

Rio Grande Sierran

NEWS OF THE RIO GRANDE CHAPTER OF THE SIERRA CLUB

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2002

Agriculture Is Our Water-Shortage Solution

by John Buchser

Early this year, researchers at New Mexico State University verified what many of us had guessed—New Mexico is using water from surface and sub-surface sources twice as fast as we are replenishing it. We can simply take note of this and move on in our busy lives, wondering where this will ultimately take us. Since water seems to flow uphill toward money, we can probably deduce that, as our population continues to grow, housing, business, and industry will continue to draw water away from traditional agricultural uses.

As some areas are already seeing, the pressure that this transition creates frequently falls on the shoulders of a few. When wells go dry, for instance, the expense of drilling deeper in hope of finding water falls solely on the shoulders of the existing rural homeowner. And potentially even more seriously, the value of water rises, leading farmers to sell their water rights. This puts large expanses of farmland clearly in the sights of developers who then skip far beyond the nearest city's boundary and contribute to sprawl.

Sustainability

The primary question is that of sustainability. How do we meet the needs of a growing population while we recharge our aquifers and keep our river systems alive? If we look at the largest current water users, the target appears clear—agriculture uses about 80% of all water, but contributes less than 10% to our economy. So shouldn't we target the biggest use?

The answer is yes! But the solution involves the urban dweller as much as it does the farmer. If farms use higher-efficiency irrigation methods, then the pressure on our water sources is not as

great. These improved methods, however, require a capital investment. We could all agree to accept a greater tax burden to subsidize these improvements, but providing a market for more profitable crops is a more direct approach.

Salts: The Death of Irrigation Practices

Precipitation, whether it be rain or snow in our mountains, or downpours at our urban elevations, brings nearly pure water. Once it hits the ground, however, various salts are absorbed from the soil, appearing in both surface water and much older water that we obtain when we pump groundwater from our aquifers. Optimal irrigation practices moisten only the root zone of a plant; however, salts build up in the topsoil over time and cause greatly reduced productivity.

This problem is so severe that, over the millennia, this loss of agricultural productivity has been a major contributor to the fall of civilized societies, all of which are based on agriculture. Clearly, methods to deal with these salts must be a substantial focus of agricultural practice—and of all of us who eat. How do we deal with this?

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Court Order Pushes Minnow to Brink

by Richard Barish

In a startling reversal of fortunes, the United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit has issued an order staying the favorable ruling of District Court Judge James A. Parker in the litigation concerning the endangered Rio Grande silvery minnow. As a result of the Tenth Circuit's order, no additional water will be released for the minnow this fall. It is possible that the minnow will go extinct, or nearly so, in the wild this year—and this could eventually lead to the total extinction of the species.

Much misinformation has been disseminated about the effect of the Judge Parker's decision on water supplies and the status of the silvery minnow. This article will attempt to set the record straight about the lawsuit, the rulings, and their effect on water and the minnow.

Background

In 1999, after years of working within the system to little effect, the Sierra Club and five other environmental groups filed suit over water operations on the Rio Grande. The suit was prompted by concerns about deterioration of Rio Grande ecosystems and the failure to adequately protect two endangered species—the Rio Grande silvery minnow and the southwester willow flycatcher. The silvery minnow, once one of the most abundant fish in the Rio Grande and its tributaries, now hangs on only in the middle valley in New Mexico, between Cochiti and Elephant Butte reservoirs.

In June, 2001, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) issued a Biological Opinion (Opinion) pursuant to the Endangered Species Act. The opinion found that the United States Bureau of Reclamation's (Reclamation's) activities on the Rio Grande placed the silvery minnow in danger of extinction. It concluded, however, that there were alternatives actions that could protect the minnow. Most importantly, the Opinion required Reclamation to keep a good deal, though not all, of the river wet in the middle valley. The environmental plaintiffs argued in court that the Opinion did not do enough to protect the minnow, but Judge Parker rejected these arguments and allowed the Opinion to stand.

This spring, the City of Albuquerque agreed to lease 70,000 acre-feet of water to the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District (MRGCD) for irrigation and 40,000 acre-feet to Reclamation to comply with the Biological Opinion. (Although the comments and actions of the mayor have been reprehensible since the September 2002 court decision, the City deserves credit for stepping up and providing this water earlier this year.) It was thought that the irrigation water and the minnow water together would be adequate to keep the river wet in compliance with the Opinion for the remainder of the year. The agreements, however, did not require the MRGCD to spread its water out over the entire irrigation season. Because of MRGCD's inefficient use of the water, the irriga-

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2002 Endorsements

The Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club has endorsed:

- Bill Richardson for Governor;
- Gloria Tristani for U.S. Senate;
- Richard Romero for U.S. Congress, District 1;
- Tom Udall for United Congress, District 3;
- Shirley Baca for Public Regulation Commission, District 5; and
- Danny Hernandez for the Board of Directors of the Albuquerque Metropolitan Arroyo and Flood Control Authority (AMAFCA), District 1.

The Chapter has also endorsed the following candidates for the New Mexico House of Representatives:

- District 11—Rick Miera
- District 14—Miguel Garcia
- District 15—Steve Archibeque*
- District 19—Sheryl Williams Stapleton
- District 21—Mimi Stewart
- District 24—Marilyn Cooper*
- District 33—J. Paul Taylor
- District 40—Nick L. Salazar
- District 47—Max Coll
- District 69—W. Ken Martinez

* Not an incumbent



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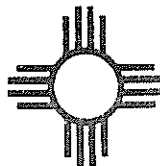
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OPEN, Conservation Organizer

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 the Conservation Organizer and a part-time lobbyist, followed by the printing and mailing of this Newsletter.



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The Valles Caldera Is a Prudent and Healthy Experiment

by Ernie Atencio

Two years ago, Congress began an experiment in public land management with a new entity called the Valles Caldera National Preserve. For \$101 million, the spectacular and ecologically rich tract of 89,000 acres in the heart of the Jemez Mountains passed from private ownership into the public estate. The new Preserve came with an ambitious mandate:

- to care for the land,
- to allow the public to enjoy its beauty and sustainably use its resources, and
- to try new management approaches.

On top of that, it is managed by a Board of Trustees and is supposed to make enough money to support itself. We had never heard of such a thing—and many were skeptical.

It's far too early to call the experiment a success, but after two years, it has at least proven not to be the open door to rapacious special interests some people feared—and what seemed a contradictory mandate is beginning to look coherent after all.

Not everyone is happy. I can't think of many people who would say that the government has done a good job of managing our public lands. Whether involved in the environmental movement, outdoor recreation, ranching, community forestry, hunting, or fishing, we've all had plenty of complaints over the years about business as usual on public lands, ponderous bureaucratic decision making, impractical or ecologically destructive management.

Finally, we have an opportunity to try a new approach—a prudent and healthy experiment to see if we can do things better. Yet, from the start, the pressure was heavy to open the Preserve as soon as possible to hiking or grazing (or whatever the interest), and the same tiresome threats of lawsuits have flown from across the political spectrum.

So just what has the Trust been doing these past two years while we're all impatiently waiting at the gate? Besides inventing an entirely new institution from scratch, hiring staff, developing a list of very progressive guiding principles and the outlines of a comprehensive management program, the Trust has taken advantage of a rare opportunity to study the place before the public sets foot or

hoof on it. We haven't heard much in the press about these ongoing studies, but a small army of researchers has been conducting:

- archaeological surveys;
- extensive range monitoring;
- elk studies;
- vegetation inventory and mapping;
- forest studies;
- soils mapping;
- riparian and water-quality studies;
- a fisheries inventory; and
- reports on birds, raptors, butterflies, mammals and amphibians.

All this scientific information will be used in an approach called "adaptive management," allowing the Trust to make better decisions, based on science, about how many cattle, how many people, when and what and how much use can take place without harming the ecosystem or cultural resources.

"No, the Preserve and its mandate are not perfect and will never make everyone happy, but it's a far sight better than what's happening on most public lands."

The Trust recently made the controversial decision to open the Preserve for six weeks of emergency cattle grazing to help out a few local ranchers who can't graze their home allotments due to drought. Through the end of September 2002, 700 cow-calf pairs are grazing two of the major valles (under private ownership, stocking levels were at least five times higher), leaving one valle purposely ungrazed. To cover the additional costs of ecological monitoring and four range riders to keep the animals on the move, those ranchers are paying a premium \$10 per AUM (Animal Unit Month), compared to \$1.35 on other public lands.

There were well founded public concerns about an unclear and seemingly rushed process on the grazing decision, and we look forward to some clarity on that soon, once the Trust spells out its own guidelines under the National Environmental

Policy Act. Still, by comparison with any other parcel of public land, this is as responsible a grazing program as we've seen:

- it's helping out about 40 local family ranchers (not corporate interests),
- it's charging close to market value,
- it's small and short term, and
- it's a good opportunity to shake out what works and what doesn't before moving into a long-term program.

No, the Preserve and its mandate are not perfect and will never make everyone happy, but it's a far sight better than what's happening on most public lands. After two years, the current Board of Trustees appears to be taking its public trust seriously and moving management in the right direction, consistent with the letter and spirit of the July 2000 Valles Caldera Preservation Act.

Three of those Trustees could be replaced when their terms end in January 2003, but if we want to

keep the experiment on track, we need to keep this Board intact. To that end, the Valles Caldera Coalition is advocating for reappointment of all three Trustees. With the steep learning curve we have traveled together, the tremendous amount of work we have already done, and the ambitious comprehensive planning process just beginning, this would be the worst possible time to reshuffle the Board.

In the end, experiment or not, what I think we all care most about is management that benefits both the land and the public. We don't want to follow blindly along, but our best bet for now is this Board of Trustees and the course it's charting into new territory.

For more information, contact Ernie Atencio (505/776-1882; atencio@vallescalderacoalition.org), or look for the Coalition's new web site soon (www.vallescalderacoalition.org).

Ernie Atencio is Coordinator of the Valles Caldera Coalition, a broad-based collective of 16 local and national conservation organizations and several individuals advocating for progressive and sustainable management of the new Valles Caldera National Preserve.

One of Our Own: Marilyn Cooper Is a Candidate in District 24

The Sierra Club is in the unusual and pleasurable position of being able to endorse one of our own activists in a bid for elective office. Marilyn Cooper, a member of both the Chapter and Central New Mexico Group ExComs, is running for State Representative in House District 24 in Albuquerque's northeast heights. The Club applauds and enthusiastically endorses Marilyn!

Marilyn has been a general contractor in New Mexico for more than 40 years. As a contractor, Marilyn worked to promote infill development to stop sprawl. She pioneered innovative and environmentally sound building technologies such as solar to promote energy savings. Marilyn

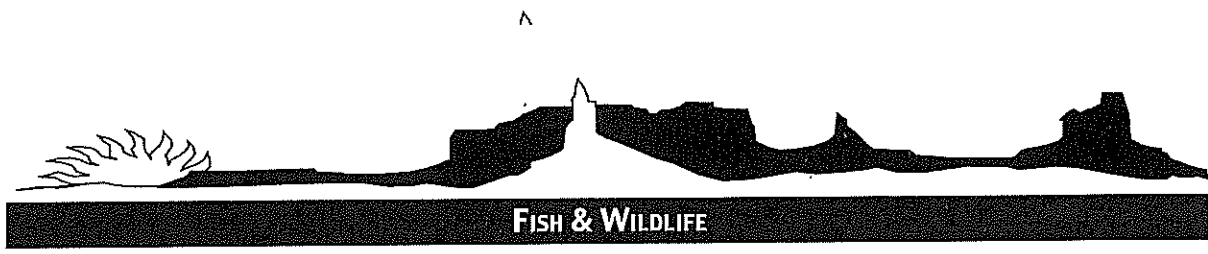
spearheaded legislation to create zoning for condominiums, and built the first condominiums in New Mexico to provide affordable housing and home ownership for lower- and mid-income New Mexicans.

With water very much on the agenda of the Legislature, Marilyn strongly believes that in

providing for the water needs of New Mexicans, we must also ensure that we provide for the needs of the Rio Grande.

Marilyn has been active in many organizations in addition to the Sierra Club, including Planned Parenthood, NARAL, the Water Assembly, and 1000 Friends of New Mexico.





FISH & WILDLIFE

Silvery Minnow (continued from page 1)

tion water ran out in early September. Without additional action, there would not be insufficient water to comply with the Opinion for the remainder of the year.

The Court had previously ruled that Reclamation had certain options for providing water needed by the minnow. Instead of exercising those options, however, Reclamation requested, and the Fish and Wildlife Service produced, a new Biological Opinion. The new Opinion also concluded that Reclamation's activities placed the silvery minnow in danger of extinction, but this time found that there were *no* alternative actions that could protect the silvery minnow from extinction. This was apparently the first time anywhere that the FWS found that a species was in jeopardy of extinction, but did not require that anything be done to preserve it. Reclamation projected that under this Opinion, the only parts of the middle valley that would remain wet at the end of irrigation season would have been approximately 20 miles south of Cochiti Reservoir—an area where few minnow are believed to exist, and the areas where sewage effluent is returned to the river—where minnows would be unlikely to survive.

The Ruling of the Court

With the drying of the river and the possible extinction of the silvery minnow in the wild imminent, the environmental plaintiffs made an offer of compromise that was highly favorable to the defendants. The defendants did not respond to the offer. Having exhausted all other options, the plaintiffs turned to the Court.

The Court's decision took a middle ground. The Court ordered the release of water to keep portions of the river in the middle valley wet. The Court ordered Reclamation to use water from what is called "the firm yield pool" of the San Juan-Chama Project. The San Juan-Chama Project transfers water from tributaries of the San Juan River into the Chama River for use in New Mexico. The firm yield pool is made up of extra water that is diverted by the project in wet years and stored in Heron Reservoir for use during dry years. This water is owned by the federal government, not the entities who contract for the water such as the City of Albuquerque.

Although the Court's decision required that portions of the river be kept wet, it did not require Reclamation to maintain the flows specified in the June, 2001 Biological Opinion, which FWS had concluded was the minimum necessary to avoid placing the silvery minnow in danger of extinction. Instead, the Court permitted another 50 or so miles of the river to go dry. By taking this approach, only about half the amount of water that would otherwise have been needed was required. Only about 9,000 acre-feet (out of 159,000 acre-feet of water in the Heron firm yield pool) would have been required to keep the river wet in compliance with Judge Parker's order for the remainder of the year.

The ruling was appealed by the defendants to the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals. The City of Albuquerque and the State of New Mexico asked the Tenth Circuit to issue an emergency stay—that is, an order delaying the implementation of the district Court's order until the appeal was heard. Reclamation joined the plaintiffs in opposing the stay. Nonetheless, on 16 October 2002, the Tenth Circuit issued the stay. In ordering the stay, the Court

disturbingly completely failed to find the facts that had to be proved as a prerequisite to issuance a stay.

Our attorneys immediately asked the U.S. Supreme Court to lift the stay. On October 17, the Court denied our petition. As a result, the stay will remain in place until the appeal is heard in early 2003.

The Effect on the Silvery Minnow

It cannot be stated with certainty how much river drying will now occur. Because of a bit of rain and some cooler weather, the water supplies obtained from Albuquerque this spring have lasted longer than Reclamation originally projected. As of this writing on October 18, it is projected that supplies will last until approximately October 21 or 22.

After that time, the river will begin to dry up. It is possible that by early- or mid-November, the river will be dry south of Angostura except for wastewater return flows. The extent of drying will depend on precipitation, whether we get freezing weather, and other factors. If river drying is extensive, the minnow will become virtually extinct in the wild.

"This was apparently the first time anywhere that the FWS found that a species was in jeopardy of extinction, but did not require that anything be done to preserve it."

A number of people have opined that extinction in the wild is not a problem, because the minnow can be reestablished in the wild from captive populations. No fish species has ever been reestablished in the wild entirely from captive populations. Most biologists believe that it is probably not possible to save the minnow from captive stocks alone.

One problem lies in the lack of genetic diversity in the captive fish. Animals need diversity so that if the animal encounters a new condition at some future time—say, a new disease—at least some will have what it takes to survive. Without that reservoir of diversity, all might perish. It is believed that the silvery minnow population has contracted to small numbers many times by river drying. As a result, the genetic diversity of the species is already low. The genetic diversity of the fish in captivity is only a fraction of that of the total population. If we rely solely on captive stocks, we are placing the fish at a much greater risk that it will not be able to survive in the long run.

Another problem is the genetic fitness of the fish in captivity. The captive minnows include fish that can survive in the artificial environment of an aquarium, but that are not necessarily fit to survive in the wild. The offspring of fish reared in captivity may also have reduced fitness, because their parents were not subject to the same selective pressures—such as the need to escape predators—that they would have been exposed to in the wild.

Finally, although the figures given for the number of fish in captivity appear large, these are not adult fish. Many of these fish will die before they grow to maturity and can reproduce. There is a great risk that there aren't enough fish in captivity to successfully reestablish wild populations that will survive in the long run.

Water Supply Issues

Although it is now a moot point, it bears noting that the reported effect of Judge Parker's September 2002 decision on water supplies was just plain wrong. The City of Albuquerque had already received full delivery of its San Juan-Chama water for this year. Moreover, the effect on future deliveries would have been small or, more likely, nothing at all. According to projections by Reclamation, even if we have a drought that mirrors the drought of the 1950s—the most serious drought on record—there would only have been an under-delivery of a small fraction of the San Juan-Chama water to be provided during one year out of the next ten years.

The Answer

This title for this section comes from the original version of this article, before the Tenth Circuit stay. But if there is less reason to hope for the survival of this unique bit of creation than before the stay, we are not entirely without reasons to believe that there still may be an answer. The silvery minnow is a hardy species. It is the only survivor of five minnow species that once existed in the Rio

Grande in the middle valley. We can hope that it is resilient enough, that sufficient genetic diversity exists, and that scientists have adequate skill, to successfully reestablish wild populations. Ironically, the Tenth Circuit's stay will

make that a much more expensive, much more long-term, and possibly much more litigious process than it otherwise might have been.

If the minnow is to be recovered, we will need to implement long-term solutions for the species. We need to reestablish populations of silvery minnows, not only in the middle valley, but in other locations as well. The silvery minnow was once one of the most numerous and widespread fishes in the Rio Grande and the Pecos River. If healthy populations of silvery minnows are reestablished outside of the middle valley, then what happens in this reach of the river will not be so crucial.

In the middle valley, we need to improve minnow habitat. There are areas of the middle valley where few or no minnow existed, even before this fall. We need to recreate more of the shallow, slow-flowing water that the silvery minnow needs.

We also need to institute a "forbearance" program, whereby farmers who want to can voluntarily lease their water to the federal government for use in the river during dry years. Although this commonsense proposal was first made in 1996, it has, astonishingly, never been put into action.

In addition, we need to find ways to allow minnows to get past diversion dams. The dams trap silvery minnows in the very parts of the river that are prone to drying, even in non-drought years. The best way to provide fish passage would be to remove a diversion dam, but this can only be done if we find other reliable ways of supplying irrigation water to farmers and if farmers agree to the removal of the dam.

And critically, we all need to continue to find ways to use our limited water resources more wisely. The silvery minnow is an object lesson for what is happening is happening to the entire Rio Grande. Our majestic river, and its glorious bosque, are slowly dying. The plight of the silvery

(continued on the next page)

New Mexico Prairie Chicken Management Still in Limbo

by James A. Bailey

The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF) failed to act on numerous commitments under its Interim Management Approach for imperiled lesser prairie-chickens during 1999-2001, and also ignored most of the 2001-2002 commitments under its new Long-range Plan for managing the species. Now, Director Larry Bell says the operational version of the Long-range Plan will be revised by October 2002.

Lesser prairie-chickens are gone from approximately 95% of their original range in five western states. In New Mexico, they are gone, or very nearly so, from 56% of their historical range, and persist as only sparse and scattered populations in another 28% of that range.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has concluded that the species warrants listing as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. In 1999, NMDGF recommended listing the species as threatened in the State under our Wildlife Conservation Act (WCA). The State Game Commission, however, violated the Act by not proceeding with listing, and NMDGF committed to continuing its status review indefinitely.

In November 1999, NMDGF announced its Interim Management Approach for lesser prairie-chickens. It contained 46 commitments for "first-year" activities to benefit prairie-chickens. After two years, at least half these commitments had not been acted upon. Accomplishments included:

- continued survey work, and
- some improvements in fencing and in efforts to remove trespass cattle from NMDGF-owned lands dedicated to prairie-chickens.

Important failures included:

- failure to obtain vegetation inventories from these lands,

- failure to initiate habitat rehabilitation practices,
- failure to develop a NMDGF incentives program to improve habitat on private lands,
- failure to increase survey work, and
- failure to initiate a study of genetics of declining populations.

In October 2001, the State Game Commission approved a new Long-range Plan for managing prairie-chickens. It contained 17 tasks to be completed by July 2002. Of these, only one was initiated, and only part of this task is now scheduled to be completed by 2003. The 16 uninitiated tasks included:

- completing a report on the amount of suitable prairie-chicken habitat in New Mexico;
- selecting the best method for surveying in northeast New Mexico, where there have been no confirmed reports of prairie-chickens since 1993;
- conducting a poll of public opinion of the management program, to be used in evaluating results of the plan in 2006;
- identifying critical areas to be managed for viable populations; and
- submitting a study plan for the continuing (since 1999) investigation of the status of the prairie-chicken in New Mexico, as required under the WCA.

The Long-range Plan contained 91 additional tasks to be initiated by July 2002. NMDGF has not been straightforward about how many of these tasks have been started, but I estimate that only 38 of these 91 tasks have been initiated, some by other agencies such as the federal Natural Resources Conservation Service. Important tasks not started in the first year of the Plan include:

- useful surveys for prairie-chickens in northeast New Mexico,
- construction of new fences on NMDGF prairie-chicken lands,
- mapping the current distribution of prairie-chickens in New Mexico,
- developing guidelines for prairie-chicken management,
- ranking the NMDGF prairie-chicken lands for effectiveness in conserving the species, and
- developing and presenting educational programs to four groups each year.

The Long-range Plan includes 22 tasks that are to be completed by July 2003, in addition to the 17 that were not completed last year. It also includes 12 new tasks to be initiated this year. NMDGF Director Larry Bell informs me that the Plan will be revised by October 2002 "to better reflect needed priorities, fiscal and personnel resources."

Director Bell is in a difficult position, trying to:

- appease the State Game Commission that does not want prairie-chickens added to the state list of threatened and endangered species,
- conserve prairie-chickens with limited resources,
- convince the public that it is making significant progress in conserving the species, and
- rationalize field data indicating that the species is not increasing and is in serious trouble in our State.



Silvery Minnow *(continued from page 4)*

minnow should serve as a wake-up call—we can learn to use our water more wisely while we still have a living river, or we can delay and do nothing, and learn what we've lost only after the river has died. With wise and responsible use of our water and with better management of our river, I believe that there can be water enough for both a living river and for the people of the middle valley. We just need the political will to make that happen. It is up to all of us who care to call our elected officials, to write letters to the editor, to hold officials accountable, so as to ensure that the Rio does not die.

Irrigation *(continued from page 1)*

Methods to Reduce Irrigation Water Use

Irrigation uses more than 80% of all of New Mexico's water. Clearly, it makes sense to improve the efficiency of irrigation practices.

Two water-reducing irrigation practices are presently used widely in the Rio Grande watershed:

- Ensuring that fields are as level as possible through the use of modern laser-leveling techniques allows flood irrigation to use less water. This method is in use on virtually all farms that are run as full-time businesses along the Rio Grande Valley.
- Using circle irrigation with down-pointing sprayers, rather than squirting the water up into the air where it has more time to evaporate before getting to the ground. This method is in wide use in the upper Rio Grande Valley in Colorado.

Drip irrigation is one of the best water-saving methods. Currently, in the Rio Grande Valley, it is used primarily in vineyards. The significant feature of this method is that it can deliver water specifically to the base of the targeted plants. Compared to overall flooding to moisten soil to the bottom of the entire root zone, drip irrigation supplies water

to individual crop plants, and flow can be adjusted to the plant's size. As a result, considerably less water is used.

Dealing With the Salts Directly

Regardless of the irrigation method, the salt problem is the "gotcha." Various techniques exist to address high levels of salt in the soil. As in so many systems, multiple solutions must generally be used to solve the problem. Some plants do well in somewhat salty soils; some plants help to use up the salts. As the soil becomes more salty, one can change to a different crop—a variation on rotating crops. Watering occasionally at much-increased rates helps to flush salts below the root zones of plants. In extreme cases, the top layer of soil can be removed to get to underlying uncontaminated layers.

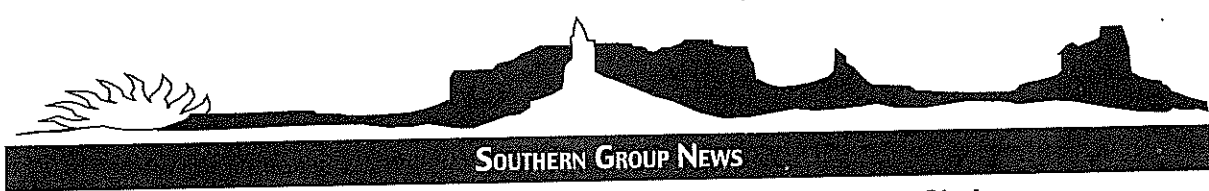
Economic Barriers

Some water-intensive crops do have advantages. Alfalfa, for instance, is nitrogen-fixing and easy to grow. Alfalfa's economic value, however, is low. Other crops have a higher market value, but

(continued on page 13)

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SOUTHERN GROUP NEWS

News from the Chair

Candidate statements:

David Farrell: I've lived in New Mexico for fifteen years and believe it's one of the most beautiful and unique states in the country. As a landscape painter in southern New Mexico I've become very aware of how our forests, riparian areas and grasslands are changing through natural forces and human manipulation. Unfortunately in many situations politics takes precedence over science in how we view and manage our air, water, wildlife and land. The Sierra Club represents an important voice in advocating for the protection of those resources. My goal as an activist is to encourage more awareness and protection of New Mexico's environment through education and legislative initiative.

Anthony Hyde: My primary interests are wildlife conservation, land and wilderness conservation, renewable energy, and appreciation of nature and ecology. I was active in Environmentally Conscious Manufacturing in New Mexico while there was such an organization, and led tours and outings to remote areas of southern New Mexico to study such manufacturing methodologies.

Cathy Burr Mathews: I am particularly interested in environmental education, the unique landscapes of southern New Mexico, and conserving open space. I am the Landscape Designer for the City of Las Cruces and, as such, am interested in promoting use of native plants in our built landscapes. My educational background is in Biology, Environmental Science, and Landscape Architecture.

Margot Wilson: I am a newly retired children's librarian, active in the Sierra Club for over twenty years. My initial interest was as an outings leader, but since 1994 I have served on the Southern Group's ExCom and have represented the Southern Group on the Chapter ExCom. I have also served on the Conservation Committee. I have organized meetings to educate and inform the public, advocating for the protection of nonrenewable resources, wildlife and public lands. I have monitored local mining and other environmental issues, and brought them to the attention of authorities, sometimes successfully blocking mining and protecting public lands. I hope to continue to serve.

Don Dearholt

By the time you get this, the election of November 5th will probably be upon us; it will be history before we know it! Let us hope that our work has paid off! It's my belief, through observations over time, that the environmental aspects of our political culture can fluctuate considerably. It's also my belief that the environmentalists are slowly but surely gaining--the evidence of the importance to all our lives of not messing up our planet any more than it is already, is becoming more clear, even to those who don't wish to spend much time or energy in considering the environment and our quality of life.

It's election time for the Sierra Club, too, and below you'll find the ballot for the Southern New Mexico Group. Please vote and mail in your ballots soon, as we'd really like to hear from you. We'll also appreciate receiving your suggestions and concerns regarding environmental issues in Southern New Mexico.

General Meetings

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

PLANNING MEETING: *Wednesday, January 8--* (ExCom and interested members and guests of the SNM Group), 6:30 p.m. at SWEC (see location information above in the description of the program meeting on November 14). Please enter the west door, just south of Day's Hamburgers.

Coming Events:

Outings

POTLUCK PARTY: *Wednesday, December 18, 6:00-9:00 p.m.* at the Mesilla Visitor Center. The visitor center is located on the west side of Highway 28, just north of the stoplight on Highway 28 at Calle Parian/Boutz. This is a small building across from San Andres High School, in the middle of the block between Calle Parian/Boutz and Calle Santiago. Parking is adjacent and to the north of the building. Bring a dish and your own plate/utensils, we'll provide drinks. If you'd like to bring a reading having environmental interest, or a song to play or sing or lead, please do so. Interested persons and members are welcome! Call Cheryl at 526-6220 (daytime) for more information/directions.

PROGRAMS

PROGRAM: The Albatrosses of Midway Atoll--Birds, Battles, and Tourists; *Alex and Marjorie Burr. Thursday, November 14, 7:00 p.m.,* new Southwest Environmental Center (SWEC) location at 275 North Downtown Mall (1/2 block south of Coa's My Bookstore), just south of Las Cruces Avenue on the mall.



BALLOT; IMPORTANT
PLEASE VOTE ASAP AND RETURN YOUR BALLOTS AS INDICATED.

**Southern NM Executive Committee
 Elections
 RETURN BY DECEMBER 10, 2002, TO:**

**Southern NM Group Sierra Club
 P.O. Box 3705
 Las Cruces, N.M. 88003**

**Vote for as many as 4 (2 year terms)
 member**

1	2	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	David Farrell
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Anthony Hyde
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cathy Burr Mathews
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Margot Wilson
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____ (write in)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____ (write in)

your membership number(s)
 1. _____
 2. _____

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Deluding Ourselves

Jamie Newlin, Vice-Chair
El Paso Regional Group

One of the games played by municipalities caught in resource usage arguments between conservation-minded reformers and developers is to concentrate on per capita reductions in resource use, such as reductions in per capita water use.

Reductions in per capita use look great and feel good ("See, I lowered my monthly water consumption."), but it doesn't solve any problems in a city or region that is growing overall. If you reduce water use by half, and then the city population more than doubles, or the regional population more than doubles, or you attract a few new water using industries, or you plant a few more alfalfa or pecan fields, you're not only back where you started but you have a whole set of other resources being used (not just water) by all these new additions to the community. And still the call for "freedom to grow" will continue. And, in terms of the Rio Grande, remember that Albuquerque and Las Cruces are playing this same game, -and they get to dip in before we do in El Paso or Juarez.

The missing ingredient here is a cap on the total amount of water used by the city and the region. When we turn a blind eye to desires for infinite growth, using less water per individual cannot equal sustainability. To be sustainable, along with the individual economizing there must be an agreement to live within limits on a group scale, which means putting limits on the total amount of water consumed.

It is also important to remember that El Paso is not the only city facing such choices. This choice between self delusion (congratulating oneself for per capita reductions while using per capita reductions to excuse infinite growth) and responsibility (an agreement not to let total human usage go beyond a certain amount, which then necessarily leads to per capita reductions within that total limit) is being played out all over the Southwest, all over Mexico, all over the world, in both agricultural and urban areas. So far people are opting for delusion, as plans such as the El Paso-Las Cruces "Sustainable" Water Project or the Texas Regional Water Plan pretend that increased overall use and per capita reductions will add up to sustainability. They won't. We are already over-using. Do the math. Increased total usage is increased total usage, even if per capita reductions are made.

We need to be limiting, and perhaps even decreasing, our total regional usage far more than we need to be playing turn-off-the-sprinkler. Turn-off-the-sprinkler will work only if it is a natural outgrowth of the more important and basic goal of limiting the total amount of water used. But today, in El Paso and all over the world, turn-off-the-sprinkler is being promoted as a distraction from enacting caps on total water usage. When used in this way, without agreement to live within limits as a group, per capita reductions are no more than a green light and fig leaf for infinite development.

Selected Outings

Nov 2-3: Catwalk-Whitewater Creek Beginner Backpack

Place: Gila Wilderness
Class: Moderate
Length: 5 miles
Elevation gain: 1000 feet
Leader: Mike Episcopo 584-9322 mepiscop@episd.org
We will hike up the "Catwalk", a metal walkway hanging on the cliffside of steep, boulder-choked Whitewater Canyon. Our campsite will be upstream under huge old-growth maple and sycamore trees. Call for help in planning your equipment.

Nov 9: Anthony's Nose Dayhike

Place: Franklin Mountains
Class: Strenuous
Length: 8 miles
Elevation Gain: 2000 feet
Leader: Mike Episcopo 584-9322
Anthony's Nose is the second highest peak in the Franklins. Our route is both on and off-trail and will require scrambling over and around several precarious outcrops. Good balance, little fear of heights, and good physical condition needed. Park entrance fee.

Nov 9-10: Chiricahua Backpack

Place: Chiricahua Wilderness, AZ
Class: Moderately Strenuous
Length: 13 miles
Elevation gain: 2500 feet
Leader: Harry Newman 588-7192 Swraveler@aol.com
After setting up a shuttle in Price Canyon, we will hike from Rustler Park to Anita, Park along the Crest Trail. Sunday will be a long, 8-mile day as we descend the Crest to our shuttle.

Nov 22-24: Tejas-Marcus-Bush Mountain Backpack

Place: Guadalupe Mountains N.P.
Class: Moderately Strenuous
Length: 13.1 miles
Elevation gain: 1530 feet
Leader: Rollin Wickenden 855-6697(H) rwickgila@aol.com
After carcamping Friday night at Dog Canyon, we will ascend the Tejas trail past Lost Peak and on to the Mescalero campsite for Saturday night. Sunday we descend the scenic Marcus trail into West Dog Canyon and return via the steep Bush Mountain Trail up and over Manzanita Ridge. Participants must carry all water. Be prepared for cold!

Nov 30-Dec 1: Alamo Hueco Mountains Backpack

Place: BLM Wilderness Study Area in the boot heel of New Mexico
Class: Strenuous
Length: 6 miles total
Elevation gain: 2000 feet
Leader: John Walton 833-8448 (H) walton@utep.edu
We'll drive early Saturday morning to the edge of the WSA (~4 hours). This requires high clearance vehicles with 4WD recommended. Next we'll hike over a ridge into the bottom of beautiful Wood Canyon where we'll spend the night. Sunday morning we'll hike up Wood canyon past 4 natural arches and numerous interesting rock formations to Ghost Rock. Optionally we'll hike past another larger arch then back to the vehicles. Some easy scrambling required. All water must be carried.

El Paso Regional Group Directory (Area Code 915)

<http://texas.sierraclub.org/elpaso>

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CENTRAL GROUP NEWS

Otero Mesa - Where We Stand

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The effort to protect New Mexico's Wildest Grassland continues at a non-stop pace. The Bureau of Land management recently contacted the offices of the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance and announced that on November 6th, they would be releasing to the conservation and oil and gas industry a preview of their Final Environmental Impact Statement for Otero Mesa. This date comes much sooner than we had been led to believe and indicates that pressure from Washington is moving this Final EIS along very quickly.

The conservation community has continued to pressure our Delegation and is now touring the state giving slide shows and meeting with the press. In addition, the Otero Mesa television commercial has continued airing and visits to our Otero Mesa website www.oteromesa.org have reached over 700 per week.

The threat to Otero Mesa is very real. Recently, Vice-President Dick Cheney visited the state for two \$1000 per plate, fund-raisers in southern New Mexico. Both were sponsored by George Yates, the President of HEYCO, the company that wants to drill in Otero Mesa. George Yates has long been an enemy of conservation. He is also the cousin of the President of Yates Petroleum, the first company to obtain a drilling lease in New Mexico. In 1982, it was Yates Petroleum that plowed a road into the Salt Creek Wilderness near Roswell. It took several weeks and a court injunction to stop the drilling. Newspaper reports of the time show two people strongly speaking up in defense of the Yates operation. One was then Interior Secretary James Watt, not a model of environmental concern; the other was a Congressman from Wyoming, Dick Cheney. What is clear from these stories is that for far too long a cozy relationship between the oil and gas industry and this Administration has been built, and now that relationship is opening the door to the destruction of over one million acres of our states wildest Chihuahuan Desert Grasslands.

In the time that remains, it is crucial that Senator Bingaman hear from New Mexicans. Your letters are making a difference on this issue! Another very important thing that can help protect Otero Mesa is to take

the time to visit the Senator's Field offices in Albuquerque, Santa Fe or Las Cruces. Call or drop by to set up an appointment and visit with his staff. Let them know that Otero Mesa deserves Wilderness protection and at a minimum, the BLM should conduct a new wilderness inventory of the area! Those visits equal 100 letters and could make the difference in the days ahead.

One thing is clear, the oil and gas industry continue their strangle hold over our state. With Otero Mesa we must draw a line in the sand and say NO to their continued lust for power and profit. If we can stop this development, we can open the door to a true conversation about alternative energy production, efficiency and preserve a real national treasure-Otero Mesa for many generations yet to come. If you have any questions or need help in setting up or meeting with the staff, contact Nathan Newcomer at 843-8696 or nathan@nmwild.org

- Call and set up a visit with Senator Bingaman today!
- In Albuquerque: 625 Silver Ave. SW, Suite 130
Albuquerque, NM 87102
505-346-6601
- In Santa Fe: 119 East Marcy, Suite 101
Santa Fe, NM 87501
505-988-6647
- In Las Cruces: 148 Loretto Towne Centre, 505 South Main
Las Cruces, NM 88001
505-523-6561

Update on the Planned Growth Strategy

We are pleased to report that the PGS has passed and been signed. At their September 23rd meeting, the City Council took up Ordinance FS O-02-39 which is the core of the PGS. During the more than 3 hour public comment period, many people spoke for or against the ordinance. When the vote was finally taken it was clear that support was there and the measure passed 7-2. To many observers, this was a major shift in support as Councilors Payne and Winter voted to pass in contrast to their earlier opposition. When asked later, Payne voiced support for the many changes that had been made since the original ordinance was introduced. He said 'I can't think of a single objectionable item in this document. It says alot about this council's ability to work together.'

At a subsequent Council meeting on October 3rd, Resolution R-02-111 which completes the PGS was also passed by the Council, also by a 7-2 vote. It was now clear that public support for a more progressive growth strategy had prevailed. We have since learned that Mayor Chavez has signed both the Ordinance and the Resolutions, so we can move ahead with implementation of the PGS and work toward the vision of a more vibrant and progressive city.

General Public Meetings

- Monday, November 18th at 7:30PM**
Vera Norwood will come to share her knowledge about Gardening.
Where: 1st Unitarian Church, 3701 Carlisle NE at Comanche, Social Hall.
- Monday, December 16th at 7:30PM**
Steve Cox will present a talk and slideshow on Birds.
Where: 1st Unitarian Church, 3701 Carlisle NE at Comanche, Social Hall.

*** * Vote on November 5th * ***

We Urge You to Support the Club's Endorsed Candidates

Bill Richardson for Governor of New Mexico
Gloria Tristani for U.S. Senate
Richard Romera for U.S. House of Representatives, District 1
Tom Udall for U.S. House of Representatives, District 3
New Mexico House of Representatives
• Rick Meira in District 11 (Central Albuquerque)
• Miguel Garcia in District 14 (Southwest Albuquerque)
• Steve Archibeque in District 15 (Albuquerque North Valley)
• Sheryl Williams Stapleton in District 19 (South Central ABQ)
• Mimi Stewart in District 21 (South East Albuquerque)
• J. Paul Taylor in District 33 (Dona Ana County)
• Nick L. Salazar in District 40 (Santa Fe, Taos, Mora Counties)
• Max Coll in District 47 (Santa Fe County)
• W. Ken Martinez in District 69 (Cibola & McKinley Counties)

Danny Hernandez for AMAFCA, District 1
Shirley Baca for Public Regulation Commission, District 3
Early voting continues until November 2nd. Check with your County Clerk for locations and times.
Check elsewhere in this newspaper for more information on the candidates.

Central New Mexico Group
PO Box 25342
Albuquerque, New Mexico, 87125-5342

Executive Committee (area code 505)

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Marilynn Cooper	842-0185	
Mark Doppke	768-1160	marckdoppke@yahoo.com
Richard Johnson	277-4144	rsheehan@unm.edu
Michal Mudd	884-3315	micmud@aol.com
Sherry Wolf	254-2190	wolf@law.unm.edu

The Executive Committee normally meets on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7:30PM. We meet at various locations, so please contact one of us for the meeting location, or if you have issues you would like to discuss. The meetings are free and open to all members.

Project Leaders (area code 505)

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Conservation Chair		
Steve Capra	843-8696 x103	scapra@nmwild.org
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Water Issues		
Mark Doppke	768-1160	marckdoppke@yahoo.com
Wildlife		
Sherry Wolf	254-2190	wolf@law.unm.edu

The Central New Mexico Group of the Sierra Club depends on the efforts of volunteers. To join us, give any of us a call.

Children's Water Festival a Great Success !

Is there water on Zork? What's it like to be 'Swimmin' in the Rio Grande? Who's got the water?

Nearly 1000 4th grade students from Albuquerque, Los Lunas and Rio Rancho learned the answers to these water questions and much more at the 4th Children's Water Festival, a celebration of water education, held at the Albuquerque Convention Center on October 17th and 18th.

As they got off the buses, the students were greeted by the Water Wizard 'who knows all there is to know about H₂O'. Later, they met the Xeric City Scarecrow who assisted them as they built water filters to purify water from the Rio Grande. Students negotiated water sharing agreements, and looked for "bugs" in the water to determine its purity, created a mini-river and used a groundwater model to 'see' how water moves underground.

Why a Water Festival? In various ways, water has been in the news all summer. Back in May, we learned that we could not hike many of our favorite trails or visit those special places. Why? Not enough water; fire danger too high. The fires of 2002 will be remembered for a long, long time - many square miles of forests gone, houses lost, millions of dollars spent to fight the fires. Why? A complex of reasons including not enough water. The water challenges faced by residents of the Middle Rio Grande valley are serious now. Imagine how much greater these challenges may become.

In 15 years or so, these students will be the water engineers and managers; the voters and decision makers. They will have to make critical choices about water and they must have the facts, concepts, values and critical thinking skills to do that. Festival organizers hope that the Water Festival provides teachers and their students with some of those water facts and concepts and values and that the Festival is a catalyst that sets off a chain reaction for ever more water education to take place in every school and each home.

Dozens of organizations and individuals donated time, resources and money to make the Water Festival possible. More than 175 volunteers helped guide groups of students, present activities, assist the presenters, or do a variety of tasks to ensure that the event ran smoothly and that the students had fun while they learned. The Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club was a financial supporter of the Water Festival.

The next Water Festival will be in Santa Fe in March 2003. Look for more news in the January/February issue of the Sierran.

Political Open House a Big Success

On November 14th, more than 125 people gathered at the 1st Unitarian Church to hear and talk to many of the candidates running for office in the upcoming election. Almost 20 candidates, including Governor & Lt. Governor, U.S. Senate, US House of Representatives, New Mexico House of Representatives, State Land Commissioner and AMAFCA attended. Attendees included many of our endorsed candidates. After brief statements, attendees gathered to talk informally with the candidates about their issues and concerns.

Many candidates voiced their thanks for our less formal format without head to head questions and debate.

Many thanks to all who attended and to those who helped organize this event.

Ciudad Soil and Water Conservation District is Saved

At the Special Election back on September 17th, Albuquerque area citizens voted overwhelmingly to keep the Ciudad Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD).

As we reported in the last issue of the Rio Grande Sierran, the SWCD works quietly but diligently to preserve our natural resources. While operating with a budget of only \$12,000, they receive and administer grants totaling more than \$300,000 from various agencies for erosion control and drainage, water quality and availability and education regarding all of these functions - all work that would not happen without the SWCD.

Thanks to all the folks who cared to vote, the SWCD can continue with its outstanding work.

Executive Committee Elections

Ballots for both the Rio Grande Chapter and the Central New Mexico Group are included in this newsletter. They are on the back of the outside page (the one the mailing label is attached to).

All Central Group members should vote for candidates for the Executive Committees of both the Rio Grande Chapter and the Central New Mexico Group. (You are a member of the Central New Mexico Group if the number 1701 appears at the top of your mailing label.)

Once you have marked your ballot, it should be mailed back to the Election Committee address listed on the ballot.

Candidate statements for the Central New Mexico Group candidate are below. Statements for the Chapter Executive Committee are presented elsewhere in this newspaper.

PLEASE VOTE. MAIL BALLOTS BY NOVEMBER 30th

Maribeth Theisen

As a social worker for the last 25 years, I have been a tireless advocate for my clients. I would like to put that same energy and commitment to work for the Sierra Club.

As a member of the Executive Committee, I will work to preserve wilderness areas, and protect them from ranching, mining, manufacturing, and drilling interests.

Preservation of our natural resources also means educating the public about clean, sustainable, energy options, such as solar, wind and hydrogen cell technology; therefore, I plan to find ways to raise the public's awareness, motivation and access to utilize alternative energy sources.

I will also raise awareness through education about the need to conserve our precious water resources.

I have been a Sierra Club member since the mid-80's. I moved to Albuquerque in 1991 and immediately became active in Club activities here, serving on the Central New Mexico Group Excom in a number of positions. I am also a member of the Rio Grande Chapter Excom, and serve as Treasurer.

I am very encouraged by the accomplishments of the Group this year. We have recruited new members to the Excom. We have invigorated our General Meetings and used them as venue to spread our message to more of our members and the general public. We have worked with our endorsed candidates in their election campaigns. We have also continued our efforts to protect the Rio Grande and the Silvery Minnow.

I believe that it is critical that we continue and enlarge these efforts. Under the current administration we are seeing increased attacks on our environment.

Not only must we oppose these attacks, we find and use any means to increase protection of our special places like Petroglyph Monument and Otero Mesa.

I offer my continued dedication to these efforts and would be honored to continue as a member of the Executive Committee.

Alma Rosa Silva Banuelos

Candidate Statement Had Not Been Received by Presstime

Outings

Saturday, November 2nd - Desert Exploratory Hike

Come and visit some of New Mexico's most incredible and beautiful landscapes hidden in its desert places. Strangely eroded and colorful rocks, badlands, precipitous cliffs, outstanding vistas, mysterious narrow and winding canyons, archeological sites, petrified forests and other fossils, historic inscriptions, stone tools, pottery, pictographs and petroglyphs are some of the discoveries we have made on the Desert Exploratory Hikes in the past.

These hikes are not physically difficult, but will require a sense of adventure on the part of participants. There will rarely be a trail and the route will be very rocky and uneven at times. Sometimes we scramble over rock surfaces (non-technical climbing) and walk narrow ledges, but this is quite often optional. Typical distance traveled is between 4 and 8 miles and we usually gain less than 1000 feet of elevation.

Meeting time will vary from 8:30AM to 10AM. Meeting place will always be Smith's, at Carlisle and Menaul, nearest to Carlisle. Contact leader by previous Wednesday for info. on specific hike location and meeting time. Joint outing with Outdoor Adventures For Singles.

Leader: Tom Petencin 271-9928 tompeten@juno.com

Sunday, November 10: Pino Trail, Sandia Mountain Wilderness
Approx. 6 miles round-trip, 2500 ft. elevation. Excellent conditioning hike from Elena Gallegos to Sandia Crest. David Ther, 260-1553.

Saturday, Nov. 16th and Sundays, December 8th, 21st, and 29th - Desert Exploratory Hike (see description for November 2nd for details)



NORTHERN GROUP NEWS

NORTHERN NEW MEXICO (alias Santa Fe) GROUP 2002 MEETINGS

Tuesday, November 19, 7 PM

HEALING NEW MEXICO'S RIVERS AND STREAMS

MaryAnn McGraw of the New Mexico Environment Department, Surface Water Quality Bureau, will discuss riparian restoration techniques being used in New Mexico. Over 3,795 miles of the state's rivers are affected in some way by non-point source pollution.

The Surface Water Quality Bureau offers grants under the Clear Water Act for projects designed to restore our streams and rivers to health. MaryAnn, who is also on the Board of the Santa Fe Botanical Garden, has been active in both doing restoration and teaching about it.

She will share her knowledge and her slides to help us understand the problems from non-point source pollution and the methods available to ameliorate its effects.



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

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

Northern New Mexico Group of the Sierra Club 621 Old Santa Fe Trail, Plaza 621, Suite 10, Santa Fe, NM 87505

505 . 983.2703

Saturday, December 14, 6 PM

HOLIDAY CELEBRATION The Commons, 2300 West Alameda

Come and share the spirit of the holidays with your fellow Sierra members and leave full of scrumptious food, inspiration, and having found new friends! As usual, please bring 8 servings of one of the following: appetizers, salads, veggie dishes, meat dishes, casseroles, breads, desserts. If you don't like to cook or don't have the time, bring beer, wine, fruit juices, soft drinks. Warming oven and refrigerator are available, as are serving implements, silverware, and plates.

For further information, call Ken Hughes (474-0550) or Norma McCallan (471-0005).

We will have a speaker after dinner. News about that will be distributed around December 1 in our bi-monthly flyer.



NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

Doug Fraser

Well, election time is upon us - both for our own Chapter and Group Club officials - and as you surely know by now, for our local and state elected offices.

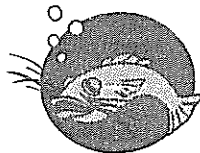
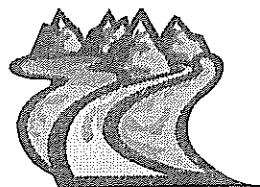
Please review the comments by candidates for the Santa Fe/Northern NM Chapter Executive Committee on the adjoining sheet, as well as the Chapter candidates, vote on the back page and mail it in by November 30.

Please make the voting turnout better than normal. It gives us an added feeling of support !!!!

Regarding our races for the office of Governor on down, please review the Club's endorsements sent to you two weeks ago before you vote. We spent considerable time and reflection on them.

On forest restoration matters, our October meeting highlighted Dr. Melissa Savage of The Four Corners Institute here in Santa Fe. She is involved in a project on Rowe Mesa on the Valle Grande Grass Bank to use fuelwooders to thin an area of ponderosa pine so that the Forest Service can burn it in hopes of reestablishing the natural fire regime.

At the November meeting, continuing with our "restoration" theme, MaryAnn McGraw of the New Mexico Environment Department - Surface Water Quality Bureau will discuss riparian restoration techniques. It is important that we not just focus on "preservation" of the West but address the needs of much of land for restoration. As we discussed with Dr. Savage, at what turned out to be quite a lively meeting, we cannot accurately determine "pre-settlement" conditions in many cases. But we can determine what constitutes a functioning ecosystem and attempt to produce that. We hope you will join us to learn about ways to do that on our streams and rivers on November 19.



CONSERVATION CHAIR

Paul Paryski

Again the major issue facing the Northern New Mexico group has been water or rather the lack thereof. Specifically we have focused on the much-contested Santa Fe City ordinance for establishing a water budget. Two versions were proposed by two distinct groups in the City Council. One a more or less real water budget ordinance proposed by four Councilors (Bushee, Coss, Chavez, Heldmeyer) and another rather poorly conceived and written bill full of loopholes but also some good points by an opposing group (Ortiz, Lopez, Wurzbarger, Pfeffer). After a stormy public hearing in Sweeney Center, with a vast majority of those who spoke and attending strongly supporting the "real" Bushee water budget ordinance, the other ordinance was passed with Mayor Delgado casting the tie-breaking vote. Now the Council must make this ordinance workable and establish administrative procedures, no easy task. At least the principle of a water budget that analyzes supply and demand and somewhat addresses establishing water allocation priorities is now law, weak though it may be. There is still some small hope.

Tom Turney has established a Water Reuse and Water Efficient Homes task force that has produced some very significant suggestions and a specific plan of action that will soon be put into execution. A good initiative.

Bear populations continue to be stressed by the lack of food caused by the drought and pressure from hunters and habitat loss. The bear sub-population in the Sandia Mountains has been severely affected. Ignoring calls for the suspension of bear hunting in this region, the Game Commission only shortened the season. A bad initiative.

Phelps Dodge is planning to amend the existing Mining Act to allow mining companies to self-bond for the cleanup costs of closed mining operations. We shall keep you informed and hope to count on our members' support in calling their legislators to opposed this amendment.

The fight to save the Rio Grande silvery minnow and indeed the Rio Grande ecosystem suffered a setback when a District Supreme Court Judge ruled that Albuquerque did not have to release water to keep the Rio Grande flowing for the minnow, overturning a previous judge's ruling. The Sierra Club and the Alliance for the Rio Grande Heritage have been fighting to both save the minnow and the river.

NORTHERN GROUP NEWS

GROUP OUTINGS FOR 2002 and 2003

- | Sat | Sun | November |
|-----|-----|--|
| 2 | | Moderate/Strenuous Bike Ride , loop up Bland Canyon and down Cochiti Canyon, possible visit to ghost town of Bland, 15 miles/1500' gain. Michael DiRosa (663-0648) |
| 2 | | Easy/Moderate Hike Penstemon Ridge, wear good hiking boots. 6+ miles R/T. Dogs ok. Norma McCallan (471-0005) |
| 3 | | Easy Hike in the Cerrillos Hills, leaving from Walgreens parking lot in Villa Linda Mall, 9 AM. Victor Atyas (438-9434) |
| 3 | | Strenuous Hike Horsethief Meadow from Panchuella CG, 11 miles, 2500' gain, dogs OK. Tobin Oruch (820-2844) |
| 9 | | Moderate Hike , dogs okay, or Intermediate XC ski if snow (no dogs). Lionel Soracco (983-6715) |
| 10 | | Moderate Hike to Seven Springs, unique travertine formations, near San Ysidro, 9 miles, <1000' gain. Optional second stop at Alabaster Cave for those desiring, some tight crawling, will need a helmet and 3 sources of light. Rich Capua (473-1948) |
| 16 | | Easy Birdwatch Walk , bring binoculars. Ron Duffy (982-2890) |
| 16 | | Strenuous Hike to Santa Fe Baldy, 14 miles, 2800' gain, going even if snow, early start. Phil Somervell (473-4797) |
| 17 | | Moderate/Strenuous Hike from Caja del Rio to White Rock Canyon rim and volcanic plug, rough/off trail, high clearance cars helpful. Norbert Sperlich (474-4354) |
| 23 | | Strenuous Hike , Holy Ghost CG to Spirit Lake in Pecos, 14 miles/2800' gain, alt if snowpacked. Heather Liston (982-9715) |
| 24 | | Moderate/Strenuous Snowshoe in Pecos Holy Ghost area or hike if no snow (call to see). Marcia Skillman (474-7414) |
| 30 | | Moderate/Strenuous Hike , Queen Mary/Otowi Mesa near LA or Shaggy Peak SE of town, 10-12 miles/2300', off-trail and rough with rock scrambling. Stephen Markowitz (505-797-5833 or stepdov@hotmail.com) |

- | Sat | Sun | December |
|-----|-----|--|
| 1 | | Easy Hike in Diablo Canyon. Leave 9 AM. Victor Atyas (438-9434) |
| 7 | | Moderate Hike in La Bajada area. Mostly off-trail. Leave 8 AM. Lester Drapela (438-3306) |
| 8 | | Moderate Hike . Gail Bryant (505-757-6654) |
| 14 | | Strenuous Hike from La Bajada to Tetilla Peak. 12 miles RT, 1700' elevation gain, partly off-trail. Michael DiRosa (663-0648) |
| 15 | | Moderate hike . Dogs allowed. Tobin Oruch (820-2844) |
| 21 | | Easy Birdwatch Walk . Bring binoculars. Ron Duffy (982-2890) |
| 21 | | Intermediate Cross-Country Ski Trip . If no snow, moderate/strenuous hike. Dogs allowed on hike only. Lionel Soracco (983-6715) |
| 22 | | Easy Hike on Nun's Corner Loop. Some steep sections. Be prepared for snow; wear boots. Dogs allowed. Leave 9:30 AM. Norma McCallan (471-0005) |
| 28 | | Moderate Hike in Ojito area, road conditions permitting. Stephen Markowitz (505-797-5833) |
| 29 | | Moderate Hike to Tor (volcanic knob) and the Blowhole in the Caja del Rio. Mostly off-trail, some rough sections. Norbert Sperlich (474-4354) |

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

For additional outings in Northern New Mexico, please check the Pajarito Group page(s) in this newsletter.



MUCHAS GRACIAS

We want to thank all those who made our yard sale on October 5 a success. In particular a huge thank you to Carole Owens for her generous and cheerful hosting of this complex event in her garage and driveway. We are also deeply grateful to those who volunteered their time to price, set up, and man the tables. In addition to Carole, we had Kathy and Doug Fraser, Barbara Johnson, Lionel Soracco, Jaffaa Spiro, Kay Carlson, Jan Kindel, Carol Szpakowski, Bernard Preskin, and Norma McCallan.

RIO GRANDE SIERRAN NOW ON THE 'NET !!
<http://www.riogrande.sierraclub.org/santaafc/home.html>

PLEASE READ THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CANDIDATE STATEMENTS ON THE NEXT PAGE

Outings Notes - Unless otherwise noted, all outings leave from the Sierra office, 621 Old Santa Fe Trail, Plaza 621, just south of Kaune's Grocery at the corner of Old SF Trail and Paseo de Perilla. 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 shoes, and clothing suitable for the weather - leader reserves the right to turn boots or shoes, and clothing suitable for the weather - leader reserves the 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. To participate, you will need to sign a liability waiver. If you would like to read a copy of the waiver, see <http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms>

GROUP COMMITTEE MEETING DATES

Group Executive Committee:	Group Conservation Committee:
Wednesday, November 6, 6:30 PM	Tuesday, November 26, 7 PM
Tuesday, December 3, 6:30 PM	Tuesday, December 17, 7 PM
Tuesday, January 7, 6:30 PM	

Water Pot-Luck (John Buchser's house [820-0201]):
 Tuesday, November 12, 6:30 PM
 Tuesday, December 10, 6:30 PM

◆ ◆ NORTHERN NEW MEXICO GROUP OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS ◆ ◆

Chair — Doug Fraser *	fraser@thuntek.net	474-7615 / 662-4104 fax	Outings — Norbert Sperlich	oruch@lanl.gov	474-4354
Vice-Chair — Barbara Johnson *	lmah3@aol.com	466-4935	— Tobin Oruch	pparyski@aol.com	820-2844
Secretary/Treas — Lionel Soracco		983-6715	Conservation — Paul Paryski *	clarsen1@ix.netcom.com	992-1984
Political Committee — Susan Martin *	smartin@lanl.gov	988-5206	Mining — Cliff Larsen *	jbuchser@earthlink.net	466-2128
Membership/Activist Outings — Norma McCallan *			Water-John Buchser *		820-0201
	nmccallan@mindspring.com	471-0005	National Parks-George Grossman	rogpete@aol.com	982-1024
Newsletter/Publicity — Kay Carlson	kcarlsonwp@earthlink.net	982-3926	Rangelands-Roger Peterson		983-7559
Web Master — Gina Aranda	garanda@cnsp.com	424-1615	Carson Nat'l Forest-George Grossman *		982-1024
Phone Tres — Berta Hanna		424-1435	Activist Outings-Norma McCallan *	nmccallan@mindspring.com	471-0005
Chapter Rep — Doug Fraser *	fraser@thuntek.net	474-7615	Growth—Eleanor Eisenmenger	jankindel@aol.com	820-6401
* Member of the SF Group Executive Committee			— Jan Kindel *		474-7207

RIO GRANDE SIERRAN 11



NORTHERN GROUP NEWS

NORTHERN NEW MEXICO (alias Santa Fe) GROUP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CANDIDATES

GINA ARANDA

My name is Gina Aranda. I am the webmaster for the Northern NM Group. I have lived in Santa Fe for six years; before that I lived 19 years in Mexico where I taught science from an ecological perspective and wrote a few environmental articles in Spanish. After coming to the USA, I gradually changed my career to information technology. I worked as systems analyst/network administrator for two years in the office of the Governor, and whilst my job there did not involve politics, I did nevertheless see that the floor of Congress is where our disagreements are most productively worked out.

I presently work in the DOH Environmental Health Epidemiology Unit as a database administrator, where my efforts concentrate on locating environmental health resources in the state.

My conservation policy is to focus on issues of population and education as a means to proactively press for a sustainable environment in which all life forms have the right to a viable and clean habitat.

DOUG FRASER

I have been a lifelong conservationist and member of the Club since 1977. Most of my employment has been in environmentally related fields. In the '60s I was a hydrology engineer in the State Engineer's Office; the '70s chief attorney for the State's environmental agency (EIA) and, as such, the Agency's legislative point man working on passage of the Air and Water Quality Acts, radiation and waste laws, etc.; the early '90s the Chapter's Lobbyist involved in the Mining, Endangered Species, and Tire Recycling Acts, among others; more recently, I worked for passage of the Anti-SLAPP Suit law.

For the past five years, I have been Chair of the SF/Northern NM Group and the Group's representative to the Rio Grande Chapter. In that time, the Group published the award-winning mining manual *Avoiding the Shaft* and a report on environmental justice; put on a series of well-attended free public workshops on mining, wildlife, wilderness, forest, and grazing issues; and continues to work with

SUSAN MARTIN

A Sierra Club member since 1974, I am chair of the Northern NM Group Political Subcommittee and believe strongly that the Club must be inclusive in its broad work to protect the environment. My political environmental experience started with volunteer campaign efforts and led to being a committee counsel to the U.S. House of Representatives, serving as attorney for the Natural Resources Defense Council in D.C. and lobbying with the Sierra Club to protect the EPA under the Reagan administration's efforts to gut it through the budget process (similar to efforts by this Congress and President).

Local environmental efforts include serving as the elected chair of the Santa Fe Metropolitan Water Board and three years working as planner director for the New Mexico Environment Department.

The Sierra Club is an extremely effective advocacy group for the protection and improvement of the environment and speaks for diverse issues ranging from endangered species to environmental public health. Our strength comes from using different approaches to promote a healthy ecosystem. As a member of the Ex Comm, I will continue to work to support the Rio Grande Chapter's efforts to protect our environment on a local, national, and global basis.

EDIE PIERPONT

Action to protect the environment remains a critical need from Santa Fe to our whole world. I am a candidate for a position on the Northern NM Group Ex Comm because I find that the Sierra Club continues to take action in the many areas where I have worked for the environment over the years for the League of Women Voters. I have been a member of the Sierra Club since 1983. The club's members have been my colleagues and it would be a pleasure to help out in a more active manner.

I have worked on issues such as water, land use planning, mining and solid waste, wilderness protection, transportation and energy. I have helped the Sierra Club with its endorsement of candidates for political office.

My background includes volunteer registered lobbyist for the League since 1984; six years as state natural resources chair for the League, including national conventions and lobbying in Washington; participation in state study committees and work on Environment Department budgets; board member of the NM Environmental Law Center for 11 years; member of the former Santa Fe Conservation Committee that saw the current crisis coming for many years.

I am the League's representative to the Jemez y Sangre Water Planning Council and continue to follow growth and water issues, and am a board member of the Great Old Broads for Wilderness.

BARBARA H. JOHNSON

A member of the Sierra Club since 1989, I was active in the Angeles Chapter before moving to New Mexico in 1991; a writer and editor for 25 years, over 10 as a legal editor working in land use litigation; editor of the *Rio Grande Sierran* for over three years, when it received the Sierra Club's Newsletter of the Year Award; a member of the SF/Northern NM Group Executive Committee for over four years and its Vice-Chair for the past three years; the Chapter's delegate to the National Council of Club Leaders for three years; and edited the Group's mining manual *Avoiding the Shaft* and the Chapter's *Sprawl Costs/Sprawl Solutions*, both honored with the Sierra Club's Special Achievement Award.

While I believe that uncontrolled growth may be one of the most pressing problems facing NM, there are other important issues that need to be addressed, such as well—water, wilderness, wildlife, and mining. The Sierra Club addresses the many issues that affect our environment and it encourages a diversity of opinion on those issues. I am committed to continuing the Sierra Club's hundred-year-old policy of effective grassroots environmental activism.

CLIFF LARSEN

I have been a member of the Sierra Club since 1991 and have served as the Chair of the Group Conservation Committee. I currently am the Co-chair for Mining Issues for the Rio Grande Chapter and a member of the NM Resource Advisory Council to the BLM.

I am particularly proud of our accomplishments in mining issues over the last few years. We have helped close an operation near Cuba that was riddled with environmental problems, helped the community of Cerrillos stop the destruction of Buffalo Mountain, slowed the expansion of the mica processing facility near Velarde, kept Phelps Dodge from getting a five-year extension on their close-out responsibilities and helped force substantial bonding of the Molcorp Mine near Questa.

I believe that our greatest task in the year ahead is to build a greater involvement of our membership in areas of sprawl, wildlife

RUTH SHANTI WAGNER

I grew up in Texas and Colorado around scientists and environmentalists and through osmosis, gained some understanding of the scientific view, but hold a more intuitive holistic vision. I have a great love of nature and a strong interest in preserving its vitality.

In the summers of 1970-71 I assisted with population genetics and ecology projects in Colorado; 1972-73 I was a full time volunteer on the Colorado Open Space Council regarding oil shale; 1977-79 did research and public comment on diversion dams, logging and coal strip-mining in Montana; 1980-81 worked for endangered species with the Audubon Society in Berkeley; 1982-84 researched for lawyers on the Navajo Reservation to stop coal development; 1990-91 researched alternative fuel methods for WIPP issues in Santa Fe; 1995-98 researched for and built a house with environmentally sensitive construction techniques in Virginia.

A landscape artist since 1982, I have also done commercial illustration and design and taught art workshops and classes. Currently, I paint landscapes in oil.

Innovative solutions exist in and outside the box to all current environment challenges. My interests are preservation of wildlands, global warming, water, and ideas that lower and eventually eliminate the negative impact of our mobile, convenient society on the natural world.



**RIGHT NOW ... RIGHT THIS
MINUTE - TURN TO THE LAST
PAGE OF THIS NEWSLETTER
AND CAST YOUR VOTE FOR
FOUR OF THESE WORTHY
CANDIDATES. (I KNOW, IT
WON'T BE EASY DECIDING
BETWEEN THEM.)**

PAJARITO GROUP

OUTINGS

Saturday, November 9 • Short Morning Hike on the Cabra Trail near Barranca Mesa—Meet at Guaje Pines Cemetery at 9:00AM. Bring water, warm clothes, and a snack. RSVP to Dick and Judy Opsah (662-9404).

Saturday, November 30 • X-Country Ski Tour—Yes, this year there will be snow. Contact Carole or Abe Jacobson (672-9579).

Friday-Sunday, December 6-8 • Bosque del Apache Birding—It's time again for our annual weekend camping and birding trip to the Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge. The group campground, accessible by car, is at the end of the main east-west road inside the reserve. Picnic tables, fire grates, and port-a-potties are available. The winter bird population should be well established. Camping is limited to the first 30 who sign up. (Others interested in the birdwatching activities can arrange for lodging in nearby Socorro.) Tour loops are open during daylight hours only. Be prepared for cold nights.

Imagine going to sleep and waking up among thousands of snow and Canada geese, sandhill cranes, and ducks of various feathers! Knowledgeable birders are especially welcome. Please register in advance. Contact Rainer Bleck (662-2368; ibleck@yahoo.com).

Please check the Northern Group pages for additional outings in the area.

Pajarito Group of the Sierra Club Directory

Ise Bleck, Chair & Chapter Representative	662-2300 ibleck@yahoo.com
Kjm Manley, Vice Chair	662-6163 kmmngol@ix.netcom.com
Carole Jacobson, Secretary/Treasurer	672-9579 abc.jacobson@worldnet.att.net
Chuck Pergler, Conservation Chair	661-6169 pergler@att.net
Jody Benson	667-8465 bensonj@lanl.gov
Matt Heavner	829-3645 heavner@jemez.com
Abe Jacobson	672-9579

MEETINGS

All meetings are held in the upstairs rooms in Mesa Public Library at 7:00PM and are open to the public. General meetings are on the first Wednesday, conservation meetings the second Wednesday, and ExComm meetings the third Wednesday. *There will be no General Meeting in January 2003.*

OPEN MEETING

AN ICELAND ADVENTURE

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 6 • 7:00PM
MESA PUBLIC LIBRARY • UPSTAIRS MEETING ROOMS

Join Rainer and Ise Bleck for a slide presentation of their trip to Iceland this summer. Explore the geological wonders and learn about the people, their history, and the environmental problems caused by the settlement of this fragile land.



OPEN MEETING

THE BEARS OF KATMAI

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4 • 7:00PM
MESA PUBLIC LIBRARY • UPSTAIRS MEETING ROOMS

Alaska's Brown Bears, has 12 years of experience with brown bears in the field, including along the coast of the Alaska Peninsula. This presentation will give us a glimpse into the secret life of bears—including the fact of bear infanticide, and the misperceptions of bears as being both unpredictable and asocial.

The Pajarito Group's Link to the Sierra Club Web Site

Pajarito can be accessed at:
<http://riogrande.sierraclub.org/pajarito/>

Matt Heavner is the webmeister.

Irrigation (continued from page 5)

require both a market for the crop and more effort or expense on the part of the farmer. International transport and marketing of crops mean that a government agricultural subsidy halfway around the world can affect a farmer here in the Rio Grande Valley.

How Can We City Slickers Help?

The first part of the solution is to provide an assured local market for higher value crops. Santa Fe has developed one of the best farmers' markets in the United States. This provides a market for fresh foods, and balances the greater cost of farming higher value foods with a reasonably assured sale of those foods and revenues that go directly to the farmer. We can help to create extensive networks of farmers' markets in urban areas. Furthermore, we can urge our local corporate grocers to

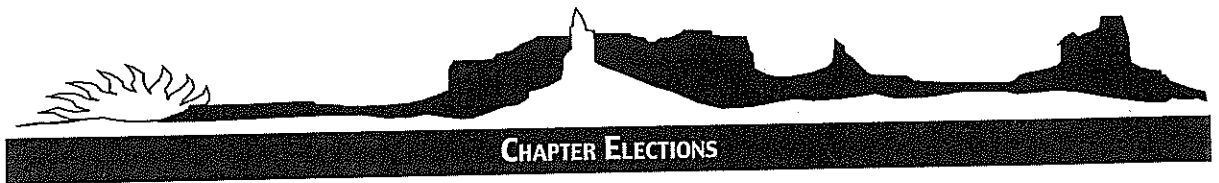
stock more local produce. Granted, Santa Fe has the advantage of tourists who buy some of the higher-value items available at the farmers' market, but every city has some advantage. Albuquerque, for example, is closer to warmer growing zones with longer growing seasons, and has a large population.

The second part of the solution proceeds directly from the availability of an expanded market. By selling higher-value crops, farmers have more money to install drip systems. The government has more reassurance that any investment in irrigation improvements will help maximize irrigation efficiency while helping to stabilize rural economics. Thus, we can make a very strong case for politicians to infuse capital to help the process along, without it seeming like a bottomless pit for tax dollars.

Finally, we have to make sure that all of these "savings" of water through improved agricultural efficiencies do not just go to providing more water for urban growth. We need to be very careful how we grow our cities and keep our use in balance with recharge. Further, we must always keep in mind that our rivers—and the creatures and ecosystems that depend upon the rivers—also depend on us for their survival.

For More Info...

www.farmersmarkets.net
www.farmersmarketsnm.org
www.caff.org
www.farmernet.com



Rio Grande Chapter ExCom Candidate Statements

The following five members of the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club are candidates for the Chapter's Executive Committee. All Chapter members are eligible to vote for three of these candidates. Please use the ballot on page 15.

Mark Doppke

My name is Mark Doppke, and I have been working as a computer engineer for more than 11 years. I built nuclear safeguard equipment and later supercomputer switches. I realize now that engineering isn't as important as survival of humans and the planet's bio-diversity, so I am changing careers. I am an extremely capable person and well educated in most areas that help or threaten our survival. I am an environmental activist in training and serve on the Sierra Club Central Group's Executive Committee with water as my main issue. I'm learning leadership skills, organizing, campaigning, protesting, and writing grants. Saving the earth is a war no one can afford to lose, so I'm setting out to find out how much of a difference I can make. Please elect me.

—marckdoppke@yahoo.com

I am completing my fourth term on the Chapter ExCom, the first two of which were several years prior to the current terms. I have been the Chapter Outings Chair for a number of years, am the alternate Council and SWRCC delegate, and am on the Conservation Committee. I have been active in the Santa Fe Group for more than 25 years, serving on its ExCom for many years, a long-time member of the Political and Conservation Committees, and current Membership Chair.

For many years, I was the Group Outing Chair (or co-chair) and still try to lead a trip each month. I am completing my sixth and final year on the national Group and Chapter Outings Committee. Meeting Sierra members from all over the country, as well as staff and officers has been an invaluable experience, as has working through the policies and guidelines governing the Club's outings programs.

I think the Chapter's biggest challenge is getting more of our considerable membership involved in attending Group meetings, participating on outings, working on political campaigns, becoming conservation activists. We need more hands-on projects, more options for involvement. As a Chapter, we need to join, where feasible, with the many other environmental and community groups across the State in projects of mutual concern. We also need to acknowledge the needs and traditions of our multi-cultural peoples, while working to conserve our special open spaces, revive our precious streams and riparian areas, improve our public transportation, encourage in every way possible the wisest use of our dwindling water sources, and help to create a sustainable future for all of us.

If re-elected I will try to serve the whole of New Mexico and West Texas to the best of my ability.

—mccallan@mindspring.com

Susan Martin

A Sierra Club member since 1974, I am chair of the Northern New Mexico Group's Political Subcommittee and believe strongly that the Club must be inclusive in its broad work to protect the environment. My political environmental experience started with volunteer campaign efforts and led to being a committee counsel to the U.S. House of Representatives, serving as attorney for the Natural Resources Defense Council in Washington DC, and lobbying with the Sierra Club to protect the EPA from the Reagan administration's efforts to gut it through the budget process (similar to recent efforts by this Congress and President).

My local environmental efforts include serving as the elected chair of the Santa Fe Metropolitan Water Board and, three years working as planning director for the New Mexico Environment Department.

The Sierra Club is an extremely effective advocacy group for the protection and improvement of the environment, and speaks for diverse issues ranging from endangered species to environmental public health. Our strength comes from using different approaches to promote a healthy ecosystem. As a member of the Executive Committee, I will work to support the Rio Grande Chapter's variety of environmental programs on a local,

—smartin31@worldnet.att.net

Ted Mertig

I have been a Sierra Club member since 1981. I transferred here from the John Muir Chapter in Madison, Wisconsin in 1984. I have been active in the El Paso Regional Group since that time. I have been on the ExCom of the local Group for the majority of the time since then, including several terms as chairperson. My Activities with the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club started some time around 1986, when I became interested in wilderness issues in New Mexico. I have served several terms as an elected ExCom member and have been the Group representative from El Paso for several terms also.

Several of the issues that I have been involved in were wolf reintroduction and, wilderness planning. One of the major success stories of the issues I have worked on was the removal of cows from the Diamond Bar grazing allotment in the Gila Wilderness. I have also been active in the Sierra Club's Inner City Outings program (ICO). I am currently chair of the ICO program for both the El Paso Group and the Rio Grande Chapter.

If elected to the ExCom, I will continue to work on issues that I find highly offensive, such as the way the extractive industries run roughshod over our wilderness areas and our public lands in general.

—tmertig@earthlink.net
915/852-3011

Barbara H. Johnson

I have been a member of the Sierra Club since 1989, and I was active in the Los Angeles Chapter before moving to New Mexico in 1991. I have been a writer and editor for almost 25 years—more than 10 as a legal editor, working in the area of land-use litigation. I was editor of the *Rio Grande Sierran* for more than three years, during which time it received the Sierra Club's Newsletter of the Year Award. I have been a member of the Northern New Mexico/Santa Fe Group Executive Committee since 1994; I was its representative to the Chapter ExCom before I was elected to the Chapter ExCom in 1996. I am the Group's Vice-Chair and have edited its newsletter, *Northern New Mexico Sierra Club News*. I edited the Group's mining manual *Avoiding the Shaft* and the Chapter's *Sprawl Costs/Sprawl Solutions*, both of which were honored with the Sierra Club's Special Achievement Award. I have been the Chapter's delegate to the national Council of Club Leaders for the past three years.

Although I believe that uncontrolled growth may be one of the most pressing problems facing New Mexico, there are other important issues which need to be addressed as well—water and mining, in particular. I work in the Sierra Club:

- because it addresses the many issues that affect our environment, and
- because it contains and encourages a diversity of opinion on those issues.

I am committed to continuing the Sierra Club's hundred-year-old policy of effective grassroots environmental activism.

—Lunah3@aol.com



CHAPTER & REGIONAL GROUP ELECTION BALLOTS

Join us!

Sign up on-line
www.sierraclub.org/membership
or return this form:

My Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____
e-mail _____

Check enclosed, made payable to:

Sierra Club
P.O. Box 52968
Boulder, CO 80322-2968

Please charge my Mastercard VISA

Cardholder's Name _____

Card Number _____

Exp. Date ____ / ____

1700

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

	INDIVIDUAL	JOINT
INTRODUCTORY	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$47
REGULAR	<input type="checkbox"/> \$39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75
SUPPORTING	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150
CONTRIBUTING	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$300
LIFE	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1,250
SENIOR	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32
STUDENT	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32
LIMITED INCOME	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$39

FOUNDED 1972
Contributions, gifts and dues to the Sierra Club are not tax-deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to *Sierra* magazine and \$1 for your Chapter newsletter.

Rio Grande Chapter Meeting

The Rio Grande Chapter will meet on December 7-8 at UNM's research station at Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge near Socorro.

On Saturday, December 7, Paula Carrell, the Club's National Lobbying Coordinator from Washington, DC, will lead a strategic planning session for activists.

The Conservation and Executive Committees will meet on Sunday, December 8.

The cost of lodging at the Refuge is \$20/person/night. All members are invited. If you are interested, please contact Chapter Chair Jim Hannan (jhannan505@aol.com; 988-5760).

Chapter & Group Elections

Postmark your ballot by Saturday, 5th November 2002

Please return this page, as your mailing label on the reverse side validates your membership(s). If there are more than one Sierra Club members in your household, and you are not all included on the mailing label, please list the additional member on the label (thus ensuring your confidentiality). Each member may vote on this ballot; two columns of boxes for casting votes are provided for this purpose.

Each Chapter member may vote for:

- three of the five candidates for the Chapter ExCom, and
- candidates in only one Regional Group—the one to which you belong (see mailing label).

Casting too many votes invalidates your ballot.

Ballots will be counted at Election Chair Gwen Wardwell's home, at 7:00pm on Thursday, 5 December 2002. Please contact Gwen (438-3060), if you are interested in being present during counting of the ballots. Other members of the Election Committee are Ranier Bleck and Marilyn Cooper.

Results are recognized officially at the close of the ExCom Meeting at Sevilleta on Sunday, 8 December 2002.

Send your ballot to:

Gwen Wardwell
Chair, Election Committee
945 Camino de Chelly
Santa Fe, NM 87505

Chapter Ballot

Rio Grande Chapter Executive Committee

See statements page 14.
Vote for up to three (3).

- Mark Doppke
 Barbara Johnson*
 Susan Martin*
 Norma McCallan*
 Ted Mertig*

* incumbent

Group Ballots

Northern Group (#1704 on mailing label)

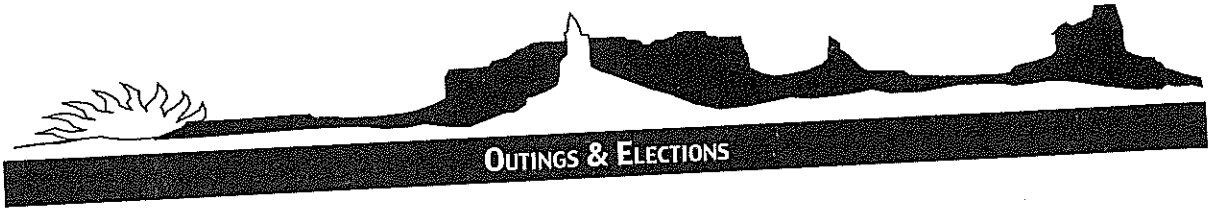
See statements pages 10-12.
Vote for up to four (4).

- Gina Aranda
 Doug Fraser*
 Barbara Johnson*
 Cliff Larsen*
 Susan Martin*
 Edie Pierpont
 Ruth Shanti Wagner

Central Group (#1701 on mailing label)

See statements pages 8 & 9.
Vote for up to three (3).

- Alma Rosa Silva Banuelos
 Blair Brown*
 Maribeth Theisen



OUTINGS & ELECTIONS

Pray For Snow—and Keep On Hiking

by Norma McCallan

The golden days of autumn are dwindling, there is a sharpness to the wind, many of the brilliant aspen leaves have fallen, though the purple asters and tawny chamisa still hang on. Yet it is still a mellow, forgiving time—a time to soak up every sunny hour against the chill of oncoming

winter. We all will hope and pray for some serious snowstorms these next months to provide a good snowpack that will send water to our parched land next spring, (and create the opportunity for skiing and snowshoeing that so many Sierrans love). Meanwhile, there are lots of good dayhikes

coming up to keep you fit and inspired—and down south, El Paso way, a good season for backpacking.

Be sure to call the leader for details, and check out the Group pages for additional outings and activities. All area codes are 505, except as noted.

Sierra Club Outings in November–December 2002

Saturday, November 9 • Anthony's Nose, Franklin Mountains State Park—Strenuous hike, good scrambling to get to this second-highest peak in the Franklins. Mike Episcopo (915/584-9322—El Paso).

Saturday, November 9 • Cabra Trail near Barranca Mesa—Short morning hike. Meet at Guaje Pines Cemetery at 9:00am. Bring water, warm clothes, and a snack. Dick and Judy Opsahl (662-9404—Los Alamos).

Saturday/Sunday, November 9/10 • Chiracahua Backpack—Strenuous hike along the Crest Trail in this remote wilderness. Harold Newman (915/351-9384—El Paso).

Sunday, November 10 • Pino Trail, Sandia Mountain Wilderness—Good conditioning hike from Elena Gallegos to the Crest. David Ther (760-1553—Abq). (473-1948—SFe).

Saturday, November 16 • Santa Fe Baldy Strenuous Hike—14 miles, 2,800' elevation gain, snow or no snow. Phil Somervell (473-4797—SFe).

Saturday, November 23 • Holy Ghost Campground to Spirit Lake—Strenuous hike in the Pecos, 14 miles, 2,800' gain. Heather Liston (982-9715—SFe).

Friday-Sunday, November 22-24 • Tejas-Marcus-Bush Mountain Trail, Guadalupe National Park—Strenuous backpack, starting at the Dog Canyon Campground. Rollin Wickenden (855-6697—El Paso).

Friday-Sunday, December 6-8 • Bosque del Apache Camping and Birding—Enjoy a weekend surrounded by snow geese, Canada geese, sandhill cranes, and ducks of various feathers. Rainer Bleck (662-2368—Los Alamos).

Saturday, December 14 • Tetilla Peak from La Bajada—Strenuous hike, 12 miles, 1,700' gain. Michael di Rosa (663-0648—Los Alamos).

Saturday, December 28 • Ojito Wilderness Study Area—Moderate hike in picturesque badlands. Steven Markowitz (797-5833—Abq).

Sunday, December 29 • Brownie, Cajon der Rio—Moderate hike to this volcanic hole. Norbert Sperlich (474-4354—SFe).

Sunday, January 19 • Arroyo de Cobre, near Abiquiu—Moderate hike in a little known canyon. Norbert Sperlich (474-4354—SFe).

Club Endorses Danny Hernandez for AMAFCA Board

The Sierra Club has endorsed Danny Hernandez in his race for reelection to the Board of Directors of the Albuquerque Metropolitan Arroyo and Flood Control Authority (AMAFCA). Danny is a long-time friend, ally, and activist on environmental causes.

During his past term as an AMAFCA board member, Danny worked to reduce subsidies to developers and reduce floodplain construction by requiring developers to pay the full costs of construction in floodplain. Danny has been a rare environmental voice as AMAFCA's representative to the Middle Region Council of Governments' Water Resources Board.

Danny chaired the Greater Albuquerque Bicycle Advisory Commission from 1992-94. Under his leadership and direction, the City extended the North Diversion Channel trail and planned the bosque trail. In large measure through his efforts, bike racks were placed on buses to accommodate the needs of bicycle users. He helped get rid of the mandatory side path law, which required bicyclists to stay on less safe parallel bike trails, and he helped to get rid of the Highway Department ban on bicycling on interstates. He was instrumental in the formation of the bicycle-equestrian advisory commission to the Highway Department. Danny was an early activist with 1000 Friends of New Mexico and was a prime organizer of the smart growth town hall three years ago on behalf

of 1000 Friends. For the last three years, he has participated in the Water Assembly, which is attempting to develop a water budget to help us live within our water means. Danny is a strong

believer in a low-impact lifestyle. He did not own a motor vehicle for 12 years, until the needs of his reelection campaign compelled him to purchase one recently.



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RIO GRANDE CHAPTER
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