

# The Rio Grande SIERRAN



THE RIO GRANDE CHAPTER OF THE SIERRA CLUB

November/December 1985

## EL MALPAIS MONUMENT-WILDERNESS BILL INTRODUCED BY RICHARDSON

Another of New Mexico's crown jewels may soon be afforded the protection and recognition it deserves, thanks to a bill introduced by Rep. Bill Richardson (D-NM) in early November. The wonderland known as El Malpais south of Grants would be designated a National Monument, with a significant portion of its acreage also designated Wilderness.

El Malpais is a lava flow that extends more than thirty miles south of I-40 near Grants. The relatively young age of the lava flow (several thousand years) accounts in part for the rugged nature of the landscape of this region. Sinkholes and lava tubes have not undergone significant erosion since they were created by the flowing and cooling lava of past millenia, making today for a vast wilderness of intricate and fascinating topography.

In some of the lava tubes, air temperatures never exceed

freezing, the result being beautiful and intriguing ice caves that seem to belong to another place or time.

Bordering the Malpais on the west are the Zuni Mountains and the pines of the Cibola National Forest. On the east is Cebollita Mesa. Although the top of the mesa is on the Acoma Indian Reservation, its western and southern flanks are mostly BLM land. And it is some of the most rugged and remote BLM land in the state, holding four BLM Wilderness Study Areas: Rimrock, Little Rimrock, Sand Canyon, and Pinyon. Within Rimrock lies the largest natural bridge rock formation in New Mexico.

Rep. Richardson's bill, H.R. 3684, is comprehensive in that it would preserve all of the above. It would create a **BLM-managed** El Malpais National Monument, consisting of 351,000 acres. Within the Monument, three Wilderness units compris-

ing 193,000 acres would be created: El Malpais, West Malpais, and Chain of Craters. Bandera Crater and the Ice Caves on the west side of the lava flow would be included in the Monument if the private owner is willing to sell. The four BLM WSAs on the east side of the lava flow would also be included within the Monument boundaries and would retain their WSA status.

The preservation legislation would further establish a visitors' center to provide information on archeological, cultural, and natural resources in the Monument. The BLM would be directed to develop a management plan and to acquire private inholdings within the Monument on a willing-seller basis.

The establishment of El Malpais National Monument and the associated Wilderness areas is an exciting prospect for the

*see El Malpais, page 11*

### BIA CONSIDERING NEW POWER LINE IN JEMEZ MTS

by Jack Kenney, Santa Fe

The Bureau of Indian Affairs in October issued a Draft Environmental Impact Statement recommending that a new 345 kV overhead electric power transmission line be built in northern Santa Fe County.

Two routes are being studied:

a) A "mountain" route across the Santa Fe National Forest and the northeast corner of the Baca Location. The line would run from Coyote to Los Alamos. The visual, wildlife, and other environmental impacts of this route are not difficult to imagine.

b) A "valley" route from Ojo to the existing Norton station and then west to Los Alamos.

Information meetings will be held at 6 PM on November 27 and December 4 and 11 at the Santa Fe County Commission Chambers (102 Grant Ave., Santa Fe); and a hearing will be held at 6 PM on December 12 at the Espanola City Hall. Final comments are due prior to January 2.

If you wish to be involved, please call Les King or Katie Parker (see Chapter Directory, page 5). And please come to the hearings. This may be our last chance to impact the decision made on the power transmission line route! \*

### MAN'S WAR AGAINST THE WOLF

Part II: The Conflict  
Migrates to America

by Herbert Meredith Orrell, Albuquerque

[Editor's note: Part I of this series of articles appeared in the September/October issue of the *Sierran*. The third and final part will be printed in the next issue.]

When the early immigrants came from Europe to the New World, they brought with them the same hatred and horror as their forebears had known for centuries. They saw no beauty in wilderness. William Bradford, upon stepping off the Mayflower, remarked on the "hideous and desolate wilderness" that lay before him.

These intrepid voyagers who had risked their lives crossing the Atlantic now had to deal not with pastures and cultivated gardens but with a dark and mysterious, uncharted land. The forest's darkness hid savage men, wild beasts, and still stranger creatures of the imagination. It was the duty of Christians to cut down the forests and turn them into an Eden. To make the task harder,

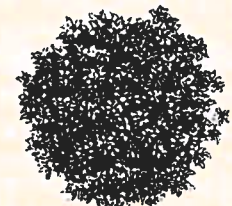
*see Wolves, page 6*

### BACA LOSES TIGHT RACE

By a margin of less than 3%, Jim Baca lost his bid for Mayor of Albuquerque on November 12. To all those who worked for Jim, the loss came as a surprise. As a Sierra Club-endorsed candidate, Baca's campaign had the volunteer help of many Club members.

Despite the loss, Baca encourages his supporters to keep working for the good of Albuquerque. With respect to those who supported Baca because of his stand on environmental issues, this means that we should continue diligently in our fight to preserve the natural setting and environment that makes Albuquerque such a great place to live.

Baca will now return to his job as State Land Commissioner to complete his work before his term expires next year. As for future political races, Baca says that he will be back sooner or later. \*



## THE CAMPAIGN FOR WILDERNESS IN UTAH

by Ronald Richey, Boulder

Utah is in the midst of a crucial preservation campaign. Of concern are vast BLM roadless areas in the heart of the Colorado Plateau comprising some of the most rugged and remote lands in the contiguous U.S. These holdings face future development from coal, oil shale, oil and gas, and tarsands, to name a few of the energy resources in conflict with wilderness protection.

A group of regional and national conservation groups, the Utah Chapter of the Sierra Club included, has formed the Utah Wilderness Coalition. On July 16 of this year, the Coalition proposed that 5 million acres of this land be added to the National Wilderness Preservation System.

This proposal culminated months of extensive study and field research and followed a series of statewide workshops that developed specific wilderness boundaries as a product of work conducted on the ground and in the air. According to Jim Gatlin, a Utah Chapter Sierra Club coalition member, the proposal "includes all the acreage in Utah that is, in fact, wilderness and deserves to be protected as wilderness."

The lands fall within eight regions. As Darrel Knuffke, Wilderness Society's Central Rockies Representative, points out, each region "illustrates the extent and quality of Utah's wild lands--land unmatched on Earth."

Knuffke, however, is less complimentary of BLM's performance to date. In 1978, the agency began a wilderness inventory of the 22 million acres that it administers in Utah. Out of this vast acreage, it identified only 1.8 million acres for wilderness study, eliminating in the process some of the most magnificent country in southern Utah, including portions of the Kaiparowits Plateau. "This illustrates," says Knuffke, "the magnitude of the BLM's failure to present thorough, fair, and balanced wilderness proposals as the Congress has directed it to do."

Only after an extensive appeal of the Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA), the Department of Interior's internal review board, did conservationists force BLM to reinstate 3.2 million acres to wilderness study status. This still contrasts sharply with the 5,032,900 acres recommended by the Coalition and omits many lands of wilderness quality from being studied or recommended by the BLM.

Since the wilderness designation process is a public one, it is hoped that the BLM's inadequate review will unleash

a flurry of protest. Maggie Fox, Sierra Club's Southwest Representative, stresses the importance of making our voices heard:

"We have started down a path that is long. BLM's recommendation for wilderness will be released in a statewide EIS in early 1986. Thus it is important, in light of the agency's performance, that concerned citizens become involved. Utah wilderness will not be saved in a day or a year. It will be a long battle, and we will need the support of conservationists around the country to fight for preservation of the Colorado Plateau."

Each of the eight regions recommended by the Utah Wilderness Coalition has some aspect that signifies the urgency with which these lands need protection. The following is a capsule of each region.

**Zion and Hot Desert.** This area in the southwestern corner of the state harbors the northernmost extension of the Mohave ecosystems. It is here that some 300 giant tortoises face extinction, development threatening their only habitat.

**The West Desert.** This stark dry land, Utah's slice of the Great Basin, is nevertheless endowed with isolated plant and animal communities, including, in the Mountain Range, the largest remaining bristlecone pines. Yet there is not permanent protection for this area's natural and scenic treasures.

**The Escalante and Kaiparowits.** The colorful canyons of the Escalante and the Straight Cliffs of the Kaiparowits Plateau offer genuine solitude, making them a haven for this rarest of all contemporary resources. The Escalante has aptly been described as a "symphony of rock, water, and time." But this unparalleled wilderness also remains at risk, and the Kaiparowits has been the subject of a lengthy battle over surface coal mining.

**Cedar Mesa.** This region located in the southeastern part of the state covers an area from the San Juan River to the Abajo Mountains. Here in the pristine mountains, mesas, and canyons rests an archive of Anasazi culture. Cliff dwellings, with kivas, guard towers, and granaries, dot the landscape and provide some of the finest archeological sites found anywhere. But each year more and more of this history is lost, plundered by exploitive individuals and vandals. Wilderness status would go a long way toward preserving the legacy of this region.

**Henry Mountain and Dirty Devil.** This region to the northwest of Cedar Mesa is nested between two national parks--Canyonlands to the east and Capitol Reef to the west. In the remote Fiddler Butte area is the Block, a rim walk that has the distinction of never having felt the imprint of wheeled machines. Natural plant communities that existed before domestic grazing altered the plant ecology of the West still grow and thrive in this unique place.

**San Rafael Swell.** Two waterways, the San Rafael River and Muddy Creek, have etched passage through this massive dome of sedimentary bedrock. South of the Swell, Muddy Creek cuts a swath through a vast roadless area of richly colored, lunar-like landscape. This area was once targeted for the largest coal-burning power plant in the U.S. Even though public outcry eventually halted the project, most of the area remains at risk, awaiting further onslaught of road building, drilling, strip mining, etc.

**The Book Cliffs and Unit Basin.** The Book Cliffs are massive escarpment of butte and spires, snaking 100 miles across Utah and Colorado. Behind this craggy wall and to the south is the vast roadless area of Travaputs Plateau where the Green River has carved a canyon system deeper than that of the Grand. But immediate development threatens, and already the BLM has allowed road building and exploratory oil drilling in areas under study for wilderness protection.

**The Canyonlands.** Preserving this region adjacent to the internationally renowned Canyonlands National Park would do more than just provide for a buffer zone. It would protect BLM lands that are every bit as spectacular as those found within the Park itself.

These lands, of which much more could be said, should never be allowed to lose their wilderness character. They deserve protection. And should Congress accept the Coalition proposal, 85 percent of Utah would still be available for development. If you are interested in helping to save the wilds of Utah, a rich slice of this country's heritage, then become a Utah BLM Wilderness Advocate! Tax-deductible contributions are being sought. The Coalition to help finance their drive to save Utah's million acres of desert wilderness. If you would like help, please send your donation to:

Utah Wilderness Coalition  
1120 South Widsor St.  
Salt Lake City, UT 84105

In the September/October issue of the Sierran, Dave Glowka made a plea against campfires and invited comments on his stance. I accepted the invitation and went one step further, proposing a regular column through which we could exchange ideas on the concept of our individual privileges and responsibilities when visiting our public lands.

Each **WILDERNESS ETHICS** column will have two parts. In the first part, I will discuss responses to previous columns, raise issues for cogitation, and beg readers to submit contributions for the second part. The second part, hopefully written by

one of you, will present either some new issue or a new twist on a previous one.

What follows are the only two responses that Dave received on the campfire issue. I would like to hear more of your views on this and any other issue with regard to what constitutes a wilderness ethic. I invite comments, suggestions of issues to discuss and, most importantly, contributions for this column. Possible topics include dogs in the wilderness; mountain bikes on the trails; a wilderness permit system in New Mexico; hunting and trapping on public land.....Let me hear from you. \*



## MORE ON CAMPFIRES

by Hank Taylor, Farmington

I believe that the issue of campfires is another issue which requires judgement and understanding rather than pro or con, black or white. Certainly there are heavily used areas where firewood is scarce and fire pits ugly. Campfires do not belong in those areas. There are also many areas seldom used, full of dead and down wood with no one to see campsites.

I have been backpacking since 1965 in the mountains and canyons of the four corners states and usually use campfires in the remote areas. My trips are judged a success when few if any other people are seen. We have developed methods of building fires in pits without rocks so that they may be covered and hidden after use. I have found no signs of our old campfires. Many of these areas worry me when I see massive amounts of dead wood which could cause a disastrous fire. It certainly should not harm the forest to burn some of that wood. The overall environment may be harmed more by the pollution created to produce stoves and stove fuel than by a remote campfire.

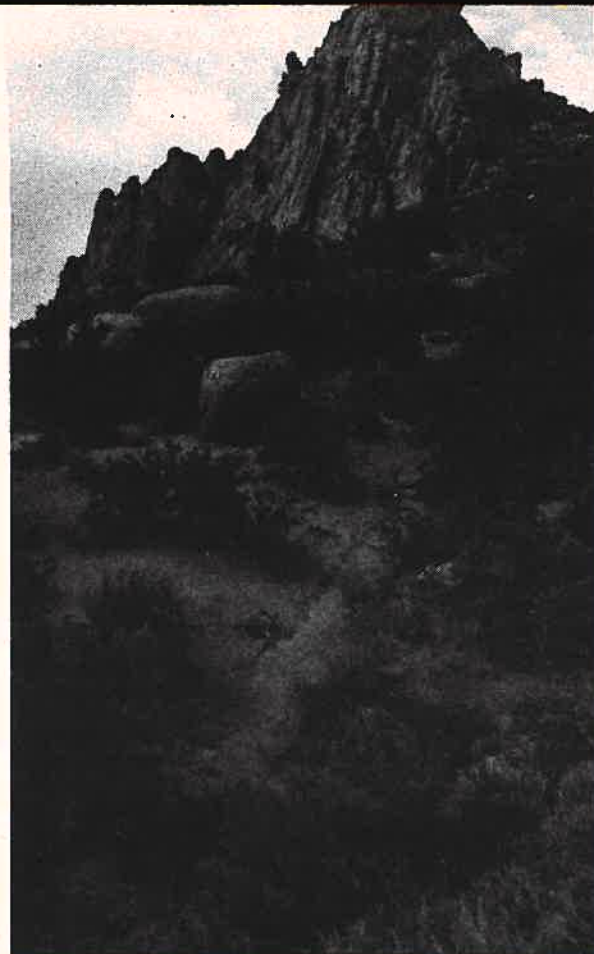
I will continue to enjoy my campfires as long as I can find the remote areas. I will also continue to huddle around candles in the Grand Canyon and other well-traveled areas. I believe we should all encourage people to cover and hide their campfires if they want them. We can set examples also by destroying old fire pits when possible. \*

by Jim Fish, Placitas

Although I basically agree with the views on campfires expressed by Dave Glowka in the last issue of the Sierran, my views are less absolute. I feel that there are many remote, low use areas in New Mexico with an abundance of dead and down wood where a responsible campfire is perfectly ethical. Note that I said "a responsible campfire," which leads me to one of my favorite self-proclaimed wilderness duties: busting up fire rings.

When looking for campsites, I always favor areas with existing fire rings. If, in my assessment, there is no reason to forego the acknowledged pleasures of a fire, I use one of the preconstructed rings. The next morning, I scatter the rocks of the ring I used and of every other ring I can find in the area; pick all the trash out of the ashes; disperse the ashes; and disguise the scars with leaves, small rocks, twigs, and rotting logs.

My hope is that the next campfire enthusiast who comes along will build a small ring for a small fire and wipe out all traces of both the next morning. Certainly, the tendency in building a fire ring is to go small; it's less work. Each time a fire ring is used, however, it grows, more rocks, higher sides, deeper ashes, and more trash left behind. One of those ugly monuments can rival the choking smoke on a cool summer night in Yosemite Valley as to which goes further in giving campfires a bad name.



Sandia Mountain Wilderness Photo by Dave Glowka

My suggestion is that those of us who insist on building campfires atone for our sin by busting up two or three existing rings for every campfire we partake of. If we do this, and if we are responsible about where and when we build fires, we can continue to enjoy an occasional campfire without degrading the land. The bit of proof I have to support my theory is that I have returned a season or two later to some of the areas which I have cleaned and found no signs of recent visitors and little evidence of the old fire rings. The specific attributes I look for in an area before building a fire are an abundance of dead and down wood, low usage, healthy ground vegetation to speed recovery, an adequate distance from the trail, access to a supply of water for quenching the fire, an existing fire ring or rocks with which to construct one, and a low danger of forest fires.

I close with an ancient saying:

Build small fire  
Keep warm  
Build large fire  
Keep warm gathering wood. \*



Send comments and contributions for  
*Wilderness Ethics* to: Jim Fish, P.O. Box 712,  
Placitas, NM 87043

**CHAIR'S COLUMN**

by Jack Kenney, Santa Fe

**IT'S OUR FUTURE.** This issue contains the ballots for members of the Chapter Executive Committee (see page 9). Your VOTE will set the path of the Club for the next three years. Think and VOTE.

**THANK YOU NOTES.**

We have had a very encouraging letter from Congressman Skeen responding to our comments on the Lincoln National Forest Plan. He agrees with many of our comments and will follow up.

Congressman Bill Richardson deserves your thanks (by letter or call) for his strong Superfund position; and also for his initiative in presenting an El Malpais bill to Congress (see related article, page 1). **WRITE!**

**THANKS,** also to Dan Jones for the fine set-up at the Bosque del Apache Wildlife Refuge for our last Executive Committee meeting, and for "arranging" the outstanding fly-over of geese, cranes, and even the stalking of three coyotes after the formal Saturday meeting. Members are always welcome at the ExCom meetings. (Phyllenore Howard and Brant Calkin were with us in Socorro.) The next meeting will be in El Paso on December 7-8.

**FOREST PLANS.** Important actions are underway on all five of the New Mexico National Forest plans. Coordinators monitor actions as below:

**Cibola.** (John Somers) Appeal has been submitted.

**Carson.** (Richard Carrol) In final preparation. Meeting in Taos on November 20 to discuss USFS proposals.

**Gila.** (Jim Owen) Awaiting USFS consideration of comments.

**Lincoln.** (Bruce Martin) Awaiting USFS consideration of comments.

**Santa Fe.** (Mark Mortier) Final in DC for approval. Meeting in Santa Fe on November 12 to discuss contents.

**BLM WILDERNESS.** Comments are still being prepared and revised. Your conservation chair should be familiar with the status of comments in your Group area...and he or she probably needs help! \*

**NOMINATIONS SOUGHT FOR CHAPTER AWARDS**

by Dan Jones, Socorro

Sierra Club members receive no pay for their contributions to the Club, its chapters, groups, conservation efforts, outings program, and other activities. They are volunteers. In recognition of this situation, the Rio Grande Chapter has an awards program, the purpose of which is to recognize outstanding contributions of member volunteers.

The following awards may be granted each year:

**ENVIRONMENTALIST OF THE YEAR:** Member who has shown dynamic leadership and competence in furthering the preservation of the environment. (May be awarded for general contributions or for more specific issues.)

**SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD:** Honors a special service or accomplishment by a member, committee, regional group, or combination.

**EXCELLENCE IN SUPPORT OF THE RIO GRANDE CHAPTER:** Member who has demonstrated professional competence in performance of support activities of the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club. (Such as recruitment, fundraising, finance/treasurer, organization, newsletter editing, media work, etc.)

**PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD OF THE RIO GRANDE CHAPTER:** Member who has made material contributions to the public awareness of the Sierra Club and of the issues of concern to the Club.

**OUTING LEADERSHIP AWARD:** Member responsible for innovative and dynamic leadership and excellence in organizing and administering the outings program of the Club. (Nominated principally from regional groups.)

The Special Achievement and Excellence in Support awards may be shared by two members; the other awards may be granted to only one member per year.

Nominations for the 1985 awards are now being solicited from the general membership by the Awards Committee. If you know of someone who deserves recognition for their hard work and effectiveness, please consider making a nomination. With each nomination, please include the following information: name and address of nominee; name of award; accomplishments/services which qualify the nominee for the award; and name, address, and club position of the person submitting the nomination. Please send the nomination to: Dan Jones, 1201 Flor del Valle, Socorro, NM 87801. Deadline for receipt of nominations is January 15, 1986. \*

**EDITOR'S NOTES**

by Dave Glowka, Albuquerque

The possibility of El Malpais becoming a National Monument-Wilderness is exciting. There aren't many places left in this country where you can have a National Monument spring up in your back yard, so to speak, almost overnight.

Of course, El Malpais has been there all along, and I have visited and known of its wonders for years; but a place gains special significance to me when it has been designated National Monument, Park, or Wilderness. It's almost overwhelming to think of a National Monument nearly a third of a million acres in size and containing not one, but three and potentially seven, Wilderness Areas.

My first thought upon pondering the prospects of Rep. Richardson's legislation was of wondering how such a gem as El Malpais could have escaped special designation until late in the twentieth century. The answer is relatively simple: it takes the people willing to work for a worthy goal to make it happen. What it took on this one was a combination of conservationists who spent years to help clear the hurdles to protective legislation, BLM officials and staffers who helped facilitate land exchanges necessary to consolidate federal holdings, and a Congressman who is not afraid to take the initiative. In reality, it's no small achievement that the hurdles have apparently been cleared to finally permit proper protection to be afforded to this magnificent area.

The case of El Malpais demonstrates that there are still some big pockets of undeveloped and unprotected lands in the West that are as worthy of preservation as our greatest Parks that were designated generations ago. At the same time, the process of large-scale zoning is underway--the BLM in particular is currently deciding the fate of millions of acres of public land in the West. Which will be preserved, and which will be developed?

Conservationists alive today are here at an opportune time to practice the art of environmental advocacy. Never again will citizens in this country have such a chance to participate in the process of preserving the last remaining segments of our natural heritage.

Which brings me to my favorite request of our readers--to get involved. Some BLM Wilderness Study Area or other parcel of land in trouble may be crying out for a champion. Through the Sierra Club, your talents and hard work can make an impact. Please contact your Group or Chapter Chair to find out where to plug in. \*

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Dave Glowka

**Contributors**

- Jack Kenney
- Herbert Meredith Orrell
- John Colburn
- Dan Jones
- Hank Taylor
- John Tiwald
- Jim Fish
- Jane Colburn
- Ron Grotbeck
- Jim Owen
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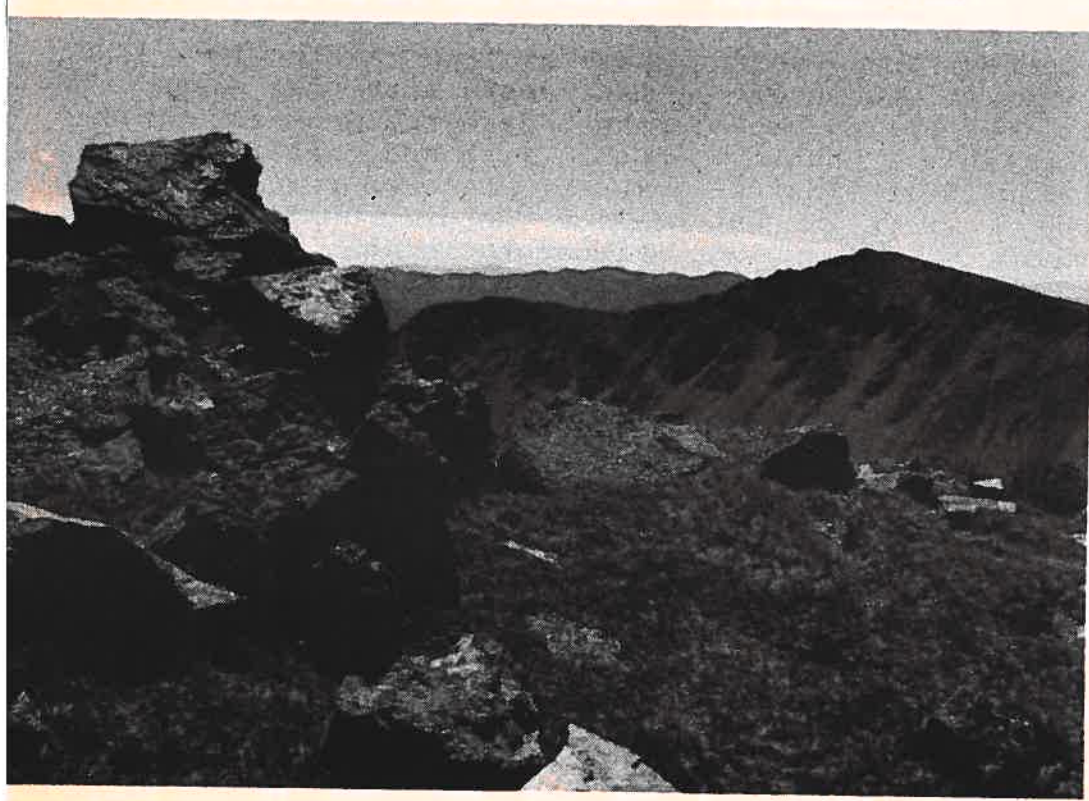
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Opinions expressed in the Rio Grande Sierran are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Sierra Club or the Rio Grande Chapter unless so stated. Other organizations may use non-copyrighted materials appearing in the Sierran as long as acknowledgement is made. We welcome contributions of articles, essays, prose, poetry, photographs, drawings, and other submissions. We request that all submissions be signed and accompanied by a telephone number and address at which the author may be contacted. Send submissions to the Editor (see directory).



View from Latir Mesa

Photo by John Tiwald

**CHAPTER DIRECTORY**

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- |   |  |
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| <b>FOREST PLANNING</b><br>Hal Reynolds<br>(address above)   | <b>COAL AND SURFACE MINING</b><br>Dave Glowka<br>(address below)   |
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- |  |  |
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|--|--|

*Wolves (from page 1)*

"snakes and serpents of strange colours and huge greatness" abounded in the wild. In 1707, Cotton Mather wrote of the "Evening Wolves, the rabid and howling Wolves of Wildernesse which could make Havoc among you, and not leave the bones till the Morning."

The wanton savagery of the anti-wolf pogrom must be laid at the feet of the white man. No Indian would be guilty of so rapacious an assault on the forests or wildlife. Whenever an Indian killed a wild animal, he did so with respect and attonement. It was never crass slaughter. Tribes had rituals of penitence which preceded and followed the killing. When the Ahtena Indians of Alaska killed a wolf, they raised him reverently to their shoulders and bore him to a hut, where he was propped up in a sitting position and offered a banquet. After the wolf had eaten all he wanted, the men would finish the remains.

American pioneers and frontiersmen never had this feeling towards wolves or any other wild animals. The only good wolf was a dead wolf. Between "sport" hunting and thoughtless methods of predator control, wolves were wiped out like vermin. As the pioneers pushed westward--through Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky--the everlasting animus against wolves went with them. Out came the instruments of death in every new region. Bounties, pits, battues, all became part of the mid-western culture. To the east, behind the settlers, great expanses of land were vacant of wolves.

Equally threatening to the wolves--perhaps more so--were the trappers who'd come west to kill beavers for their skins. When the beavers were wiped out, the trappers turned to the wolves for their pelts. In the 1830's, wolf pelts were selling for a dollar apiece; by 1850, the price had gone up to two dollars.

The great buffalo slaughter also contributed to the slaughter of wolves. Between 1850 and 1870, 75 million buffaloes were killed, mostly for their hides. The carcasses left on the ground attracted hordes of wolves, many of who became targets just for the sport of it. And during the winter when travel was difficult, the teamsters and bullwhackers drawn west by the magnetism of gold concentrated on poisoning wolves because it was easier than tracking buffaloes. All they had to do was kill a buffalo, lace it with strychnine, and wait for the harvest of dead wolves. Between 1865 and 1895, these "hunters" are credited with having slain virtually every wolf between Texas and the Dakotas, and from Missouri to Colorado.

But it was the livestock industry, perhaps the greatest bonanza in the history of the West, that dealt the most telling blow of all. When it was found that a herd of cattle had survived the rigors of a winter on the ranges of Colorado, fending for itself, a revolution was in the making. But of course the cattle required protection from predation by wolves who could no longer find buffaloes and were forced to turn to cattle in order to live.

At this point, the "wolfener" made his entrance--the professional killer armed with all his hardware of death. By that time, Montana had become the center of the cattle raising industry of the northern plains. The first bounty law in that state was passed in 1884. A dead wolf was worth a dollar. In 1887, because of the lobbying by mine interests, the law was repealed as too expensive. The cattlemen, however, pushed for its reinstatement, and in 1893 the legislature acceded. The bounty on wolves was raised to ten dollars. The cattlemen also succeeded in getting a law passed which required the state veterinarian to inoculate wolves with scarcoptic mange and then let them loose. This technique did not succeed in curbing wolf predation, but it did infect domestic cattle to the extent that domestic herds had to be quarantined by the federal government. In the thirty-five years from 1883 to 1915, 80,730 wolves were bountied for \$342,764.

In 1915, a new phase of wolf hunting was introduced when Washington called for extermination of all wolves on federal land. Between 1915 and 1942, government-employed workers killed 24,132 wolves, mostly in Wyoming, Colorado, Montana, and the Dakotas. The wolfeners resorted to poisons and the Newhouse #4-1/2 steel trap and later its modification, #14 model, a toothed trap which held its captive animal securely. And in the spring when these redoubtable hunters weren't tending their instruments, they were out "denning"--that is, searching out wolf pups and killing them.

The battle against wolves was not confined to the Great Plains. It also reached the Southwest, where conflict began with the arrival of cattle, sheep, and goats brought by the Spanish. With the arrival of Anglo ranchers during the 1870's and 1880's, the wolf war deteriorated into an unprecedented savagery. According to The Wolf in the Southwest, David Brown, Editor, the Southwest was one large livestock ranch. Ranch hands went out on the range armed with a Winchester prepared to shoot any mountain lion, bear, or

wolf in sight. Trap lines were laid and guard dogs were used to protect the sheep. Bounties became widespread. In 1893, the Arizona-New Mexico Territorial Legislature passed an act legaliaing bounty payments on "predatory wolves, big bears [grizzlies], mountain lions, bobcats, and coyotes." Wolfeners became folk heroes. Men like J. Stokely Ligon became nationally known for their expertise and heroism. Predator control became a lifelong vocation.

Despite the legends and folklore of the wolf as a vicious, aggressive animal, scientists and observers now know that the wolf is a shy creature, quick to hide from human beings. Many an experienced woodsman has lived a lifetime without even glimpsing a wolf in its natural surroundings.

Among American Indians, the wolf has always been respected and admired as an animal of power and mystery. He moves silently over the earth. He has stamina and long-distance staying powers. He can lope over forty miles a day if required. His howling contains messages for those wise enough to heed. He has communication with those who have passed into the spirit world.

The wolf is also admired for his parental solicitude. He is a familial animal; wolf marriages often last a lifetime. He sees to it that his children are well fed and educated. But his concern is not limited to his family; it embraces the wider community as well. His howl invites coyotes, foxes, and birds to share in the remains of his feast. Among many tribes, he is regarded as a model of individual strength and concern for others, a paradigm of integration between personal wants and the needs of others.

Yet, because of man's persecution, this extraordinary animal had to be listed as an endangered species in order to save it from extinction. But ten years after the passage of the Endangered Species Act, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFW) relaxed regulations to allow "sport" hunting on the Minnesota timber wolf, a move which, in the opinion of many, violated the intent and purpose of the Act.

A lawsuit was quickly filed by a coalition of fifteen environmental groups, including the Sierra Club. In the ensuing trial, U.S. District Court Judge Miles W. Lord held that the purpose of the Act was to restore the population of an endangered species and was incompatible with declaring an open hunting season. Under the terms of the Act, the only time an endangered animal could be killed would be "in the extraordinary case where population pressures within a given eco-

system cannot otherwise be relieved." This condition had never existed in the case of the eastern timber wolf in Minnesota. As a result, Judge Lord ordered a permanent injunction against the hunting season.

Needless to say, Judge Lord's decision was joyously greeted by environmentalists and wildlife lovers in general. It was indeed a victory for Minnesota's eastern timber wolves. Judge Lord's ruling had made it unmistakably clear that the Secretary of Interior's duty is to bring the wolf population to a point where the protections of the Act are no longer needed. His duty is to increase the numbers of endangered species.

Nevertheless, the future of the wolf in the United State is questionable. The red wolf, once roaming through the southern part of the country, is probably extinct in the wild state. There are conflicting figures about the Alaskan population. What is certain is that wolves are in danger from developers, scofflaws, lobbyists pressing for hunting in wilderness areas, and tourists willing to pay \$500 for a wolf pelt. \*

**NEXT ISSUE:**  
**PART III--THE FUTURE FOR WOLVES**

**SWRCC REPORT**

by Dan Jones, Socorro

I am sure that many of my fellow Rio Grande Chapter Sierra Club members are as blissfully unaware of what SWRCC is as I was when I was elected to the Chapter Executive Committee two years ago. So first a brief primer and some alphabet soup.

Organizationally, the Sierra Club is subdivided into chapters. In order to address regional conservation issues and to coordinate efforts of the individual chapters in each region, so-called Regional Conservation Committeess (RCCs) were established. Each chapter is represented at the RCC meetings by several delegates. The Chair of each RCC (elected from and by the committee) is automatically a Regional Vice-President (RVP) of the Sierra Club. Four times a year, the RVPs get together in conjunction with a National Board of Directors (BOD) meeting. These meetings of the RVPs are called RVP forums.

The Rio Grande Chapter, the Rocky Mountain Chapter (Colorado), the Utah Chapter, and the Grand Canyon Chapter (Arizona) each send three delegates

to the Southwest Regional Conservation Committee (SWRCC), which has met three times this year. Rio Grande Chapter delegates for 1985 are Jack Kenney, Dan Jones, and John Colburn.

Now that you have some knowledge of what SWRCC is I can tell you something about its most recent meeting in Denver on October 19 and 20. The meeting was held in a penthouse in downtown Denver, the air was clear, and the view of the Front Range outstanding.

The BOD sends one of its members to RCC meetings to report BOD activity. Denny Shaeffer, past President of the Sierra Club, was our BOD liason. He reported that some cuts are being made in the National Club budget. This is in part due to the cost of the upcoming move of the national office to new quarters in San Francisco. Fortunately, RCC and volunteer budgets were spared.

The Rocky Mountain Chapter reported Front Range water storage projects, the stalled national forest wilderness bill, and a possible BLM wilderness bill as their major issues.

The Utah Chapter reported that the citizens Utah BLM wilderness proposal recommending 5 million acres of new Wilderness, is out. (See related article, page 2).

The Grand Canyon Chapter's major concern is the status of flights over the Grand Canyon. A potential wildlife refuge on the San Pedro River is another current Chapter effort.

Maggie Fox, the Southwest Representative of the Sierra Club, reported on activities in the region. A good agreement has been negotiated for a Wild and Scenic River bill for the Cache LaPoudre River in Colorado. The Rio Chama in New Mexico and the Gunnison in Colorado are being promoted as additional candidates for this status. (See related article, back page.)

The next meeting of SWRCC is set for January 18-19 in Phoenix. \*



**COPPER SMELTERS AND ACID RAIN**

by John Colburn, Albuquerque

Spokesmen from the western copper industry, speaking at recent Environmental Improvement Board meeting, bring to mind the murderer whose defense was, "Why pick on me? Lot of others are killing poeple, too!"

While there are a number of sources of sulpher dioxide in the western states, the copper smelters are the major emitters of the pollutant, a major component of acid rain and dry acid deposition.

In 1982, emissions of sulpher dioxide from copper smelters exceeded that from electric generating plants by 45.9 percent--more than 225,000 tons --nearly sixty tons per day! They exceeded the emissions from all other sources except generating plants by 40.6 percent, nearly 207,000 tons.

There has been no significant reduction of sulpher dioxide emissions from the copper smelters since 1982, and if the copper industry has its way, there won't be any. In fact, unless the old smelter at Douglas, AZ, is made to clean up its emissions, the new smelter at Nacozari, Mexico, just south of Douglas, will soon come on line with no emissions control, nearly doubling the amount of sulpher dioxide being spewed into the air of the Southwest.

Sulpher dioxide from all sources in the Southwest is a major component of the acid rain and dry acid depositions which are beginning to damage forests and lakes in the mountains of northern New Mexico and southern Colorado, much as they are destroying forests and lakes in New England, eastern Canada, and Scandinavia.

We cannot wait ten years--even two years--for "positive" evidence of acid rain damage before reducing sulpher dioxide emissions, whether they come from copper smelters or any other source. Since the copper smelters are the largest single source of sulpher dioxide, they must make a greater effort to reduce their emissions before acid rain destroys the high country of the West. \*

**BACKPACKERS WANTED**

Hank Taylor is looking for someone to join him in his spring and fall hikes in the Grand Canyon. Hank's next hike is either Easter week or the week before and will probably take place along Crystal Creek on the north side of the Canyon. Call or write Hank if you are interested. See Chapter Directory (page 5) for address and phone number. \*

**ENTER THE  
RIO GRANDE SIERRAN  
PHOTO RAFFLE  
Win a Subscription to  
High Country News**

What this newsletter needs is more open space! That's why we are pleased to announce the 1985 Rio Grande Sierran Photo Raffle. The prize for this raffle--a free one-year subscription to High Country News--will help keep you informed on all the environmental issues facing the West. At the same time, you will be helping us out by providing photographs of natural landscapes and line drawings for use in "lightening up" the Sierran.

In order to enhance the readability of the Sierran, we need to include more graphics in each issue. But in order to do that, we need access to more graphics that we can include. Believe it or not, good graphics appropriate for the Sierran are hard to come by commercially. Line drawings are limited in availability, and pertinent photographs are virtually non-existent.

Do you have drawing talents or know of non-copyrighted line drawings that might look nice in this newsletter? Do you have any photographs you would like to see in print? Then send them in, and for each one entered, your name will be entered separately into a box. Note that this is not a photo contest. A drawing from the box will be made on February 20, 1986 to determine the lucky winner of the High Country News subscription. In addition, entries will be printed, with proper credit, in future issues of the Sierran.

Photographs that print well in the Sierran are those that have good contrast and do not depend on color for their beauty or interest. Black and white (3-1/2X5 or 5X7) prints are preferable, but 35 mm color slides also do well because black and white prints can be made from them.

Line drawings of vegetation or landscapes are welcome, particularly if they fill either one column (3.1 inches wide) or two columns (6.5 inches wide).

The winner will be announced in the March/April issue of the Sierran. Graphics will be printed as they are submitted and as space permits in future issues. All entries become the property of the Sierran unless return is specifically requested. \*

**HOW TO:  
Make Your Holidays Easier,  
Add a New Dimension  
to Someone's Life,  
Help Make the Planet a  
Better Place to Live  
by Jane Colburn, Albuquerque**

Consider giving a membership in the Sierra Club to someone ready for this awareness-raising adventure!

A student of any age can find term paper ideas and life-long expanded perspectives in pages of Sierra.

A retiree might find opportunity for work on local conservation issues or organizational needs in pages of a Group newsletter.

Someone recently moved to a new state could learn about concerns, treasures, and happenings in his or her new community through a Chapter newsletter, as well as find a ready-made community of like-minded friends.

The shopping is easy...just use the membership application on page 11 or one from your Group's last newsletter.

If you're giving multiple memberships and need more applications, contact your local Group or me, Jane Colburn, Chapter Membership Chair, at 505/268-3606.

Note: Applications processed in San Francisco during December will be assured a January Sierra magazine--the precious national outings issue, "wishbook" without equal! \*

**SIERRA CLUB EMPHASIS  
Education Needs More Attention  
by Hank Taylor, Farmington**


I have taught environmental issues in school and I have worried about them for years. Sometimes I wonder which issues the Sierra Club emphasizes most. It seems to me that education is the prime problem: if we can't improve education, we can't improve the world's situation. Certainly the Club is for better education, but do we expend enough of our energy and resources there?

As a teacher with no science department budget, I tried to obtain conservation and environmental films. The Sierra Club charges a fee for use of their films, but large companies loan and ship films free. You can imagine which films are used more often in schools. Perhaps the Club's efforts could be directed to providing films and literature to teachers. This would be a very positive step toward the type of education which can solve the very serious problems we do expend a great deal of resources on. We cannot even communicate with people who don't have a good education or social values.

Education is badly in need of reform and improvement, but first there must be a social need or value more than what exists presently. Perhaps the Sierra Club could do more to promote those values. Sometimes I see a real need for more education within the club, too.

Many times I have been told by someone that they are against air pollution, but they don't know what pollutants are. As an ex-science teacher I always wish people had had better science classes or more interest. However, the opposite problem exists in those with good science backgrounds but little understanding of human values. The world environmental problems have become so complex that simply being "against" something won't work anymore. I recently had visitors from two different provinces in Red China to see our sulphur dioxide removal system at San Juan Generating Station. They want to install pollution control equipment, but I found that they have no stainless steel production to build the equipment. Now I wonder if the "world" possesses enough exotic metals such as nickel and molybdenum to build enough air pollution control systems.

With a decent education, people should be able to understand issues and develop the values required to solve the



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**EL PASO GROUP NEWS**

The El Paso Group Executive Committee has undergone some changes recently. The ExCom is now structured as follows:

CHAIR: Gary Williams  
VICE-CHAIR: Rollin Wickenden



RIO GRANDE CHAPTER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

The Executive Committee of the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club consists of nine members elected at large, each for a term of three years, plus one member appointed by each of the Groups. The elected members currently serving on the ExCom are: Jack Kenney, Dan Jones, John Colburn, John Hamilton, Les King, Hal Reynolds, Ron Grotbeck, Ned Sudborough, and Hank Taylor. One of the elected positions is reserved specifically for the Chapter's Representative on the Sierra Club Council. That position is currently held by Ron Grotbeck. The terms of elected members are staggered so that only

three members' terms expire every year. The expiring terms this year are held by Ron Grotbeck, Ned Sudborough, and Hank Taylor. Since Ron also holds the Council Representative seat on the ExCom, the election this year will be for one Council Representative and two regular ExCom seats. Appearing below are the statements of candidates for the Chapter offices. Please read the statements carefully and participate in the balloting process if you are a Sierra Club member in this Chapter. The ballot appears on page 11. Please note that ballots must be postmarked by December 21, 1985 in order to be counted.

Ned Sudborough, Santa Fe

Sierra Club member since 1967, former teacher (two B.A.'s, one M.A.), hiking entrepreneur, designer/builder and student, I grew up in Michigan and continued growing in Seattle, Long Island and Santa Fe. I am presently a member of the Chapter Executive Committee and have served two terms on the Santa Fe Executive Committee.

When on the "Bingaman for Senator" staff, I coordinated the large and exciting volunteer effort for Santa Fe County. When I chaired the Santa Fe Group SCOPE, the committee's recommendations were backed by extensive non-partisan investigation, and the Santa Fe Group achieved a new high level of political participation and effectiveness. All our endorsed candidates won.

I have served three years on the Rio Grande Chapter SCOPE (Sierra Club Committee on Political Education). The Chapter needs political sophistication and an unblinking, balanced view to protect the club from narrow political interests even in the face of occasional intellectual bravado and charm.

As Chapter Legislative Chair, I developed a cooperative center with other groups sympathetic to pro-environmental legislation. In defense of water quality, I discovered a new argument against a bill to weaken the Water Quality Control Commission, induced a timely newspaper editorial for our side, and initiated a caucus of representatives to oppose the bill on the floor of the N.M. House of Representatives.

As a member of the Santa Fe Group's Conservation Committee, I drew attention to the insights expressed in the Santa Fe Forest Plan Appeals, wrote a newspaper article that caught the attention of Congressman Bill Richardson, and testified with several others of us at the Congressional Field Hearing he subsequently called.

In the last two years I have not missed more than one meeting of the Chapter Executive Committee. I have also attended Sierra Club workshops in Colorado and Washington, D.C. as well as the 1983 Sierra Club International Assembly at Snowmass, Colorado.

We have 3200 members in the Rio Grande Chapter, yet only 200 plus votes were cast in the preceding Chapter election. Yours counts.



Candidates for Ex Com

Ron Loehman, Albuquerque

Born 1943; married; 3 children; occupation: research scientist; employer: Sandia National Laboratories.

I have come to New Mexico by way of Florida and California. Over a period of about eight years in Florida I was the Gainesville Group Chair, Group Conservation Chair, Outings Chair, and Chapter Conservation Chair. In California I was active in the Chapter outings program. I have only recently gotten involved in New Mexico conservation activities through the Cibola National Forest Plan.

New Mexico is blessed with low population density and large acreages of public land. Unfortunately, much of that land seems quite fragile and historically public agencies have favored exploitation over conservation. Even the non-specialist can see that much of New Mexico is overgrazed, too heavily logged, and has dirt roads going into all sorts of places that would be better off without them. By all indications the USFS and the BLM wish to increase the level of exploitation of lands they administer.

In my opinion one of the Rio Grande Chapter's priorities must be to attempt to reverse those trends in land use, to preserve whatever wilderness and open space we feel qualifies for those designations, and to promote saner patterns of land use. We can do that through education, through vigorous advocacy, or, as a last resort, through litigation.

Hank Taylor, Farmington

Member of Sierra Club since 1971. Also a member of The Wilderness Society, Wilderness Federation, and New Mexico Citizens for Clean Air and Water. Taught public school in Albuquerque for 9 years. Presently chemical engineering supervisor at the San Juan Generating Station with responsibility for environmental, chemical, and pollution control engineering and waste water treatment. Appointed to Chapter ExCom a year ago to fill a vacant seat.

As a member of the ExCom, I would continue to represent the Four Corners Area, where there is no formal Sierra Club Group and no other representation on the ExCom. As an employee of PNM there are several issues I would prefer to abstain from, but I am proud of my work in the field of pollution control. I am very familiar with Right to Know issues and Superfund problems. I worked in the early years on the Wilderness Study Committee and presently am involved with wilderness study areas in the Four Corners states.

I usually average at least 12 backpacks a year, including 2 in the Grand Canyon, and feel qualified to speak out about Forest Service and wilderness areas both in the area close to Farmington, and throughout New Mexico and the adjacent states. I have led backpacks for the New Mexico Mountain Club and the Sierra Club. Besides hiking and backpacking I also do downhill and cross-country skiing.



**Jim Owen, El Paso**

Background: Age, 48. Public school teacher for 27 years (History and Psychology). Born in Silver City. Resident of El Paso since 1948. Family background, Silver City area. Married to Joy Owen (Chapter Treasurer). One son lives in Las Cruces, the other in Albuquerque.

Club background: Member for about ten years. Served as group: outing leader, membership chair, ExCom member, and chairman. I have been twice appointed to fill vacancies on the Chapter Ex-Com. Presently I maintain the group's membership roll, recently coordinated our response to the Gila Forest planning process, and am an active outing leader.

Philosophy: I am dedicated to a strong organizational framework for the chapter to serve as a vehicle to enhance the effectiveness of the activists that take on the individual issues. I believe I have an understanding of the Club and New Mexican and national processes to facilitate the effectiveness of our organization and help reach our goals.

**Gordon Venable, Albuquerque**

General Background: Member of the Sierra Club for several years, and served on the Wildlife Committee and as a member of the Albuquerque Group ExCom. Professional background: attorney specializing in environmental law; graduate studies and professional experience in arid lands ecology and rangeland management and rehabilitation. Concentration on the federal Clean Air Act, the New Mexico Air Quality Control Act, the National Environmental Policy Act; additional experience in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act and the National Historic Preservation Act, among others. Southwest regional professional natural resources protection experience as a New Mexico Environmental Improvement Division (EID) staff attorney and then EID Air Quality Bureau Chief. Now serving on the Air Quality Bureau's Control Strategy Section.

Point of View: I am extensively familiar with many aspects of the agency workings of the New Mexico EID and, to the degree such arcane mysteries can be known by an outsider, with the workings of the U.S. EPA, particularly in the areas involving the Clean Air Act. From this experience, I conclude that the Sierra Club's battle standard of recent times, "THE REAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY," carries far more truth than the public at large has begun to guess; dangerously more truth

than the mandated "environmental" agencies, local, state and federal, will ever acknowledge publicly...

The Sierra Club stands with other conservation organizations against an array of environmental assaults of widely divergent types in terms of impact, depth and breadth of consequences and geographic and temporal scope. These widely varied, often multiple, complex, hybrid and synergistic threats are difficult to measure against one another in order to rank in priority of risk or urgency of treatment ...or triage. Environmental organizations are only recently beginning to coordinate resource commitments to avoid waste of these limited arsenals. Also, many of the most serious environmentally destructive processes yet remain to be discovered (at least by the public), often hidden by the long period over which subtle processes produce irreversible consequences of astonishing and devastating magnitude.

Candidate's Position: I believe that the Chapter ExCom must continue to educate the membership and itself on many issues, to draw upon expertise in the membership to assess the issues, in turn to be informed by membership and the ExCom's best judgment regarding priorities, and then to implement the best possible efforts to achieve these primary objectives. I understand the personal time commitments required and the limited resources we have to address numerous serious concerns of significance to the Chapter. In this context, I would be privileged to serve on the Chapter ExCom in order to assist in the development and implementation of Chapter policies.

**Candidates for Council**

**Ron Grotbeck, Albuquerque**

Sierra Club Council is a representative body of the Club composed of delegates elected by the members of the respective chapters. Under the California corporation laws (in which state the Sierra Club is incorporated) the delegates to the Council are the representatives of all the members (shareholders) of the corporation. The Council meets twice each year in San Francisco to give advice to the Board of Directors on the organizational health of the Club at the Chapter and Group level, and to recommend solutions to problems which involve the management structure and operation of the Club. The Council does not deal with conservation policy or with individual conservation issues.

I have been the Council dele-

gate for the Rio Grande Chapter for the past three years and have served on several of the Council's committees, where most of the work of the Council is accomplished. During that time, I have remained active in both Chapter and Group activities and have brought my understanding of ongoing local situations to bear on the solutions to national Club problems. My experience at the local level extends back to 1973, when I was first elected to the Albuquerque Group ExCom, and includes nearly every job title (from Media Coordinator to Group Chair) except Treasurer. I am committed to remain involved in activities at the local level, not only because such local involvement increases the effectiveness of the Council (and thereby the entire Club), but also because I believe that strong and active grassroots organizations are vital to the Sierra Club's successful conservation actions at all levels.

**John Pierpont, Santa Fe**

Retired public relations manager and consultant to companies and business associations on communications, sales promotion, lobbying, management. Experience most relevant to Sierra Club Council responsibilities includes writing (reports, slide presentations, film treatments, newspaper/radio/TV reporting); meeting and convention management; public speaking; management of political campaigns; local public office; service on boards of various not-for-profit organizations.

Current member of ExCom of Santa Fe Group (Program, SCCOPE, and Conservation committees). Active hiker, camper, skier (10th Mountain Division in WW II), environmentalist. Married, five children.

**Ben Zerbey, Las Cruces**

I have been a member of the Sierra Club since 1980 and am serving as Membership Chair and Bulletin Editor for the Southwestern New Mexico Group. I retired in 1981 after serving 35 years with the National Park Service in various positions and locations. My last job was State Director for NPS properties in Utah, where the Service was deeply involved in air quality, nuclear waste, surface mining, development of mining claims, and wilderness issues.

I am interested in the management of public lands by federal and state agencies. Keeping the pressure on BLM and USFS is important to ensure that these public land managers



give sufficient weight to the conservation views on issues. Many of the ranchers/permit holders on public lands are of advanced age, and the economic outlook for the livestock industry is not good. This presents an opportunity and a pitfall to conservationists. The opportunity is that we can lobby to reduce or retire grazing permits on the more ravaged areas while improving the overall management of wildlands. The pitfall is that permits will be transferred into the hands of absentee corporate owners which will look only to profits in resource consumption.

There are many critical issues facing the Sierra Club in southwestern New Mexico. The USFS plans for the Gila and Lincoln Forests, the BLM wilderness proposals, threats of dams on the Gila River, continuing encroachments of the military, lack of comprehensive planning on unbridled growth by municipal and state agencies, and continued pressure on meagre water supplies by agricultural, developmental, and municipal interests all cry out for voices of common sense to be heard. Sierra Club must be instrumental in proposing sound and reasonable solutions to these problems. \*



*El Malpais (from page 1)*

citizens of New Mexico, particularly those in the Grants area. This area has suffered from the downturn in the uranium market and the subsequent closure of several nearby mines. A new attraction such as El Malpais will undoubtedly prove to be a more stable, though less ambitious, industry than the mining of uranium ore. As a result, Richardson's bill has the backing of community leaders in the Grants area.

Hearings on Rep. Richardson's bill will probably be held in the spring. So far, no companion bill has yet been introduced in the Senate. **Your letters count!** Please write Senators Jeff Bingaman (D-NM) and Pete Domenici (R-NM) and urge them to introduce Rep. Richardson's bill in the Senate. Stress that H.R. 3684 represents the best practical solution to the need for urgent, comprehensive preservation of the natural wonders in and around El Malpais.

If you live in a congressional district other than Rep. Richardson's, please write your representative and ask him to support H.R. 3684. And last but not least, **don't forget** to also drop Rep. Richardson a note thanking him for his continuing work to preserve and protect New Mexico's natural heritage. \*

**RIO GRANDE CHAPTER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTION  
BALLOT**

*Ex Com (Vote for 2)*

- Ron Loehman
- Hank Taylor
- Ned Sudborough
- Jim Owen
- Gordon Venable

*Sierra Club Council (Vote for 1)*

- Ron Grotbeck
- Ben Zerbey
- John Pierpont

Mail to: SIERRA CLUB  
1301 Louisa St.  
Santa Fe, NM 87501

In order to be valid, your ballot must have your mailing label on the flip side, and you must be a member of the Sierra Club in the Rio Grande Chapter.

Ballot must be postmarked by December 21, 1985 to be counted.

Please cut along dotted line, fold, and place in an envelope.

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|--------------|---|--------------------------------|
| Regular      | <input type="checkbox"/> \$29               | <input type="checkbox"/> \$33  |
| Supporting   | <input type="checkbox"/> \$50               | <input type="checkbox"/> \$54  |
| Contributing | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100              | <input type="checkbox"/> \$104 |
| Life         | <input type="checkbox"/> \$750 (per person) |                                |

**SPECIAL CATEGORIES**

- |                |   |                               |
|----------------|---|-------------------------------|
| Senior         | <input type="checkbox"/> \$15               | <input type="checkbox"/> \$19 |
| Student        | <input type="checkbox"/> \$15               | <input type="checkbox"/> \$19 |
| Spouse of Life | <input type="checkbox"/> \$15 (annual dues) |                               |

All dues include subscription to *Sierra* (\$4) and chapter publications (\$1).

## PROTECTION NEEDED FOR THE RIO CHAMA

Work is underway drafting legislation to designate the Rio Chama a Wild and Scenic River. Such legislation is needed to protect the river from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as well as other development that might encroach on one of New Mexico's finest stretches of free-flowing river.

This past summer at Abiquiu Reservoir, the Corps impounded run-off from a heavy snow pack in quantities far in excess of what was needed for flood control. The retained water level rose in the reservoir, backing upstream into the Rio Chama. Archeological sites were damaged, as well as many old-growth Ponderosa, some of which served as Bald Eagle nesting sites.

It did not seem to matter to the Corps that the Rio Chama upstream of Abiquiu Reservoir to El Vado Dam has been designated a Scenic and Pastoral River by the New Mexico State Legislature. It is clear that federal protection is needed to keep the Corps in compliance with

the law regulating the quantity of water they can store in the reservoir.

The Rio Chama Preservation Trust is working with Senator Bingaman's office to draft legislation that would designate part of the river as a Wild River and part of it as a Scenic River. Current drafts of the legislation call for the Wild River segment to be that part just south of El Vado Dam downstream to elevation 6,410 feet, where the Rio Gallina enters the Rio Chama. The Scenic River would run from this elevation to 6,235 feet, the maximum elevation of the Abiquiu Reservoir.

Establishment of the Wild and Scenic River would effectively set the storage capacity of Abiquiu Reservoir at 267,500 acre-feet. Inundation of the Wild and Scenic River would be justified only for real flood control where life and property is endangered. The Corps would not be allowed to store water simply for the sake of water storage as they did last summer. \*

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The Rio Grande Sierran

# The Rio Grande SIERRAN



THE RIO GRANDE CHAPTER OF THE SIERRA CLUB

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View of the West Face of the Sanias

Photo by John Tiwald

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