there are greater road dust emissions in rural areas because of the proximity to open land, and those account for higher rural readings," Turner explained.

Road dust is more than the simple dirt a vehicle stirs up as it moves along the road. Besides dirt from soil, road dust also contains the suspended fine particulate matter created from tail pipe emissions. It is a major component of vehicular air pollution and a matter of serious concern to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the medical profession. Upper respiratory illnesses, cardiovascular diseases such as arrhythmia, and cancer increasingly are being linked to road dust and other vehicular particulate matter.

The acidity of the matter, its heavy metal composition and the sheer volume of minuscule particles suspended in the air all make your automobile particulate-matter air pollution a potential public health threat.

Turner and his students used particulate matter samplers that pull air through filters, measuring the mass of the filters before and after the sampling. They concentrated on Interstate 40, which runs through the heart of St. Louis, and Interstate 55 in Madison County, Ill., some 30 miles northeast of St. Louis.

Periodically, from January to April 1998, the team painstakingly counted and classified vehicles at both sites during six- to eight-hour time spans, taking five-minute readings every 15 minutes while they collected the particulate-matter samples. They determined that the rural site averaged about 1,300 vehicles per hour; the urban location varied widely from 7,500 to 10,000 vehicles per hour.

The results of the study, which was funded in part by the EPA, were published in the *Journal of Air and Waste Management Association*. The data he has collected, plus his analysis of U.S. EPA mathematical models that predict air particulate-matter emission rates, will help environmental agencies and municipalities better sample their roads and address their particulate-matter air quality challenges.

"The numbers indicate that a single vehicle stirs up a considerable amount of particulate matter, more so than what people might think," Turner said. "When you then consider that you can multiply this daily value by the many thousands of miles vehicles travel on the roads each day, you get a clearer view of what role the automobile potentially plays in air pollution."

For more information on this story, contact Tony Fitzpatrick (314) 935-5272.



Rio Grande Near San Antonio, New Mexico -- Summer 1996

Paul Tashjian

This is in the section of the Rio Grande in which most of the remaining silvery minnows live, below San Acacia dam. Due to the levees that have been constructed, constrain-

ing the braiding of the river, and all the dams (especially San Acacia), these pools are generally too shallow to support the minnow for long under these no-flow conditions.

Walking Gently on Our Planet

Costs of Sprawl: Crunching Numbers, Numbers Crunch

by C.L. Bothwell III

The developers, realtors and kowtowers to big business who people my county's Commission are struggling with the developers, realtors and kowtowers who want to supplant them. The burning issue, as ever, is who can make the county grow fastest.

Lately it has been gloomily reported that a handful of businesses have chosen not to locate here, for lack of adequate sites. Everything flat is in use. (As a cheerful Chamber of Commerce exec said awhile back, "The biggest problem Asheville has is the mountains.") (Different strokes.) This dismal business climate is abetted by a dearth of sewage and water pipes and other freebies dear to the hearts of transnational firms. It is further dampened by a lack of workers, with businesses reporting that they repeatedly hire from afar.

Let me get this straight: we don't have suitable places to put new businesses, we don't have the infrastructure necessary for those potential businesses, and we don't have workers for newbies to hire. Huh? Then, could someone please explain exactly why we need new businesses at all?

No, I'm not that dumb. I know why. We need to make some very wealthy people wealthier still. After all, who does benefit from growth? Big landowners anxious to develop their land and the developers who do the deed are obvious beneficiaries. The electric company and other energy providers do pretty well too. Supermarket chains and fast food fran-

chises can't wait. And our dear friend WalMart, murderer of downtowns worldwide, is absolutely ga-ga for growth.

In our current election the biggest developer South of town wants to knock off the biggest developer Southwest of town. His campaign posters carry the banner headline "FREEDOM!" and his platform is succinct: "No zoning."

Meanwhile, amongst the incumbents, boosters of growth claim that efforts by the Economic Development Commission have helped 32 businesses create 4,523 jobs in the last five years, and that this has "contributed substantially" to the \$18.2 million increase in state and local tax revenue" since then, and to the cumulative \$146 million rise in personal income during that same period. Let's do the math.

Suppose those 4,500 jobs contributed ALL of the \$18.2 million revenue increase, and let's suppose that the new workers make babies at half the national rate and therefore add 2000 children to public schools. Buncombe County spends \$4400 per student for education, a little over \$4000 of which is drawn from state and local taxes. (Work with me on this.) \$4000 times 2000 is \$8 million per year. (I did this a couple of times in my head, but you can use a calculator if you want to. Somebody should buy our Commissioners a calculator for sure.) This next part is no harder -- trust me -- \$8 million times 5 years is \$40 million.

So, we have an estimated \$40 million increase in education expense funded by an

estimated \$18 million in tax revenues. And that is only for education! This doesn't account for roads, sewers, water, police, landfill and all of the other pesky incidental expenses which increase with population. Nor does this account for whatever "incentives" have been offered to companies targeted for recruitment. This reiterates a fact which emerges in study after study, in state after state, that growth of an urban area always increases taxation. Always. "Increasing the tax base" to benefit current residents is a bald-faced lie.

Then what about the other claim, that development efforts have helped spur a cumulative \$146 million pay raise during that period? (I used a calculator on this one.)

That pay boost amounts to \$768 per capita for the 190 thousand residents here. For a two-income family of four making \$70,000 per year, that is a 4 percent increase over five years -- and those were five very, very robust years for the U.S. economy. In fact, I would be totally flabbergasted if most workers didn't enjoy a much larger increase during those years: the U.S. Labor Department announced a 4 percent increase in wages this past January alone. Since 1994, even the minimum wage rose by a third..... as did my property tax bill: a whopping 32%.

Growth is good for the greedy, the big cheeses that go crunch - on our wallets and our environment -- biting the hands that feed them. Perhaps we should withhold food?



Rio Grande and Houses In Flood Plain Near Socorro

Paul Tashjian

For reproduction of Cottonwood, flooding is required to plant seed. With houses in flood plain, flooding will cause

property damage. Solution is to maintain zoning that does not allow housing in flood plains -- and evidently Socorro County needs zoning

changes. Also, property insurance that is federally backed should not be available -- no insurance should be available at all!



Walking Gently on Our Planet

Population and Biodiversity

"The one process ongoing in the 1990s that will take millions of years to correct is the loss of genetic and species diversity by the destruction of natural habitats. This is the folly that our descendants are least likely to forgive us."

Edward O. Wilson

Extinction is not new to the planet. It is, in fact, an integral part of the history of life on Earth. However, the current rate of species loss is 150 times higher than the natural background rate of extinction. Human population growth interacts with resource consumption patterns in many complicated ways to produce this unprecedented mass extinction. This fact sheet addresses the main causes directly related to population size and growth: habitat alteration, invasive species, and overexploitation.

What is Biodiversity?

Short for "biological diversity," the term "biodiversity" describes the richness and complexity of life on Earth. Biodiversity is usually measured in numbers of species but is really much greater in scope. Biodiversity refers to both the number of living species and the number of different genes in those species' gene pools, for example. The loss of our planet's diversity is a disturbing fact.

Growing and Declining Numbers

On average, 2.37 people are born every second. Today, 5.8 billion people inhabit the planet. The United Nations projects that over the next 50 years, we may add nearly 4 billion more, totaling 9.4 billion people. Ninety-eight percent of this growth is expected to occur in low-income countries where natural resources and ecosystems are already stressed and fragile, and where social services are limited.

With an expanding human population, many non-human species face decline or total extermination. We destroyed 30 percent of the natural world between 1970 and 1995. At the current rate of extinction, the Earth will have lost 25% of its present number of species by 2050. Roughly 50,000 species vanish every year. Scientists estimate that Earth harbors between 7 and 20 million species, of which only 1.75 million have been cataloged. Sadly, many creatures will forever remain unknown to us, for they are disappearing before we get a chance even to learn about them.

Should We Care?

Yes! The loss of our planet's diversity touches us all. Biological diversity underpins our existence—only a species-rich environment can provide us with food, fibers, and many other products which we usually take for granted. Plants and microorganisms create our soils; forests cleanse the air and replenish our groundwater supplies; frogs, fish, and birds control pests; insects provide pollination services without which many plants would not reproduce. The list is long and many interactions have not yet been explored.

Keeping Options Alive

The reason for the preservation of Earth's natural communities can be summed up in one concise phrase: We must keep options alive. Ultimately we depend on the natural world for everything. For example:

We depend on the natural world for our food supply. Genetic diversity of our crops and livestock is vital for our future food security in a

rapidly changing world. Genetically impoverished stocks are more susceptible to pests and disease. All agricultural crops must be periodically bred with wild varieties to increase or maintain their productivity levels.

Scientists also note that biodiversity supports our health care system. Twenty-five percent of drugs prescribed in the U.S. contain chemical compounds derived from wild species. The cure for AIDS or cancer may be hidden in the vast tracts of still unexplored rainforests. By destroying forests today, we are limiting our options for treating illness in the future.

Why Mass Extinction?

As more and more people inhabit the planet, less room, or habitat, is available for other species. Our behavior has caused broad-scale modifications of the natural world, affecting animal and plant life in many ways. Three human-induced factors stand out as primary causes for the unprecedented rate of species loss: habitat alteration, the spreading of invasive species, and overexploitation.

Habitat alteration

Habitat alteration is by far the most significant cause of global species decline. Humans claim more resources today than any other organism on Earth. In the process of making room for our growing numbers, we plow under and pave over, split up and cut down, drain, pollute, contaminate, and sell away previously intact landscapes, and thereby destroy invaluable habitat for thousands of species. Industrial and agricultural pollutants poison individuals of many species and make their habitats unfit for continued survival.

Today, only 27% of Earth's habitable land mass remains undisturbed. Large land mammals with a need for large home ranges, and endemic species (species that are highly adapted to a restricted geographic area and do not occur anywhere else on Earth) are most affected by habitat destruction.

As habitats dwindle, so does the possibility for species to move and migrate. This becomes particularly dangerous given the threat of global climate change. Should weather patterns change, plants and animals cannot shift their range as they were able to in the evolutionary past, and are thus more vulnerable to extinction.

Deforestation is quite possibly the greatest threat to biodiversity at present. Forests are biodiversity "hotspots". The alarming rates of deforestation are clearly linked to the actions and aims of commercial logging companies, large landowners, distant consumers, international development agencies, and government officials. Socio-economic and political factors like inequities in wealth and land ownership also play key roles in the loss of habitat.

Invasive Species

Either intentionally or unintentionally, a traveling or migrating human population contributes to the spreading of so-called "invasive" or "alien" species. These are highly adaptable plant or animal species that, once introduced into a new environment, manage to reproduce successfully, and then compete with native species for valuable resources. These "pests" oftentimes outcompete or even prey on more susceptible and vulnerable species. Endemic species are especially threatened by the invasion of non-native species.

In Hawaii, 75% of the original flora and fauna has been replaced by non-native, invasive species. The archipelago's unique bird populations

were among the hardest hit. Approximately 90 Hawaiian bird species were endemic to the islands. Barely one-third have survived the onslaught of alien species introduced by Polynesian and European settlers. About 66% of the remaining native birds are threatened with extinction.

Overexploitation

Humanity has always utilized nature's services for survival. Exploitation of species for food, clothing, and shelter has seldom led to serious problems in the past. But in today's densely populated and profit-driven world, many species are hunted, trapped or killed above their rate of replacement. This is overexploitation. Profiteering and fashion fads fuel global demand and drive commercial overexploitation.

What Can We Do?

Species loss is a difficult problem to tackle. It is the ultimate, measurable result of many interacting and mutually reinforcing factors. A successful approach to biodiversity conservation must therefore be integrated.

Protected Areas

National governments have established parks and other designated protected areas to combat the rapid decline in biodiversity. A worldwide total area of 1 billion hectares, equivalent to the size of Canada, is officially "protected." Laudable as such efforts are, there still exist numerous problems including proper law enforcement. Official protection does not necessarily mean actual protection.

The 1973 Endangered Species Act

The U.S. Endangered Species Act (ESA) stands today as the main line of defense against further species loss in the United States. Passed by Congress in 1972, the law intends "to provide a means whereby the ecosystems upon which endangered and threatened species depend may be conserved, and to provide a program for the conservation of these species." Some species like the Bald Eagle have experienced a comeback under ESA protection. This law needs to remain strong.

Stabilizing Our Numbers and Consuming Less

Stabilization of human numbers and consumption at sustainable levels throughout the world is essential. The Sierra Club's Population Program works for population stabilization by advocating increases in U.S. funding for international and domestic family planning programs, and for foreign assistance that supports equity for and empowerment of women in societies throughout the world.

The Sierra Club's

International Population Campaign

The goal of the International Population Campaign (global and domestic in scope) is to stabilize population and reduce excessive consumption in order to protect our global environment and preserve our natural resource base for our families, for families throughout the world, and for our common future.

The objectives of the International Population Campaign are:

To seek increased U.S. funding for international and domestic family planning and reproductive health programs to ensure that couples in the U.S. and abroad are able to plan the size and spacing of their families.

To seek to stabilize population and reduce excessive consumption by pursuing equity and empowerment of women.

More: www.sierraclub.org/population

CENTRAL NEW MEXICO GROUP NEWS

NEWS AND INFORMATION FOR AND ABOUT NEW MEXICO'S LARGEST SIERRA CLUB GROUP

We Endorse John Kelly!

Nobody needs to tell Sierrans how important this election year will be to the future of our American Wildlife and Wildland Heritage. We face some particularly clear choices this year and bear some equally clear responsibilities. The race for New Mexico's First Congressional District is one of a handful of pivotal races nationally. As the largest assembly of conservationists in the district, the Central NM Group of the Sierra Club has a special responsibility under these circumstances and shirking this responsibility is not an honorable option. Thus, we have paid careful attention to the records of the candidates, their potential to be successfully elected and the probable costs or benefits of such electoral success.

Although the incumbent has been slow to respond to conservation community efforts to communicate with her and better understand her thinking, the circumstances behind US Representative Heather Wilson paint a pretty clear picture. She is not from this part of the country; she has painfully little knowledge of, seemingly even less interest in, the uniquely beautiful resources of this part of the country or even the needs, desires, or thinking of the people she claims to represent; and her voting record has been that of someone who was hand-picked, by Republican bigshots at the national level, to be a "Stepford Wife" for the rightwing agenda, which is just what happened. Senator Domenici dutifully came back to town for a visit, anointed her as Representative Schiff's successor, and quickly herded the local GOP into dancing to the tune.

Heather Wilson doesn't vote on our behalf. She doesn't know us or this district and could care less. Her record on conservation issues has been abysmal, just what you would expect from a politician who owes her position to rightwing party bigshots... lock, stock, and barrel.

We desperately need a change in this district and there is indeed a Green Party candidate in the race; however, those of you who have been watching politics in New Mexico over the past decade know that the Green Party can inadvertently make itself the best ally

the GOP ever had. This race is too important for us. This time, we need to make our votes count. We must get Heather Wilson into another line of work. We can't afford to cast symbolic votes this time.

We have another option, a very good option. This time around, former US Attorney for New Mexico John Kelly is running for the seat in New Mexico's First Congressional District. He is not just a good candidate; he is an excellent candidate.

As US Attorney, John heroically withstood enormous pressure to take direct and critical steps to enforce and thereby preserve the strength of the Endangered Species Act, the Bald Eagle Protection Act, Clean Water Act, the Archaeological Resources Protection Act, and many other laws that we, as conservationists, rely upon in our efforts to safeguard our natural and cultural heritage.

Throughout his long and distinguished career, John Kelly has worked to protect the public interest. He represented the City of Newport Beach in a successful fight to stop a potentially disastrous expansion of the John Wayne Airport. He represented the Burnham Chapter of the Navajo Nation against the Consolidated Coal Company, El Paso Natural Gas Company, and the US Bureau of Reclamation in an effort to mitigate strip mining impacts.

In many of these efforts, John has been joined by his wife, Attorney Suede Kelly. A longtime member of the Central NM Group of the Sierra Club with John, Suede has represented or been employed by the Natural Resources Defense Council, US Environmental Protection Agency, Southwest Research and Information Center, Save the Jemez, the New Mexico Water Congress, and Natural Resources Center of the University of New Mexico. Suede Kelly also serves as Editor-in-Chief of the Natural Resources Journal of the University of New Mexico School of Law.

We reviewed John Kelly's candidacy on the basis of a lengthy questionnaire and subsequent interview. Sierran Richard Barish summed up the situation when he reported that "Kelly returned a very strong questionnaire" and that his interview "answers continued to demonstrate a strong commitment to environmental protection," to such an extent that the interview committee was forced to "unanimously" recommend Kelly's endorsement.

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

If we wait to find people more committed to the environment than John and Suede Kelly, we won't find them. If we fail to go to the polls or fail to vote for John Kelly, we will be failing ourselves.

In other news, our own Central NM Group Excom elections will be coming up this fall. Cecily Vix, Edward Sullivan, and Richard Barish are our nominating committee. If you have a "hankering to help," then contact one of them and tell them to throw your hat into the ring. It's good for you!



LOOK HERE FOR OUTINGS...

Well, fall is coming; the summer heat is lifting; and we will soon be into those golden days that make autumn in the Southwest so beautiful. Don't let the season slip away. Join a Sierra Club Outing!

Join Rick Hurley and others at 5:45 PM on Wednesday, September 13th, at Furr's on the corner of Juan Tabo and Central for a Sandia Moonlight Hike. The group will hike an east side trail until the sun sets, watch the moon rise, then hike back in the moonlight. Hiking distance will be three to five miles and there will be a \$3.00 parking fee at trailhead. Bring boots, some water, a snack, and a flashlight. For information, contact Rick at 299-8401 or RickHurley@aol.com.

Meet Rick at Bank of America on the corner of San Mateo and Academy at 8:30 AM on Saturday, September 17th, for a Santa Clara Peak Exploration. The group will drive into the high country between Espanola and the Valle Grande for an easy exploratory hike, although the elevation will be over 10,000 feet and some of the hike may be off trail. The drive will be about 260 miles roundtrip, with some rough road travel; the hike will be about six miles; and there will be a dinner stop afterwards. Dress for weather and bring boots, water, and lunch. Contact Rick at either 299-8401 or RickHurley@aol.com.

Meet again, at the same Bank of America on the corner of San Mateo and Academy, this time at 8:00 AM on Sunday, October 1st, for the always spectacular Gallinas Aspen Hike. The north end of the San Pedro Parks Wilderness has nice stands of aspen and Rick will try to show them to you at their peak, as well as search for the Red Rock Cliff, if time permits. There will be a drive of 240 miles roundtrip; the hike will be eight to ten miles; and a dinner stop is possible afterwards. Dress for weather and bring boots, water, and lunch. Contact Rick at either 299-8401 or RickHurley@aol.com.

Contact Rick Hurley, 299-8401 or RickHurley@aol.com, for the time and place to meet for his Manzano Fall Color Hike, Saturday, October 14th. Rick will lead the group up the Bosque Trail to the Manzano Crest, with a loop to the Cerro Blanco trail. Prepare yourselves for outstanding views and brilliant fall colors in the aspens and maples. This will be a drive of 120 miles roundtrip and a hike of about eight miles, with an elevation change of 1,500 feet. Dress for weather and bring boots, water, and lunch.

Rick has tentatively scheduled a three day car camp, at Cold Springs near the Apache Kid Wilderness, from Friday to Sunday, November 3rd through the 5th. If all goes as

planned, there will be day hiking to Cold Spring, Tonto Basin, or Blue Mountain, all featuring spectacular remote canyons and wilderness. A high ground clearance on all vehicles would be helpful. For more information, contact Rick at either 299-8401 or RickHurley@aol.com.

On Sunday, November 12th, Rick will lead a group in to visit the San Miguel Ruins in Bandelier National Monument, just north of Cochiti Pueblo. Hike six miles on trail, with another four miles cross country, up a nice canyon and perhaps, depending on the drought, see a waterfall along the way. The drive will be about 120 miles roundtrip. Dress for weather and bring boots, water, and lunch. Contact Rick at 299-8401 or RickHurley@aol.com for the meeting time and place.

Do you ever want to hike, but find no outing listed for the coming weekend? Don't despair, join the Sierra Club Outings E-Mail List. Everyone on the list will receive instant notification of impromptu hikes that don't get into the newsletter. You can also submit your own hiking plans and invite others to join. It will be a great way for members to stay in touch. For information or to join, contact Rick at 299-8401 or RickHurley@aol.com.



Central New Mexico Group News

...HERE FOR PROGRAMS...

We are also going to be having some interesting General Meetings in the months of September and October. We have even arranged a much nicer meeting location for these next two presentations.

For September and October at the very least, we will meet in Room SB106 of TVI's Smith-Brasher Hall at 717 University SE. Smith-Brasher Hall is the cylindrical brick building on the southwest corner of University and Coal. There is a parking lot on the south side of the building; just park there and walk up either of the curved ramps on each side of the building to get to the entry doors. A Sierran will be posted in the lobby to give you directions to the room.

In September, we get together at 7:30 PM on Monday, September 18th, to share a presentation by the organization Hawks Aloft, hosted by Sierran Martin Heinrich. We all recognize that the health and status of top native predators, like Wolves and Grizzlies, is one of the quickest and most reliable indicators of total ecosystem health; yet, we often forget that hawks are the top predators in the biggest ecosystem of all... the heavens above us. Hawks Aloft will tell us how these tigers of the skies are faring. With any luck, Hawks Aloft will also be able to bring some of their winged friends along. It is always a special aesthetic treat to see, firsthand, how God translated the beauty of tigers and leopards into feathers. Don't miss it!

Sierrans have been watching the plight of America's last truly wild herds of Bison with much sadness. For most of each year, these Bison live peacefully within Yellowstone National Park. With the coming of winter, however, the grooming of roads in the Park for snowmobilers lures these herds into trying to reach their ancestral winter range along the northern border of the Park. Thousands of these rare animals are being slaughtered by Montana's Department of Livestock as they cross that border. At 7:30 PM on Monday, October 16th, we will see an important presentation by Cold Mountains, Cold Rivers on this tragedy, its causes, and its longterm impacts on both the Bison and Yellowstone National Park.

Guest Editorial

Leon Metz Concerned About Water Supplies on the Border

by Leon Metz

Thanks to writer and historian Metz for permission to print his commentary.

If a recent newspaper mention that El Paso has sufficient water supplies to last only another 25 years is correct, that would seem to be a serious statement. But obviously no one believed it because there does not appear to be any serious evacuation planning under way.

For if we are going to run out of water in 25 years, then within that 25 years we need to have the following possibilities in place: huge additional water supplies to tap into, or fewer thirsty people and a whole lot less industrialization.

A subsequent newspaper article mentioned that within five years El Paso would be utilizing our "layaway" underground ranch supplies near Valentine, Texas. In a nice bit of forward thinking, we purchased and locked away that water for future use perhaps 10 or 15 years ago.

Now that investment must be utilized. As things stand now, we have three known sources of water, not counting the clouds. We have the Rio Grande, the Hueco Bolson, and Valentine, Texas. The Rio Grande by treaty and state contact furnishes water to Colorado, New Mexico, West Texas, and Mexico. However, for as far as we can look into the future, the Rio Grande promises to show us not a heck of a lot more than a moist, sandy channel. Our underground water, which is the Hueco Bolson, supplies both El Paso and Juárez. It is nearly depleted.

As for Valentine, well, that's another water hole similar to the Hueco Bolson, a difference being that it is tethered to the end of a long pipeline. Its supplies and capabilities will likely never be much more than short-range, temporary and stopgap.

So our problem seems obvious: We don't really have too little water, what we have is far too many people on both sides of the Rio Grande utilizing substantially the same supplies.

If we think that El Paso can scrape by and Juárez can by worry about itself, we need to think again. Two million people are not going to be concerned about boundaries when they are desperate for water. A century ago, back in 1900, El Paso, Juárez and outlying towns together had fewer than 60,000 people. They had sufficient water between them to last forever. Today this same area has more than 3 million residents, and we are counting, counting, counting, and counting. Until now, more people have always been a blessing; today more people may very well be a curse. Farms on both sides of the Rio Grande will be the first to go. We can always order our cotton and pecans from elsewhere. Within 20 years, water will become too precious and too expensive to waste on trees and other plants. Yet, when we reach the point where water is too precious for anything except human use, then we've already passed the point of doing anything other than existing.

Of course, new water sources may eventually be found, possibly in southern Chihuahua. All that will do, however, is delay the day of reckoning. Eventually we will deplete all available supplies, then at prohibitive expense we will purify the brackish water, which we currently have in vast quantities. Then I suppose we might float icebergs down to San Diego and melt them, or pump in water from the Mississippi River.

So the bottom line is that the enemy isn't the water, it is us. We are already far too many, and Juárez and El Paso continue to be two of the fastest-growing cities in the world. And the great influx may not yet have even started. With water so limited, the only solution is not continued population growth, but less of it... and starting soon. The second step is to reduce or terminate regional farming and industrialization. Now is the time to start wrestling with the serious consequences of too many people living in a desert.

Pulling the Rug Out From Under Wolves and Grizzly Bears

reported by Liz Walsh

The Sierra Club reacts with concern to a government announcement that it will be lessening protections for the gray wolf and grizzly bear under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

While gray wolf numbers have increased since the species was first protected under the ESA in 1973, the populations are concentrated in a few isolated areas and the species is absent from the great majority of its original range.

Today there are gray wolves in only two regions of the U.S. - the

Great Lakes States and the areas in and surrounding Yellowstone National Park. If protections for the wolf are weakened, wolves will be unable to return to the Pacific Northwest, California, or the southern Rockies.

Under the government's new proposal, the lethal control of wolves will no longer be just a last resort to deal with human/wolf conflicts. It will be applied more broadly than in previous years. For example, in the Northeast, wolves could be killed if trophy hunters feel wolves are preying upon too many deer.

"The conservation of the wolf is a critical issue and one in which the public needs to be involved. We will be asking the USFWS to hold hearings on the proposal around the country," said Bart Semcer, chair of the Club's Endangered Species Committee. "Ultimately, we believe the American public is willing to share our wild places with the wolf."

Grizzlies Threatened

Meanwhile, the Sierra Club marked the 25th anniversary of the listing of grizzly bears (July 28, 1975) as a threatened species by acknowledging the Endangered Species Act as the primary reason that the majestic species has survived, rather than gone extinct, in the lower-48 United States.

"Thanks to a strong ESA, people can still find grizzlies in the wilds of the northern Rockies," stated Louisa Willcox, of the Club's Grizzly Bear Ecosystems Project. "Today, after 25 years of federal protection, we celebrate the protections of the Endangered Species Act that have helped stabilize their populations in the lower-48, but we realize there is still a long road ahead to a full recovery."

Today, only 1,000 grizzly bears - 1% of the original US grizzly population - live on 1-2% of their historic range in five isolated ecosystems in Wyoming, Montana, Idaho and Washington state. The Endangered Species Act helped stop populations from a free-fall decline in grizzly numbers that began with settlement of the West. However, human-caused threats to these animals continue to multiply, making Endangered Species status even more essential than ever to their survival. Destruction of grizzly bear habitat by logging, mining, oil and gas development and off-road vehicles is accelerating at unprecedented levels. Such developments threaten to box the bears into habitat remnants that are too small to support a viable population over the long term.

And this year alone, accidental shootings by black bear hunters have exceeded the recovery plan quota for allowable grizzly mortality levels for the fourth consecutive year. Also, six of the nine dead bears lost to all causes were females - a great loss, as the grizzly doesn't breed until 5-6 years of age, and then only every third year.

"Here we are, just halfway through the year, and we've already exceeded the mortality cap for female bears," said Brian Peck, a wildlife consultant for the Grizzly Bear Ecosystems Project. "That's 58 dead grizzly bears - that we know of - in this ecosystem in the last 36 months. The state and federal governments are sanctioning a legal hunt that is resulting in an illegal 'take' of listed grizzlies," he concluded.

Despite this, the federal government is taking steps to delist the Yellowstone grizzly, removing its Endangered Species Act protections. Last fall, the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee approved a plan to remove federal protections from the Yellowstone grizzly by 2005.

"Not only is removing the bear from the endangered species list premature and ill-advised at this time, the federal plan falls far short of providing bears with what they need to survive," added Louisa Willcox. "The only way to save grizzlies is to safeguard their habitat. If we fail to save the lands they rely on, we will lose one of the last living symbols of the American West and the essence of what makes Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks national treasures."

"The grizzly bear still exists in the lower-48 states because of endangered species protection. But even after 25 years of protection, the grizzly is still not out of the emergency room".

The Sierra Club must make sure that government zeal to show results does not result in the delisting of species still in need of protection. In the case of the wolf and grizzly, delisting will likely consign both species to a state of slow decline, from which they will have to be rescued again. But by then there may not be enough habitat left.

Call for Ex Com Nominees

Annual Executive Committee elections are approaching for both the El Paso Group and the Rio Grande Chapter. Please contact a Nominating Committee member if you would like to be considered for candidacy. Your local committee members are Elizabeth Walsh, Ann Falknor, Sally Savage, and Rollin Wickenden. Candidates may also be nominated by petition. Refer to the August LORAX for the election schedule.

Outings (Area Code 915)

Sep 2-4: Labor Day Weekend Car Camp, Day Hikes, Backpack

Place: Gila Wilderness, based from Willow Creek
 Class: Easy to Moderate
 Length: 0-15 miles
 Elevation gain: 0-2,000 feet
 Leader: Laurence Gibson: 594-7342 (H)
 Come on out to the beautiful, cool Willow Creek area of the Gila Wilderness where there are plenty of "different strokes for different folks". Some of us will simply car camp with the possibility to fish in Willow or Gilita Creeks or day hike or bird watch at Iron Creek Lake. Those of us desiring more solitude will make a moderate backpack, spending one night at Iron Creek and another down on the Middle Fork of the Gila. We'll enjoy the pine needle-covered trails of Gilita Creek and Iron Creek Mesa or possibly Clayton Mesa. There should be time to look for elusive Clayton Spring and fish for dinner.

Sep 9: Dog Canyon Day Hike

Place: Sacramento Mountains east of Alamogordo
 Class: Moderate +
 Length: 7 miles
 Elevation gain: 2,000 feet
 Leader: Mike Epsicopo: 584-9322 (H)
 This classic outing begins at Oliver Lee State Park south of Alamogordo. There are good camping facilities for those who want to go up the night before. The trail begins steeply over easy rock, then climbs through open country, finally reaching a small stream at the ruins of an old line cabin. Great views out over the Tularosa Basin are the main attraction of this hike.

Sep 16-17: Mimbres Lake Backpack

Place: Aldo Leopold Wilderness NE of Mimbres, NM
 Class: Moderate
 Length: 7 miles
 Elevation gain: 1,200 feet
 Leader: Rollin Wickenden: 532-9645 (leave message)
 We plan to drive up the rough McKnight Road to the trail head at McKnight Fire Cabin near the crest of the Black Range. Our trail goes north along the crest, then up across the shoulder of McKnight Mountain (10,165). After a short side trip to the peak, we will

continue, descending some switchbacks to our campsite at beautiful Mimbres Lake, which is surrounded by a dense forest of spruce, fir, and aspen. If time permits, we might take advantage of one of several great day hike opportunities in this area. After enjoying a moonlit night (weather depending), we'll retrace our route to the cars.

Sep 17: Hitt Canyon Day Hike

Place: Franklin Mountain State Park, eastern slope
 Class: Easy+
 Length: 6 miles max.
 Elevation gain: 500
 Leader: Elizabeth Walsh: 583-1471 (H)
 It has been years since we followed this trail back into the heart of Franklin Mountain State Park. Beginning close to the reservoir by the North Hills subdivision on the eastern slopes of the Franklins, it winds back and up a bit towards Anthony's Nose. Join Professor Walsh for a biologist's insights into the life of the canyon.

Sep 23-24: Spring Cabin Backpack

Place: White Mountains NW of Ruidoso
 Class: Moderate
 Length: 8 miles
 Elevation gain: 1,500
 Leader: Laurence Gibson: 594-7342 (H)
 The White Mountain Wilderness above Bonito Lake is one of the wonderful treasures available to El Pasoans. High altitudes with great vistas over the Tularosa Basin enable a city dweller to "get away from it all" in short order. This loop backpack climbs steeply up through Argentina Canyon to the crest, then descends gently via the spectacular Crest Trail to the Spring Cabin area, featuring huge grassy tent-sites under stately pines. Descent to the trail head is through picturesque Little Bonito Canyon.

Outings and meetings of the El Paso Regional Group of the Sierra Club are led by volunteers dedicated to the preservation and enjoyment of our precious natural environment. We encourage donations to help us continue organizing and publicizing this valuable service to the community. A donation of only \$2-3 per person per event puts us at the break-even point.

Check the Web for the El Paso Group's Latest News:

www.sierraclub.org/chapters/lx/elpaso

The Lorax - El Paso Group

Sierra Club - El Paso Regional Group Directory (Area Code 915)

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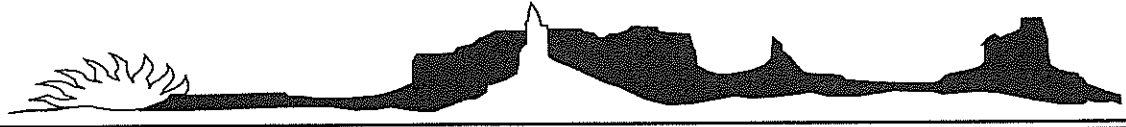
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SANTA FE GROUP MEETINGS

MANAGEMENT OF THE SANTA FE WATERSHED

Tuesday, September 19, 7 PM

Paige Grant of the Santa Fe Watershed Association will reprise and add to her extremely informative and well-received presentation at the annual Sierra Club picnic in July.

Paige has been working to bring together science and dialogue about management of the Santa Fe watershed. The best available science suggests that decades of fire suppression have created a forest that is unnaturally dense and prone to severe fires, like the recent Cerro Grande and Viveash fires. Such fires could lead to the deposition of ash in the City's water supply reservoirs, flooding, habitat loss and other environmental problems. (Ash from the Viveash fire is currently making its way to the Pecos River after every rain, killing the fish.) At the same time, the population of Santa Fe is growing and reaching into wildlands to the north and east, thereby increasing the threat of damage by fire to human life and property.

The Forest Service has begun to prepare an Environmental Assessment of management options for its lands in the upper watershed, including thinning and prescribed burning. Much discussion about these plans has been appearing in local newspapers. Come and hear Paige explain these options and the current status of plans for the watershed.

FIRE MANAGEMENT IN NEW MEXICO

Tuesday, October 17, 7 PM

Continuing our theme regarding watershed protection from catastrophic fire and the options available, Robert Lee of the Bureau of Land Management's Fire and Aviation section and Chair of the Southwest Fire Management Board, will speak about the interagency aspects of fire management in New Mexico.

Bob will open with a discussion on the use of fire to restore ecosystem health, the challenges that brings to land managers, and the role of suppression in fire management. He will go into land-use planning for fire management and how important the public's involvement is to that. Among the topics he will cover are fire program history and direction, prescribed fire, fire suppression, wildland urban interface, and the Cerro Grande fire. There will be plenty of time for your questions to be answered.

*All meetings are held at the Unitarian Church
107 W. Barcelona St (between Galisteo and Don Gaspar).*

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

Santa Fe Group of the Sierra Club

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NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

Doug Fraser

First, let me brag. The Santa Fe Group won the Sierra Club Wilcher Award for our fifth edition of "Day Hikes in the Santa Fe Area." Thanks to the hiking book committee and its chair, Lionel Soracco, it is selling like hotcakes all over this area.

We were also involved with the proposed Mercado along the Santa Fe bypass. It would have required an amendment to the Highway Corridor Plan, which was originally designed to foster the rural and residential nature of the surrounding properties. We were prepared to testify in opposition. In a very positive step in maintaining the integrity of the Plan, Santa Fe County Commission Chair Javier Gonzales won its withdrawal. In its place he asked for more time to create a commercial transfer zone. Cail to thank him. The bypass must remain a bypass, and not become just another congested urban road. If you any questions regarding this matter, please call me (474-7615) or Susan Martin (988-5206). Many thanks to Susan, who has been working very hard on this matter.

Also, over the weekend of August 19th and 20th, past, the largest gathering of Club leaders in our 106-year history met in Albuquerque. There were three hundred activists to address conservation issues for the 21st century. The diversity, as well as the unity, of this premiere environmental organization, was inspirational.

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

Cliff Larsen

The Conservation Committee meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7 PM at our Old Santa Fe Trail headquarters. All are welcome to attend and join the good fight.

WATER MEETINGS YES, WE DO LIVE IN A DESERT

Ongoing Mondays - September 11 and October 9

Help us develop new water strategies. Linda and John Buchser have been hosting a standing second Monday of the month pot-luck water meeting at their house, 606 Alto Street (corner of Closson and Alto, about 5 blocks from the Santa Fe Plaza). It starts at 6:30 and goes till 9ish. Bring something to munch on and discuss water strategies with other concerned citizens! Selected members of the legislature will be invited to attend meetings.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE ANNOUNCES CANDIDATES FOR 2001 EXCOM ELECTIONS

The Nominating Committee of the Santa Fe Group has chosen the following candidates to run for the Group Executive Committee for 2001: Doug Fraser, Barbara Johnson, Cliff Larsen, and Susan Martin.

There are four positions open on the ExCom for two-year terms beginning January 1, 2001.

Any member in good standing as of September 1, 2000, may run for election by a petition presented to the Nominating Committee no later than October 10, 2000. The petition must contain the signatures of at least 10 Group members in good standing as of the date of signing the petition. Petitioners must also include a statement to be published in the *Sierran*, detailing their conservation philosophy and goals for the Group.

For further information, potential petitioners may contact George Grossman of the Nominating Committee (982-1024).

♦ ♦ SANTA FE GROUP OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS ♦ ♦

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Vice-Chair — Barbara Johnson *
Secretary/Treas — Lionel Soracco

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Carson Nat'l Forest — George Grossman

982-1024

Activist Outings — Norma McCallan *

471-0005 nmccallan@mindspring.com

Growth — Eleanor Eisenmenger *

820-6401

* Member of the SF Group Executive Committee

SANTA FE GROUP OUTINGS

Sat Sun September 2000

Saturday to Monday, September 2-4

Norma McCallan (471-0005) Moderate Backpack in Colorado's Sangre de Cristos, up Major Creek to Upper Brush Lake, across Crossover Trail to Banjo Lake, down Horsethief Basin and Cotton Creek. Considerable elevation gain, steep trails, magnificent views. Dogs OK. Leave Friday after work (or, if participants able, leave 24 hours earlier to allow a separate day hike in this magnificent country).

- 2 Norbert Sperlich (983-1962) Moderate Hike in the Jemez.
- 3 Steven Markowitz (983-2829) Strenuous Hike somewhere in the Sangre de Cristo range. Call for reservation and time before 9:00 PM day before.
- 9 Marcia Skillman (820-6654) Easy hike to Tent Rocks, two miles, 350' elevation gain. Some optional steep scrambling at the end. Leave 8 AM.
- 10 Jeff Jones (466-2389) Moderate hike up Atalaya, 5-7 miles, 1600-1800' gain, short drive, leave 8:30 AM.
- 16 John Jasper (986-4613, 263-5466) Very Strenuous Hike to Capulin Meadows. Call for reservation.
- 17 Art Judd (982-3212) Moderate Hike in high country. Leave 8:00 AM.
- 23 Phil Somervell (473-4797) Very Strenuous Hike up Santa Fe Baldy, 14 miles, 3600' elevation gain, high elevation.
- 24 David Bryant (1-505-757-3477) Moderate Hike to La Vega, seven miles, 1300' elevation gain. Leave 9 AM.
- 30 [Substitute for Ned Sudborough's hike]
Lionel Soracco (983-6715) Moderate Hike from Big Tesuque to Aspen Vista. Dogs allowed. Leave 8 AM. Call for reservation.

Sat Sun November 2000

- 4 Stephen Markowitz (983-2829) Moderate Hike to Eagle Traps in Bandelier. About eight miles, less than 500' elevation gain, some scrambling and a lot of off-trail. Leave 7:30 AM from Sierra Club Office or meet at Ponderosa Campground at 8:30 AM. Hike subject to change; call for update before 9 PM November 3.
- 5 Victor Atyas (438-9434) Easy Hike to Tent Rocks near Cochiti. About five miles. Some scrambling and off-trail. Meet leader in the parking lot in front of Wallgreens at Villa Linda Mall at 9 AM (look for maroon Cherokee).
- 11 Art Judd (982-3212) Moderate Hike near Santa Fe, leave 8 AM.
- 12 Marcia Skillman (820-6654) Strenuous Hike to Cabezon volcanic plug north of Bernalillo. About 5 miles, 1500' elevation gain, but has vertical hand-and-foot rock climbing and exposure to falling. Must call for reservation.
- 18 Lionel Soracco (983-6715) Moderate X-Country Ski Trip probably in Ski Basin - or Moderate Hike with dogs if no snow - call to find out which. Leave 8 AM.
- 19 Norma McCallan (471-0005) Moderate Hike to Cerro Pelado southeast of Atalaya Mtn, under five miles but steep, about 1500' elevation gain. Dogs OK. Leave 9 AM.
- 25 Norbert Sperlich (983-1962) Moderate Hike to Buckman Mesa, Otowi Peak, and blowhole. About 6 miles RT, 1100' elevation gain, rough terrain, steep climb. Call for reservation.
- 26 David Bryant (1-505-757-3477) Strenuous Hike to Rancho Viejo from Ski Basin area, 12 miles, 2800' elevation gain. Alternate destination if snow. Leave 9 AM. Must call for reservation.

Outings Notes - Unless otherwise noted, all outings leave from the Sierra office, 621 Old Santa Fe Trail, "Plaza Desira," just south of Kaune's Grocery at the corner of Old SF Trail and Paseo de Peralta. Carpooling will be arranged. Each hiker should come prepared to pay 5¢ a mile to the driver of the car in which s/he rides. Bring a lunch, water, sturdy hiking boots or shoes, and clothing suitable for the weather - leader reserves the right to turn away anyone whose equipment or experience appears unsuitable. Leader has right to alter destination of hike or cancel trip due to weather, unfavorable conditions, or insufficient numbers of participants. Unaccompanied minors must have written permission from parents or guardians to participate; permission forms are available at the Sierra Club office. Dogs not permitted on hikes unless noted otherwise. Telephone leader for details of the individual hike.

Sat Sun October 2000

- 1 Marcia Skillman (820-6654) Strenuous Hike to Cerro Pedernal (past Abiquiu). 9 miles RT, 1900' elevation gain, some rock scrambling, some steep sections. Call for reservation.
- Thursday to Monday, October 5-9
- Norma McCallan (471-0005) Backpack/Car Camp in SE Utah Canyon Country, dogs OK. Call for details.
- 7 Phil Somervell (473-4797) Strenuous Hike to Quemado Falls (near Truchas Peaks). Limited to 6 participants. 10 miles RT, 2500' elevation gain. Call for details.
 - 8 Art Judd (982-3212) Moderate Hike in the High Country. Leave 8 AM.
 - 14 No hike leader available. Call Norbert or Tobin to become one!
 - 15 Norbert Sperlich (983-1962) Strenuous Hike to Painted Caves (from Dome Trailhead). 12 miles RT, 2400' elevation gain, some off-trail hiking. Leave 7 AM. Call for reservation.
 - 21 Tobin Oruch (820 2844) Strenuous Hike to Brazos Cabin near Cundiyo. 12 miles, 2600' elevation gain, dogs allowed, destination subject to change; call for reservation.
 - 22 Victor Atyas (438-9434) Easy/Moderate Hike on Frey Trail to Ceremonial Cave. Leave 9 AM.
 - 28 Marcia Skillman (820-6654) Moderate Hike in Bandelier. Leave 8 AM. Call for reservation.
 - 29 David Bryant (1-505-757-3477) Moderate Hike. Call for details.

PLEASE ALWAYS CALL THE OUTINGS LEADER PRIOR TO A HIKE FOR CONFIRMATION AND DETAILS.

Most especially call the leader for X-country ski or snowshoe outings, not only to find out about snow conditions, but to be sure that you have the proper equipment and conditioning.

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.

YARD SALE FUNDRAISER
Saturday, September 30, 9 AM to 3 PM
Lutheran Church of the Shepherd
2481 Legacy Court
(next door to Sam's Club on Rodeo Road)

Yes, we need items to sell - clean out that attic and garage. We also want you to help us before, during and after the sale. Please call Norma McCallan (471-0005) for answers to all of your questions!

We'd like to express a special thank you to Pastor Michael P. Rime, who has given us permission to use the church's parking lot for the sale.

GROUP COMMITTEE MEETING DATES

Group Executive Committee:	Group Conservation Committee:
Tuesday, October 3, 6:30 PM	Tuesday, September 26, 7 PM
Tuesday, November 7, 6:30 PM	Tuesday, October 24, 7 PM
Water Pot-Luck (John Buchser's house):	
Monday, September 11, 6:30 PM	
Monday, October 9, 6:30 PM	

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

- Wildlife chair - An important arm of our conservation efforts - Cliff Larsen (466-2128)
- Tea and Coffee/General Meeting set-up person (your basic volunteer job - Norma McCallan (471-0005))
- Creative Publicity Person with new ways of getting our news out - Norma or Cliff

Santa Fe Group News

Group Directory

Southern N.M. Group

Executive Committee

P.O. Box 3705 UPB

Las Cruces, New Mexico 88003

Marianne Thaeler Chair	522-3421 marianne.thaeler@sierraclub.org
Cheryll Blevins Vice Chair, Treasurer	524-4861 spotblev@greatwhite.com
Margo Wilson Chapter Representative, Conservation Chair	744-5860 margotwilson40@hotmail.com
David Farrell Legislative Issues	895-3352 dafarrelli@hotmail.com
Robin Heard ICO, Secretary	522-1275
John Hamilton, Sprawl Issues	525-6671 johnrh54@yahoo.com
Toni Gross Recording Secretary	522-2815 tgross@lcp.k12.nm.us



Executive Committee Elections

Anyone who would be interested in serving on the Group Executive Committee, or anyone who would like to nominate a club member to serve on the Excomm, please contact the nominating committee.

The nominating committee for election of members to the Executive Committee consists of:

Marianne Thaeler 522-3421
Cheryll Blevins 524-4861

Texas Thoughts.....

According to the U.S. General Services Administration Table Comparison of Federally Owned Land with total acreage of states for the fiscal year 1997, Texas has 2,008,137 acres of federal land (including Military Bases, Army Corps of Engineers, and some small Indian Reservations). This amounts to 1.194% of the total state acreage of 168,217,600 acres. Of the federal land in Texas, the U.S. Forest Service owns 755,000 acres and the National Park Service owns 1,231,988 acres.



Outings

September 23, Saturday

Hillsboro Peak.

10 mile moderate hike along the crest of the Black Range with great views. Call Annie Gordon at 522-4527 evenings.

October 7, Saturday

Willie White Canyon near Cloudcroft.

Moderate; about 8 miles. We hope to see some changing fall colors; this is a nice hike in a very pretty area of the Lincoln. Call Annie Gordon at 522-4527 evenings.

October 21, Saturday

Field Trip:

Rangeland Analysis and how to read Clusters. Jess Rivera of the U.S. Forest Service, Black Range District will help participants in this rangeland educational field trip. Leaves the parking lot of the USFS office in Truth or Consequences at 8:30 a.m. Bring lunch, water and appropriate clothes and shoes. Call Margot Wilson in T or C for more information at 744-5860.



Executive Committee Meetings are typically the first Wednesday of the month--all members are welcome to attend. Call Cheryll at 524-4861 for time and place.

Group Directory Pajarito Group of the Sierran Club

Executive Committee

Abe Jacobson, Chair	672-9579
Bev Hartline, Vice-Chair	661-9031
Carole Jacobson, Secretary/Treasurer	672-9579
Fred Hartline	661-9031
Miriam Oudejans	672-0414
Michael Smith	662-2380
Gordon Spingler	662-9481

Conservation Committee

Janet Gerwin, Co-Chair	662-9568
Jody Benson, Sprawl	662-4782
Janet Gerwin, Water	662-9568
Abe Jacobson, Mining	672-9579
Carole Jacobson, Adopt-A-Highway	672-9579
Jennifer Johnson, Jemez Mountains Issues	289-9183
Chuck Pergler, Grazing	661-6169
Michael Smith/ Gordon Spingler, DOE Land Transfer	662-2380/ 662-9481
Wildlife OPEN	

Administration

David Bouquin, Chapter Rep.	662-3741
Fred Hartline, Publicity Rep.	661-9031
Miriam Oudejans, Newsletter	672-0414
Guthrie Miller, Membership	662-5545
Warren Steckle, Outings	672-0414



Advanced Trip Notice:

A weekend camping and birding trip to Bosque del Apache, December 1-3, is being organized. The campground is car accessible, off the main road through the reserve. Port-a-potties, picnic tables and fire grate available. The winter bird population should be well established by then. More information to come in the next Sierran.

General Meetings

When: Wednesday, September 6 at 7:00 PM.
Where: Mesa Public Library (Los Alamos), second floor
What: *"Forest Changes After the Fire: Multiple Paths to Recovery"*

Dr. Allen will address the Pajarito group of the Sierra Club on the processes by which forests respond to sudden perturbations, including fire, blight, and blowdown events. There are both structural and species changes which can occur. Dr. Allen's talk will also provide some concepts with which better to understand the forest succession processes which will play out in the Cerro Grande fire area.

October General Meeting - To be announced.
 Look for it on our new Pajarito Group Website!!!
<http://www.riograndesierraclub.org/pajarito/>

Outings

Sunday, August 27-

Day Hike to FLAT MOUNTAIN (Cumbres Pass) at southern end of South San Juan Wilderness. Moderate hike; 10 miles round trip; high elevation (start 10800 feet; ascend to 12000 feet); leave Los Alamos 7 AM, return early evening. Call leaders for details.

Trip Leaders: Carole and Abe Jacobson 672-9579
abe.jacobson@worldnet.att.net

Friday Evening, September 8 (leave after work) through Sunday, September 10-

Car Camp and Backpack to SOUTH SAN JUAN WILDERNESS. Drive a little over 2 hours Friday evening to camp near trailhead. Saturday--hike with packs-up to below Lake Ann at the headwaters of the Middle Fork of the Conejos River. Sunday - explore continental divide above camp, then fetch packs, return to car and drive home by Sunday evening. Moderate, 14 miles round trip, start at 10000 feet, ascend to 11200 feet with packs, another 1000 feet without packs.
Trip Leaders: Carole and Abe Jacobson 672-9579
abe.jacobson@worldnet.att.net

Saturday, October 7-

KITCHEN MESA day Hike. Ghost Ranch, north of Abiquiu. Striking vistas, interesting geological features. Round trip hiking distance about 5 miles, 600 feet elevation gain. Easy hike with one rock scramble. Meet at the "Y" (the commuter lot just west of the Highway 502 overpass of State Route 3 to Los Alamos) 8:30 a.m.
Trip Leaders: Rainer & Ilse Bleck 662-2368

Saturday morning, October 21- HIGHWAY CLEANUP

Meet at 8:30 a.m. at Ponderosa Campground (near "Back Gate"). We'll finish in 2 hours. Bring work gloves and water
Project Leader: Carole Jacobson 672-9579
abe.jacobson@worldnet.att.net

Saturday, September 23-

Hike/Bike trip in BANDELIER. Hike from park visitor center to Ponderosa Campground up Frijoles Canyon (7.5 miles, elevation gain 1500 feet), then bike 9 miles downhill along Route 4 back to the visitor center (optional). Trip will meet at 8:30 a.m. at Ponderosa Campground to leave bikes and carpool to the visitor center. Helmets and eye protection (for example, sunglasses) required for biking. Some participants can choose to leave a car at Ponderosa Campground and miss the bike portion of the outing. We plan to break for lunch on the trail and to finish in the early afternoon. Children accompanied by their parents are welcome.
Trip Leaders: Bev and Fred Hartline 661-9031
 Email fbhartl@ibm.net or phone to sign up.

Market Analysis: Renewable Energy Coming To Power

SAN JOSE, California, June 30, 2000 (ENS) - After being marginalized for decades, renewable energy technologies are now becoming mainstream energy options, shows new research by Frost & Sullivan. The firm, which specializes in international marketing consulting and training, monitors the energy industry for market trends, market measurements and strategies. The Frost & Sullivan analysis, "North American Renewable Energy Markets," reports that the total market for renewable energy jumped from \$204 million in 1978 to \$843.4 million in 1999. Deregulation of the energy industry has opened the door for competition, and new power generation methods will soon be firmly

entrenched in the North American electricity infrastructure, the report says.

Heliostats at Solar Two reflect the Sun's energy onto a receiver atop a centrally located 300-foot tower. Considered the most advanced central-receiver power plant in the world, Solar Two, 90 miles east of Los Angeles in the Mojave Desert, went online in June 1997. The growth rate is forecast to slow in the near term and then resume its rapid pace again by 2004, though not at its 1999 rate. The Frost & Sullivan report analyzes the major power segments of the renewable energy markets, including wind, solar, biopower, such as waste to energy, and geothermal power. Wind

and biopower segments are identified as promising, with the wind power segment experiencing the most rapid growth. Biopower should also continue to grow steadily on the heels of recent tax incentives, the report predicts. "Although deregulation and competition have fostered the introduction of renewable energy technologies, the demand for low-cost electricity puts the higher cost of renewable energy at a disadvantage," says Frost & Sullivan analyst Heidi Anderson. "Currently, coal and natural gas are cheaper than any form of renewable energy. Education about the environmental and social benefits of renewable power must be integrated with information about pollution and other side effects associated with fossil fuel-based power generation."



Join Us for NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS DAY,
September 23rd at Cochiti Lake

for a morning of volunteer labor,
a FREE t-shirt, boat ride or poster and LUNCH
+ all-afternoon family fun on (or in) the water,
a multi-agency Environmental Education Fair
& a Concert by the Banana Slugs String Band

and for One Stop Shopping for

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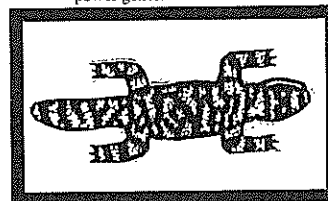
in the BLM and Santa Fe National Forest Offices
1474 Rodeo Road (near Sawmill & St. Francis)

Your Complete Resource for Information On

National Forests Wilderness Areas State Parks Wildlife Refuges
Lakes BLM Lands State Monuments Wild Rivers National Parks

NOW ON-LINE AT www.publiclands.org

to pre-register as a volunteer, call 438-PLIC (7542)



Bio-Fuels Boosted By \$4.3M In Grants

WASHINGTON, DC, June 30, 2000 (ENS) - The Department of Energy (DOE) has awarded four grants totaling \$4.3 million to develop bio-based alternatives to fuel and consumer products using domestic agricultural resources. The full cost of the research projects will be shared by the grant recipients. The DOE awards are intended to accelerate the development of bio-based industries using trees, crops, agricultural, forest and aquatic resources to make commercial products such as fuel, electricity or heat, chemicals, adhesives, lubricants and building materials. "By developing bio-based fuel alternatives right here in the United States, we reduce our country's dependence on foreign oil," said Energy Secretary Bill Richardson. "With the development of biomass and bioenergy, we can reduce America's dependence on foreign oil by creating new energy products straight from its own farms."

The National Corn Growers Association will get \$1.7 million to research conversion of corn fibers into core building blocks of alternative fuel such as sugars to produce ethanol. The Louisiana Pacific Corporation will get \$1.21 million to develop ways to increase the use of bio-based chemical products and fuels in construction. The company proposes to use bark to produce bio-based resins to replace an oil based resin in plywood. Cargill Dow Polymers is offering a renewable alternative to petroleum based plastics. With its \$1.12 million grant, the company plans to demonstrate that it can convert corn fiber and corn stalks into a new kind of organic plastic. The Institute of Gas Technology will get \$264,500 to demonstrate ways of breaking down animal manure to produce methane gas for power and heat and a fertilizer byproduct. The energy and fertilizer, which will provide additional revenue to the farmer and displace purchased commercial fertilizers, could increase the American farmer's annual income by an average of 18 percent.



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