

The Rio Grande SIERRAN



THE RIO GRANDE CHAPTER OF THE SIERRA CLUB

January/February 1986

AGREEMENT COULD CLOSE GATEWAY MINE

by John Colburn, Albuquerque

On January 22, 1986, Jack Kenney, Chair of the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club; Grove Burnett, attorney for the Chapter; Jim Baca, State Land Commissioner; Paul Biderman, Secretary of the Energy and Minerals Department; and Charles Hunter, Senior Vice President of Sunbelt Mining Company, signed an agreement which could end operation of the Gateway Mine adjacent to the Bisti Wilderness south of Farmington, New Mexico.

The agreement sets in motion a procedure to exchange Sunbelt's interest in the coal mining leases on "Section 32", the Gateway Mine, for other state lands containing coal of equal value. As soon as these lands have been identified, Sunbelt will begin shutting down the mine and reclaiming the stripped area.

The Gateway Mine has been a bone of contention between

environmentalists and mining interests since late 1981 when Sunbelt filed a mine permit application for Section 32. The Rio Grande Chapter filed an unsuitability petition with the state Mining and Minerals Division, charging that the land could not be properly reclaimed and that it had more important uses such as outdoor recreation, scientific study, and as a nature preserve. The section of state land on which the mine is located is surrounded on three sides by the federal Bisti Wilderness and has the same characteristic badlands beauty as the Wilderness itself.

The petition was denied, a permit was issued, and strip mining operations began in late 1982. The Chapter appealed the decision by filing suit against the New Mexico Coal Surface Mining Commission. The suit is currently under appeal, while mining operations continue. So

far, operations have disturbed only a small percentage of the surface area of Section 32. The most scenic portion, the north half of the section, has not yet been significantly damaged.

As a part of the agreement, the Chapter will not pursue its appeal, and when the exchange is finalized, the suit will be mooted. The Chapter also agreed not to challenge the suitability of the selected exchange lands for surface mining.

The agreement calls for Sunbelt to identify state lands adjacent to current or future coal leases held by Sunbelt or its affiliates that have a value of strippable coal equal to that of Section 32. If such lands can be found, the State Land Office will grant Sunbelt a lease on these lands in exchange for relinquishment of the leases on the remaining

see Bisti, page 7

MOUNTAIN LIONS NEED OUR HELP

by Carol Cochran, Albuquerque

Each year the NM State Game Commission meets to set hunting seasons and other regulations on the state's big game animals, including the mountain lion. If you've been following the story, you know that each year the Sierra Club organizes an effort to increase protection for the mountain lion. Two years ago we were successful in persuading the Commission to reduce the season from eleven months to three. Last year we were unsuccessful. One more month was added to the season on the lion. This year we'll try again to get the season reduced, and we badly need the help of all of you.

As you no doubt remember, no accurate census of mountain lion numbers in New Mexico exists. Furthermore, the game department cannot say with certainty whether or not mountain lion populations are increasing, decreasing, or remaining the same. The only study which has been done, a statistical report based on hunter success, indicates that mountain lion populations are declining statewide. We believe that it is impossible to responsibly set seasons on an animal about

see Mountain Lions, page 2

MAN'S WAR AGAINST THE WOLF

Part III: The Future of the Wolf

by Norma Ames, Santa Fe

[Editor's note: This is the final installment of a three-part series on the wolf. In this part, wildlife biologist, writer, and lecturer Norma Ames discusses the prospects for the wolf in the future.]

Barring the unexpected appearance of some geological or astrophysical cataclysm or a newly evolved disease "superbug", the future of the wolf depends on the thoughts and actions of mankind. So, for that matter, does the future of all wildlife and of mankind.

Today, we humans have the numbers--how fast they increase!--and the technology to bring life on earth back near Square One, if we so choose. The effective technology is not limited to nuclear bombs; note the effects of pollution and destruction of ecosystems on which our own well-being ultimately depends. More correctly, that "if we choose" should read: if a majority of us choose not to develop and exercise ecological

see Wolves, page 8

SUPERFUND AND TOXIC MINING WASTES

by Denise Fort, Director
NM Environmental Improvement Division

Nestled within the righteous mass of the Senate Superfund amendments is an obscurely worded provision that could effectively end the clean-up of mining sites in New Mexico. While not labeled a "loophole", and, in fact, beyond the ready understanding of all but a few sharp lobbyists, the provision singles out for its special concern mining sites that might otherwise be cleaned up under Superfund.

Superfund is one of the toughest environmental laws to be placed on the books--a reflection of public concern over hazardous waste sites and Congressional concern over tough enforcement of clean-up laws. The law provides both a fund to clean up sites, and also a hammer to force recalcitrant polluters to clean up the sites. In short, if you own an operation that had polluted ground water with arsenic, your legal counsel's first hope would be that Superfund didn't apply.

What arguments could be made to a rational Congress to persuade it that mining wastes should not be kept under

see Superfund, page 2

Mountain Lions (from page 1)

which nothing certain is known, but which seems to be in trouble. And so it has been the Sierra Club's position all along that a moratorium be declared until the game department and the game commission know what they are doing. Nothing has happened to change our position.

This year, the game department is recommending to the commission that the season be reduced from four months to three (December through February). There is no telling what the commission will do. Last year, they seemed to listen to the loudest voices at the public meeting in Santa Fe. Unfortunately, those were the voices of the guides and outfitters, a small but apparently influential special interest group, which makes its living killing animals and naturally would want a greater opportunity to do so. Last year neither ranchers nor hunters seemed to be interested in expanding the season. And of course, we were not. But the commission listened to the outfitters because they were the only ones who spoke.

This year we must be in Santa Fe to let the commission hear from us. The state's wildlife belongs to all and we must let the commission know that New Mexicans care. Please plan to attend the meeting. Your presence alone is important, even if you do not speak. The meeting will be either February 27 or 28 during the day in Santa Fe. It's easier for guides and outfitters than it is for us to get off work, but please do all you can to be there. Last year we let the mountain lion down because we didn't show up in good numbers. We can't let that happen this year.

Remember February 27 or 28. For more information on the exact date and place, call Carol Cochran (505/345-1412) or John Somers (268-2350) evenings or weekends; or the Albuquerque Group office (265-5506) mornings.

Also write the Game Commissioners expressing your feelings on mountain lion protection:

Mr. James H. Koch, Chairman
PO Box 1926
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Dr. A. H. Gutierrez
2402 W. Pierce, 2A
Carlsbad, NM 88220

Mr. Jake Alcon
c/o NM Dept. of Game and Fish
Santa Fe, NM 98503

Dr. Thomas P. Arvas
7905 Spain Rd. NE
Albuquerque, NM 87111

Mrs. Christine DiGregorio
1103 Susan St.
Gallup, NM 87301

Superfund (from page 1)

Superfund? Well, appearances, for one thing. Back East, where the most publicized disasters occur, Superfund has been called in to clean up leaking barrels of toxic wastes. Even if the cyanide leached from mining wastes is every bit as toxic as that leaked out of a barrel, the mining industry recites that its wastes are "high volume, low toxicity" and therefore different from packaged wastes. To a New Mexican with contaminated drinking water the debate may all seem a little academic.

In essence, the arguments attack the ranking system used to list sites on the National Priority List. These arguments have been rejected by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit (in a case in which New Mexico and other states intervened) and by the Environmental Protection

Agency. While their basis seems to be that the ranking system overstates the risk posed by mining, an argument abundantly refuted by the courts and EPA, the real question is whether Superfund has been used to clean up sites where contamination has not occurred. EPA's answer to this is an unambiguous "no": "Our experience at mining sites has shown tht the concentration of toxic metals found in the wastes of mining sites on the NPL are high enough to cause serious contamination of surface and ground water." (Letter from Jack W. McGraw, Acting Assistant Administrator, Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response, EPA, to Senator Pete V. Domenice, June 27, 1985.)

In New Mexico the issue is surface and ground water contamination, with some instances of air borne contaminants. At over 100 sites, the state is investigating, on behalf of EPA, suspected or proven contaminants. The problems do not appear trivial:

* An abandoned uranium mine with a mine spoils pile of approximately 14,000 tons threatens contamination of ground and surface water through leachate from the tailing pile, as well as releases of radioactive dust and gas. Contaminants include heavy metals, as well as radioactive decay products of uranium.

* A large uranium mine with a spoils pile of approximately 7,000 tons contaminated existing ground water supplies.

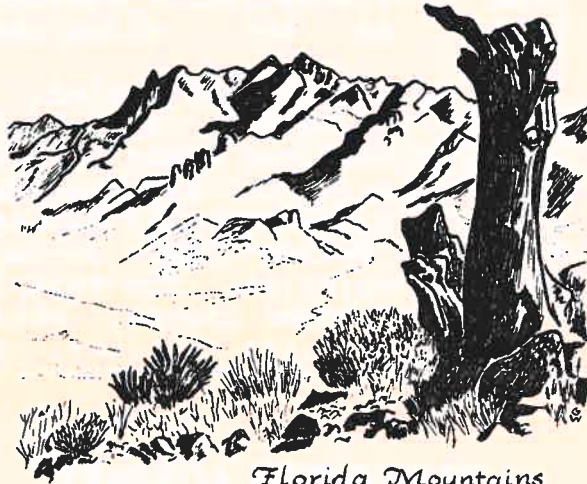
* A mine and mill where lead, silver, and zinc were mined at various times with a cyanide leach process for ore extraction: cyanide and heavy metals pose a ground water contamination threat at this site.

* Four different mills processing copper, lead, and zinc in a area have produced contamination of surface and ground water.

* A gold and silver mine abandoned in 1950 produced tailings which are being eroded into a creek. Hazardous contaminants include cyanide, mercury, and heavy metals; high levels of lead have been detected in surface water samples.

New Mexicans are second to none in their concern for the environment. They surely deserve the protection of federal laws in seeking to protect their water and air. *

Drawing by Walter K. Graf



Florida Mountains

Also send a copy of your letters to Governor Toney Anaya, State Capitol, Santa Fe, NM 87503.

If you do only one thing this year for New Mexico's wildlife, please do this!

Share with Wildlife:

Please remember to donate part or all of your state income tax refund to Share with Wildlife, the program which benefits our state's wildlife, particularly nongame species. In the five years the program has been in existence, Share with Wildlife has collected about one million dollars and has funded projects benefitting mountain lions, spotted owls, prairie dogs, leopard frogs, bald eagles, and many other creatures. Your donation is tax deductible.

Endangered Species Fair:

We are starting to plan next fall's Endangered Species Fair. Anyone who has suggestions or would like to help, please contact Carol Cochran or John Somers. *

WILDERNESS ETHICS

Edited by Jim Fish, Placitas

I must say that the number of responses to the first of this series (November/December Sierran) was not overwhelming. The two I did receive, however, are enough to encourage me to keep trying.

Jim Owen of El Paso wrote to ask how we might convince the Forest Service to measure the value of wildlife and of wilderness such that they are not sacrificed to those uses of public land for which a dollar value is more easily assigned; such as timbering, grazing, mining, and hunting. Although this question addresses an important concern, I consider it somewhat out of the scope of this column. My intention is to discuss and debate issues having a more individual focus. With that said for future reference, I

will, however, pass on any comments I receive on Jim's question.

Richard Spray, Forest Service Manager from Albuquerque, sent me a packet which contained a two page letter from which our new topic is taken, a copy of a paper he had written on fire rings, and a report by David Cole and John Dalle-Molle, "Managing Campfire Impacts in the Backcountry," Report INT-135, November 1982.

In his paper, Spray points out that in some high use areas it is more practical and less detrimental to the area if existing fire rings are left, unless management is willing to enforce a "no camping" or "no fires" regulation. Repeated construction and destruction of fire rings can result in the

entire campsite becoming plowed up and blackened with charcoal and ash.

The report by Cole and Dalle-Molle discusses the ecological and esthetic impacts of campfires and management strategies for minimizing these impacts.

Thanks to Richard Spray and Jim Owen for their letters. I look forward to hearing from more of you in the future. *



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

DRY CAMPING

by Richard Spray,
U.S. Forest Service

Backpack camping technique seems to have been cast in concrete over the years. This has had one result which is very evident anywhere water is found in wilderness --- heavy camping impact. Almost everyone selects a campsite near water and cooks the evening meal, sleeps and cooks breakfast before moving on. This is usually in a fragile, wet location that is heavily used by other campers, cattle, and wildlife. Try "dry-stopping" or "bivouacking" instead. It takes a different thought process to the daily routine of traveling and camping in wilderness, but once acquired the benefits are many.

There are different ways of going about this novel camping style. The key point to remember is that you don't

camp near a water source. As evening approaches, depending on whether or not you are hungry when you come to the last water source of the day, you can either cook dinner there or you can fill water containers with enough water to cook later and move on. Either way you don't camp at the water source but move on to a campsite (or more properly a bivouac) on a ridgetop, a peak, or any place that strikes your fancy. If you've eaten, all you need to do is bed down and enjoy the view or whatever. If you haven't eaten, enjoy a meal in a different environment. Anyway you look at it, it is different; and if you approach it in the proper frame of mind, it is very enjoyable.

By not camping on water and spreading your impact around to more durable sites that other people don't often use, the wilderness also benefits. The following morning I like to have a quick orange juice and a cup of coffee and move on to fix something more substantial after I've warmed up on the trail and come to a good breakfast spot with water. You can also fix breakfast in bed on the spot if you have sufficient water left from the night before.

I've also tried backpacking with no stove and no cooked meals, surviving on various high energy gorps, goops, and pemmican. That style does not suit me very well, but it may be okay for others who eat simply to live and not the other way around. *



View from Top of Cabezon Peak
Photo by Jim Fish

CHAIR'S COLUMN

by Jack Kenney, Santa Fe

My sincere thanks for the honor you have bestowed on me by appointing me as chapter chair for a second year. Perhaps I can get it right the second time around.

My feelings of pride were diminished more than somewhat by receipt of the report of the Elections Committee following the election of new Executive Committee members (Hank Taylor and Ned Sudborough); and a new Council Delegate (Ben Zerbey) and alternate (Ron Grotbeck). Sincere congratulations to all of them. I am certain that they will contribute in a meaningful way to the accomplishments of the Chapter.

My pride in the club was diminished not by the results of the ballots, but by the number of ballots submitted. Of approximately 3600 members in the Chapter 116 voted!!!!!!

WHERE WERE THE OTHER 3500????

WHAT CAUSED SUCH APATHY?

Is the Executive Committee seen as unimportant? How about the Chapter? The Groups?

I have appointed Ken Adams, a member of the Club for over 52 years, to examine the election results, investigate possible reasons for the disgraceful vote, and to make recommendations to the Executive Committee early this summer as to measures which we can take to obtain better participation.

Please write or call Ken with your suggestions and comments. His address is 418 Apodaca Hill, Santa Fe, NM 87501; (505/983-1949).

FOREST PLANS

Our New Mexico Forest Planning efforts are about to reach a new stage and a new plateau.

The Santa Fe Plan will be out by the time you read this.

We met with the Gila Planner in Silver City on 11 January to confirm and re-emphasize the comments and positions of the El Paso Group, Chapter, Wilderness Coalition, and Santa Fe Group. We are not pleased with the Timber Allowable Sale Quantity; the tentative decisions on Wilderness and RNA recommendations and on Road and Trail priorities; etc. The Final Plan is expected in May 1986.

We met with the Carson Supervisor and his staff on 2 January in Taos to discuss fine tuning the plan. Full agreement was not achieved, however we were favorably impressed by many of the changes made to the DRAFT (no clearcutting; no timbering of steep (over 40%) slopes; higher priority for recreation; road

reduction; etc.) The Plan is expected to be in final form in early February 1986.

Little news on the Lincoln Plan. Still under revision.

The Cibola Plan has been appealed. We hope for major revisions.

BLM WILDERNESS

We need to complete our comments initiated last year. Brush up on your adopted area, look it over again, and nudge your local coordinator. *

WILDERNESS COALITION TO HOLD WORKSHOP

The Wilderness Coalition will hold a workshop on March 1 in Socorro to discuss and plan work that needs to be done on the Coalition's proposals for BLM wilderness. Nearly fifty BLM Wilderness Study Areas in New Mexico are currently under consideration for wilderness designation. The number of these areas that are eventually preserved will depend on the work that conservationists put forward in the next couple of years.

The workshop is designed to be a working session where maps and wilderness boundary proposals will be studied and discussed. Any further field work needed to provide data for the wilderness proposals will be identified and scheduled. For the activist who wants to get outdoors and explore potential wilderness areas, this workshop and the follow-up activities should be ideal.

The workshop will be held on Saturday, March 1 at the Workman Center, Room 54, of New Mexico Tech in Socorro. The meeting will start at 10 AM and will probably last until 5 or 6 PM. To get to Workman Center, turn west on Bullock St. off the main highway through town.

For more information, call Carl Popp (505/835-0236), Judy Bishop (505/471-4439), or Jim Stewart (505/831-5911). *

EDITOR'S NOTES

by Dave Glowka, Albuquerque

Thinking about the last year's issues of the Sierran, I came to realize that most, if not all, of my editorials have concentrated on membership involvement. That probably comes from the frustration of mailing out over 3000 copies of the Sierran every issue and yet realizing that the core of active members is actually very small.

It seems almost impossible these days to get volunteers motivated to do something for the environment. Perhaps after five years of the Reagan Administration and the onslaught of attacks it has brought against the environment, people are burned out. It certainly does seem at times like we're beating our heads against the wall. Sometimes everything we work on seems to be a fight to prevent something terrible from happening to the environment. Maybe people get tired of being forced to take what is perceived as the negative side all of the time.

Well, for those of you who fall into the "burned out" category, as well as those with lots of energy, we have a wonderful and important project for you: **HELP GET BRANT CALKIN ELECTED STATE LAND COMMISSIONER**

If ever there was a job that won't get done by itself or with the work of just a few, this is it: we have less than one month to gather 9,000 valid signatures in order to get Brant on the ballot. This is a formidable task, and we need the help of every Sierra Club member in New Mexico to accomplish it.

Please consider devoting your time to this cause. If you don't do anything else for the environment this year, please do this! Read the article starting on the back page and circulate the enclosed petition. State lands represent a significant part of New Mexico's future, and we need Brant in the driver's seat for the next four years. *

This Land Is Your Land. Brant Calkin will

- Take down the NO TRESPASSING signs that keep you off your land;
- Restore and protect your damaged state land;
- Keep taxes low by earning a fair dollar value from your land.

The Most Experienced Candidate: Brant Calkin has been

- New Mexico Secretary of Natural Resources;
- New Mexico Assistant State Land Commissioner;
- An expert in natural resource protection for 18 years;
- A U.N.M. graduate; a New Mexico resident for 43 years.

The State Land Commissioner manages your 9 million acres of state trust land, which earns \$665,000 per day to support New Mexico's schools and hospitals.

Vote for **BRANT CALKIN** for State Land Commissioner.

BRANT CALKIN  This Land Is Your Land
DEMOCRAT • STATE LAND COMMISSIONER 

PLEASE OBTAIN AS MANY SIGNATURES OF REGISTERED NEW MEXICO DEMOCRATS AS POSSIBLE ON THE ENCLOSED PETITION. RETURN NO LATER THAN MARCH 15, 1986.

Richard Spray
John Colburn
Jane Colburn
John Somers
Walter Graf

Thanks to the Albuquerque Group for helping to mail the Sierran.

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OUR EDITORIAL POLICY

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).

**DAM PROPOSAL THREATENS
WILD AND SCENIC
RIO GRANDE**

from *Sierra Club Wildline*

A proposal to construct Chiflo Dam in the Rio Grande Gorge northwest of Questa poses a threat to the nation's first Wild and Scenic River. First proposed by the Corps of Engineers in the early 1940's as a flood control measure, the Chiflo Dam site was specifically removed from authorization by Congress in 1948. That portion of the Rio Grande Gorge from the Colorado state line south to the NM State Highway 96 bridge was included in the National Wild and Scenic River System by Congress in 1968.

Various interests in Taos County have recently raised the issue of Chiflo Dam to help control flooding, provide hydro-electric power, and store water for the City of Albuquerque and the irrigators below Elephant Butte. They are bringing pressure on Congressman Richardson to hold hearings in Taos about the dam.

The Chiflo Dam would cost approximately \$350 million and would flood some 18 miles of the Rio Grande Gorge. Write Congressman Richardson and urge him to not waste our money holding a hearing on a pipe dream project at a time when every federal agency is being hard-hit by budget-balancing cuts. Also stress that the Rio Grande is truly a Wild and Scenic River--not just because Congress said it is.*

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Calkin (from back page)

member of the Sierra Club staff as head of the Southwest Office and the Southwest Regional Representative. He served in that position until 1982, working with local volunteer activists at the Group, Chapter, and Regional levels and serving as the Club's lobbyist to Congress on issues affecting the Southwest.

After the strong involvement of New Mexico environmentalists in the 1982 elections, the new governor, Toney Anaya, asked Brant to become Deputy Secretary of Natural Resources in his administration. Brant accepted and served the environmental cause in that position until the termination of Shirley Hill-Witt as chief of the Department in August of 1983. Brant filled the vacancy as acting Director and was confirmed the following February by the New Mexico legislature as the permanent cabinet Secretary of Natural Resources. He resigned from that office in August of 1984 and was immediately hired by the State Land Commissioner, Jim Baca, as his Special Assistant.

Brant has served in that capacity at the State Land Office until last month, when he resigned to run for the office of Commissioner. Jim Baca, himself prevented by the State Constitution from running this year for the office (or any of six other top statewide elective offices), has strongly endorsed Brant for the job. He feels that Brant will continue and complete many of the worth-

while projects and reforms he began as New Mexico's 20th Land Commissioner.

WHAT DOES THE LAND COMMISSIONER DO?

The State Land Office was established in 1899. The Land Office administers 9.2 million surface acres and 13.1 million subsurface acres of state lands held in trust for 20 separate trust beneficiaries.

Each acre of Trust Land is held in trust for one of the 20 beneficiaries, and any mingling of funds is prohibited. All royalty income received by the State Land Office is deposited in the New Mexico Permanent Fund; income received from the investment of that fund is distributed to the proper beneficiaries. More than \$2,300,000,000 has been earned for the beneficiaries since 1899.

Some statistics about the Land Office and the State Lands it administers:

* New Mexico ranks seventh in the nation in terms of crude oil extraction and fourth in natural gas.

* During the last fiscal year, 32.1% of the 34,221 producing oil and gas wells were on Trust Lands.

* During the last fiscal year, 49.7% of all oil and 22.5% of all natural gas produced in New Mexico came from Trust Lands.

* By the end of the last fiscal year, oil and gas leases had been issued on 58.8%--or 7,707,558 acres--of the 13.1

million acres of sub-surface Trust Lands. Many of the leases are decades old.

* Oil and gas related activities on State Trust Lands provided 94.6% of the revenues received during the last fiscal year.

* During the last fiscal year, the Land Office earned \$247,127,507.29 for the people of New Mexico--an average of \$667,061.66 every day, 365 days a year!

* New Mexico's public schools received about 83.5% of all royalty earned by the Land Office during the last fiscal year.

* The State Land Office earned \$62.29 for every dollar it spent to administer the Trust during the past year.

Certainly, with so much of the income-producing activity on Trust Lands concentrated in potentially environmentally damaging industries, having a Land Commissioner with Brant's conservation background is vital to the long-term health and productivity of the land.

YOUR HELP IS URGENTLY NEEDED

The Chapter SCCOPE (Sierra Club Committee on Political Education) is made up of the chairs of the five Group SCCOPE committees in Las Cruces, Albuquerque, El Paso, Alamogordo, and Santa Fe. Each of the Group SCCOPE chairs will be coordinating the Calkin for Land Commissioner campaign in his own area, but we need a volunteer coordinator in each of the other towns in New Mexico. If you have an interest in political activism and have some free time to devote to a campaign of real significance to New Mexico, drop me a note: Ron Grotbeck, 8812 Harwood NE, Albuquerque 87111, or call me at 505/296-0944 most any evening.

The major focus of the campaign between now and March 15 will be to collect the 8875 nominating petition signatures necessary to get Brant's name on the ballot for the Primary Election in June. Since many of the signatures will be invalid, for one reason or another, we have set a goal of 11,000 signatures collected before the deadline. We are collecting signatures at places where people gather on Saturday mornings--shopping malls, events, grocery stores.

During the course of the campaign there will be many opportunities for concerned and enthusiastic volunteers to help get Brant elected, but he won't even be a candidate if we can't collect the required signatures before March 15. If you can spend any time at all, even an hour in your own neighborhood asking friends to sign the nominating petition, please call your Group SCCOPE chair and volunteer to help. *

MORRIS K. UDALL
20 DISTRICT OF ARIZONA

235 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
202/225-4066

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515

COMMITTEES
INTERIOR AND INSULAR AFFAIRS
CHAIRMAN
FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY
ASSESSMENT

February 5, 1986

Brant Calkin
611 Jiron Street
Santa Fe, N.M. 87501

Dear Brant:

I'm delighted to see that you have entered the Democratic primary for the Land Commissioner race in New Mexico. In the twenty years since we first met in Santa Fe, you have become one of the most knowledgeable and experienced figures in the field of resource planning and environmental management.

It is additionally appropriate that after all these years of supporting the Democratic Party and working for its candidates, you have become a candidate yourself. Your primary race has attracted a strong field, reaffirming the strength of our party and its ability to give our members outstanding choices. You deserve to be among those presented to the Democrats in the New Mexico primary, and I hope that they will gather the petition signatures and do the other necessary tasks that will lead to your being on the ballot in June.

Good luck to you and all the other candidates.

Regards,



Morris K. Udall

PLEASE OBTAIN AS MANY SIGNATURES OF REGISTERED NEW MEXICO DEMOCRATS AS POSSIBLE ON THE ENCLOSED PETITION. RETURN NO LATER THAN MARCH 15, 1986.

Bisti (from page 1)

coal in Section 32. Sunbelt will then halt mining operations and begin the task of reclaiming the disturbed lands.

The agreement further calls for the State Land Office to negotiate an exchange with the Bureau of Land Management to allow BLM to acquire Section 32 and manage it in conjunction with the Bisti Wilderness. The state would, in return, obtain an equal value of federal coal lands.

Under the terms of the agreement, Sunbelt will be reimbursed for costs associated with the exchange, including additional development and reclamation costs for Section 32 that may arise as a result of the exchange. This reimbursement is to come in the form of additional coal reserves obtained from BLM as part of the exchange agreement between BLM and the State Land Office. Sunbelt will also obtain an additional amount of coal, equal to 15% of the exchanged tonnage, to compensate Sunbelt for the financial risks associated with the exchange.

At a press conference announcing the agreement, Secretary Biderman discussed the problems with mining on Section 32: "Since the permit to mine the Gateway was first issued in late 1982 by our Mining and Minerals Division, difficulties have arisen in the company's efforts to achieve comprehensive reclamation of surface mined land in these sensitive badlands. I have visited the site several times. Some portions of the permit area contain sandstone features that have eroded through the millenia into eerie and irreplaceable forms. Most of the sparsely vegetated permit area is vulnerable to erosion from wind and water. Eventually, mining would have destroyed the formations that closely resemble those in the surrounding wilderness area."

Kenney remarked, "This agreement represents a win-win situation. The fragile environment of most of Section 32 will be preserved, and Sunbelt will receive coal leases of equal value in a location more suitable for mining."

Sunbelt's Hunter said, "[The agreement] required the cooperation of a diverse set of interests. The willingness of the different parties to work cooperatively, rather than confrontationally, was a critical element in putting this Agreement together. By helping to define and work toward our common interests instead of focusing on our differences, the parties were able to forge an Agreement acceptable to all." *

**EL MALPAIS PRESERVATION UPDATE**

by John Somers, Albuquerque

The U.S. House Public Lands Subcommittee has scheduled a field hearing in Grants on Wednesday, March 26 on the El Malpais National Monument Bill (H.R. 3684). This bill was introduced in November, 1985 by Congressman Bill Richardson (D-NM) to stimulate economic activity in the Cibola County area (see Nov/Dec Rio Grande Sierran). The bill would establish long-sought protection for 351,000 acres, including 193,000 acres of wilderness.

This bill has received support, and in fact incorporates the recommendations of, conservationists from several organizations: the Sierra Club, Wilderness Society, New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee, Project Lighthawk, and the BLM Wilderness Coalition. An outpouring of public support is needed at the field hearing. Wilderness friend John Sieberling of Ohio chairs the Subcommittee and the hearing. You can be allotted time to testify at the hearing by contacting Congressman Sieberling's staff assistant, Russ Shea, at 202/226-7734 or by calling Congressman Richardson's office at 202/225-6190 or 505/988-6177. Exact times and location for the hearing are not yet set but will be available from local leaders of the organizations mentioned above or from the congressional staff offices. The hearing record will accept written comments mailed to Richardson's office: 1610 Longworth House Office Bldg., Washington, DC 20515.

Some controversy has arisen regarding the appropriateness of national monument designation for a BLM-managed area. This would indeed be the first national monument under BLM management. We can avoid becoming embroiled in this political entanglement by emphasizing our firm support for the comprehensive protection plan for El Malpais embodied in this bill, regardless of what the protected area is ultimately called. The BLM State Director and the BLM Area Manager both strongly support wilderness in the El Malpais area.

Additional congressional support must be generated. Urge your congressional representative to support H.R. 3684 and to become a cosponsor of this bill. Please write Senators Jeff Bingaman (D-NM) and Pete Domenici (R-NM) and urge them to introduce a Senate bill incorporating the comprehensive protection provided in the House bill. This is most important, because we must have more action from the other members of New Mexico's congressional delegation to fulfill the promise of adequately protecting this unique and

wonderfully scenic area.

For up-to-date information, call one of the following: Judy Bishop (Santa Fe, 505/471-4439); George Grossman (Santa Fe, 982-1024); Jim Stewart (Albuquerque, 831-5911); or John Somers (Albuquerque, 268-2350). *

RICHARDSON INTRODUCES LEGISLATION TO PROTECT CHACOAN OUTLIERS

Demonstrating a concern for New Mexico's cultural heritage, Congressman Richardson has introduced legislation to place 33 Chacoan outliers within the National Park System.

Chaco Culture National Historic Park is the site of the most advanced prehistoric civilizations in the United States. Between approximately 900 and 1300 A.D., the Anasazi Indians built a centrally-controlled society with its center in Chaco Canyon and extensive road and communication networks. These networks linked outlying communities, called outliers, with the central government in Chaco Canyon. Although the canyon itself and its ruins have been protected by the National Park Service since the early part of the century, the outliers have not had adequate protection.

A bill passed in 1980 identified 33 of the outliers as significant archeological sites and mandated that they be managed jointly by the Bureau of Land Management, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the National Park Service. The protection promised by the bill, however, has never materialized. In the meantime, at least one of the sites has been looted by professional pot-hunters.

Congressman Richardson's bill would designate at least the remaining 32 outliers as units of Chaco Culture National Historic Park. This would resolve the ambiguity about management responsibility and would place it within the Park Service, which has the expertise and the mandate to properly protect the outliers. In addition, Richardson's bill would direct the NPS to develop one of the sites near Grants as an interpretive unit. Visitation to this unit is projected to exceed that to Chaco Canyon itself.

Please write your Congressman and Senators, requesting them to support Congressman Richardson's bill, H.R. 3685. Stress the fact that proper management of the outliers requires authority to be concentrated in one agency. And don't forget to send a letter to Congressman Richardson, expressing your thanks for his vigilant watch over New Mexico's treasures from the past. *

Wolves (from page 1)

understanding and love of our planet and its life. It should also read: if we choose not to develop and exercise the maturity to put aside self-indulgence, as may sometimes be needed if we are not to turn life-supporting ecosystems into lifeless furnishings of the human world.

In the wolf's problems and prospects, can we see indications of our developing that understanding, love, and self-restraint? The wolf is a good place to start an inquiry since a large carnivore is a key character in the operation of a large chunk of natural habitat. If a population of a large carnivore is to survive in the wild, the habitat must have a vigorous population of prey species. These, in turn, require thriving stands of appropriate plant life. The plant life's health depends on sufficient soils with adequate nutrient content and operant soil organisms. Also vital to the plant and other life are clean air, clean water, and sunshine. To some, "good wolf country" may be a term as unlikeable as "Smucker's." With a name like good wolf country, however, it's got to be good for many other life forms as well, and thereby a benefit to mankind.

Many wolf-supporters are not thinking about these ecological arguments when they advocate saving the wolf. It's more often the charisma or beauty of the animal that hooked them, or its song, or some almost unrealistic idea they have about the noble character of the wolf. All that is fine, and they're all more or less right. We should, however, add realistic images and larger issues to our campaign if controversies over wolf survival are not to deteriorate into mere "Evil!" versus "Good!" shouting matches.

In recent years, wolf-supporters have won several court or regulatory decisions that stopped or delayed actions aimed at killing considerable numbers of wolves. Some competent wildlife biologists had perceived the proposed wolf-reductions as proper management for the welfare of both wolves and prey populations. Arguments on particular proposals are beyond the scope of this article. What is pertinent to a picture of the future of the wolf is that, in these cases, the number of people who deemed themselves to be on the side of the wolf was significant enough to influence major actions affecting wolves.

Such events have occurred recently in Alaska and Minnesota. Public opposition has repeatedly altered proposals of Alaska's state wildlife agency to reduce wolf numbers in specific areas for the purpose of increasing populations of moose

or other large ungulates. Perhaps reduction of wolf numbers in some areas might have produced such increases and these, in time, might have allowed for future increases in wolf numbers. Possibly, too, not reducing wolf numbers might further reduce prey numbers, a situation that could eventually mean hungrier and fewer wolves. The decision-making is complicated, however, by factors other than predicted population responses. One is our wish to see almost immediate results of our manipulations, and nature usually doesn't work that fast.

Another complication is our choice as to whether the moose are to be taken and eaten by wolves or by human hunters. We open a vast field of argument when we start considering the pros and cons of allowing mankind to replace wild carnivores at the top of the food chain, or when we condemn or promote human hunting for recreation as opposed to hunting for meat or hides. These controversies, while meaningful to the future of wolves, are beyond the scope and space of this article.

What must be emphasized here is that the number of wolf-supporters is, in fact, already large enough to affect decision-making. In Minnesota, also, those who oppose any killing of wolves have won court decisions against certain wolf-management proposals. In both Alaska and Minnesota, we have not seen the end of proposals, arguments, and decisions. The very existence of arguments about proper wolf-management, however, in itself indicates that not all mankind is allied in some "War Against the Wolf."

Dr. Stephen Kellert of Yale University has conducted several extensive surveys that have revealed much about our knowledge and perceptions of wildlife in the United States and our attitudes toward wildlife and wildlife issues. Last year, Dr. Kellert released a report on a new survey he had conducted concerning Minnesotans' knowledge of and attitudes toward the timber wolf in their state. The wide spectrum of people surveyed did not omit livestock raisers and hunters. Most respondents, surprisingly, held a generally favorable image of the wolf. The survey results, in fact, were so favorable that Dr. Kellert concluded: "It might, in fact, be possible to proceed with the conviction that a world made better for the timber wolf is a world made more attractive, meaningful, and satisfying for people." Wolf-supporters in Minnesota and other areas can certainly take heart from that survey. They are not alone in their fight.

There will be plenty of challenges for wolf-supporters. The controversies in Alaska and

Minnesota will continue. Ahead, also, will be another release proposal for the red wolf. The proposal to release red wolves in the Land Between the Lakes country in Kentucky and Tennessee was turned down, but the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service did not wash its hands of the red wolf. It will try again elsewhere. Ahead, too, is further argument on the proposal to restore the Rocky Mountain timber wolf through reintroduction in Yellowstone National Park.

So, then, we can take heart. Because people demanded it, legislation was passed to create programs to prevent extinction of endangered species and try to restore them in the wild. Recovery programs have been established for the wolf. Wolf-supporters are numerous enough to affect progress of programs and rulings. Mere applause and boos are helpful, of course, in judging the will of the people, but this is not some thumbs-up, thumbs-down Roman Empire arena. To be credible and to win additional supporters, the applause must be backed by intelligent arguments.

An important asset is realistic knowledge of the wolf. Although one may argue that some reports of livestock loss to wolves are false or exaggerated, one cannot deny that wolves take livestock. Wolf-supporters' effective approaches to that liability include proper consideration of ways to limit and compensate for predatory damage, ways that restrict removal to the offending wolves without threatening survival of an area's entire wolf population. The approaches also include acceptance of the idea that a few wolves might indeed have to die under such circumstances to keep their entire population from being sacrificed to economic needs or revenge.

One can, however, truthfully deny that normal wild wolves are a threat to humans. The man-attacking wolves in the scary stories have been either fictitious or were rabid or once-tamed wolves that had lost their fear of humans. Wolves' actions, also, are often misinterpreted by people ignorant of wolf behavior. When occasionally a wild wolf approaches a human, the action is all too readily imagined to be an attack, and inappropriate reactions by the human can further muddle the situation and its interpretation. When accounts of such encounters are readied for publication, editors equally unacquainted with wolf behavior can hardly be expected to amend the word "attack" to one reflecting the behavior actually expressed by the wolf. The result: an "attack" is documented.

Chief Dan George said, "If you talk to the animals, they will talk with you and you will know each other. If you do not talk to them, you will not know them, and what you do not know you will fear. What one fears, one destroys." While few of us can "talk" with wolves, we can study truthful material so that we will know and understand the real nature of the wolf.

Another factor wolf-supporters must consider is that saving the wolf is not just a matter of stopping the direct killing of wolves. Saving habitat is important. Saving habitat so that wild wolf populations can survive does provide ecological, esthetic, and other benefits to mankind. Beyond that, however, wolves cannot be restored to areas of habitat inadequate to their needs, and habitat once lost--even if only a bit at a time--is unlikely to be restored to its original status as good wolf (or wildlife) country. We cannot be complacent because we have some wolves breeding in captivity and think that sometime in the future things will be better and the wolves can be released into the wild. The time to save habitat is now.

Speaking more broadly, our system puts management of wildlife in the hands of wildlife agencies and the management of wildlife habitat in those of other agencies. Since the wildlife agencies have but limited ability to save habitat for wildlife by means of acquisition, the public has to yell loudly to keep other interests from usurping wildlife habitat.

The range of the Mexican wolf once included habitat in southwestern New Mexico, southeastern Arizona, Trans-Pecos Texas, and the central plateau of Mexico south to Oaxaca. Today, a handful of Mexican wolves remain in the wild, chiefly in the mountains of north-central Mexico. Because remaining wolves were few, scattered, and still threatened, recovery efforts started with capture of live wolves for a captive breeding project. The recovery program is a joint effort of the United States and Mexico, but the breeding project is conducted in the United States by the Fish and Wildlife Service. There are now 29 wolves in the project, and some additional breeding can be expected this spring. For now, however, expansion of the captive population is limited by the present lack of additional enclosures. In time, however, the recovery effort aims to restore at least a small population of Mexican wolves to ecologically suitable and adequately protected habitat within the wolf's historic range.

Restoration in the wild, even if of limited extent, is the objective of a recovery program

for any endangered life form. Recovery programs are expensive, endangered species are many, and expected governmental budget cuts make successes even harder to achieve. Support from the public, and especially financial support from the private sector, assumes increasing importance.

Even before this, however, progress of the Mexican wolf recovery program has depended heavily on nongovernmental support. The zoological facilities cooperating in the breeding project contribute costs of the year-round housing, feeding, and other care of the wolves. The facilities' funds come from the various sources, depending on the facility, but contributions from private individuals and groups have been a large and vital component. (Names and addresses of the facilities now involved are listed below.) A similar situation has applied to the red wolf recovery effort. The existence of those contributions should also show wolf-supporters that they are not alone.

The future of the wolf depends also on informing and educating more people about the wolf's status and needs, its real nature, and the efforts underway on its behalf. Again, take heart; others have already started educational projects. Expansion is needed and expected. One such project is the excellent Wolves and Humans exhibit that the Sierra Club may be able to bring to Albuquerque in the future (it is booked far in advance).

Informing oneself and one's own organization is a necessary first step. Wolf recovery plans and details of progress are available from the U.S.

Fish and Wildlife Service. Good books on the natural history of the wolf are available. Next, discussion groups are good approaches--about wolves, about their past history and present situations, about the problems of wolf conservation and possible solutions. As for the fellow whose only contribution is "Alas! Alas!" tell him to go home. No one ever said it would be easy, and there is no assurance of final victory. A positive approach, however, is vital, and the rewards may be considerable.

The future of the wolf cannot be restoration to its 15th-century numbers or even restoration of small population throughout its historic North American range, but it need not be a decline to extinction. The thoughts and actions of mankind will determine. Dr. Kellert asked people for their thoughts. Their answers indicated that a significant number of them were attuned to the idea that "a world made better for the timber wolf is a world more attractive, meaningful, and satisfying for people." The Sierra Club, having decided to support wolf recovery, can therefore take heart.

Facilities in the Mexican wolf breeding project, early 1986:

Wild Canid Survival and
Research Center
PO Box 760
Eureka, Missouri 63025

Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum
Rt. 9, Box 900
Tuscon, Arizona 87543

Rio Grande Zoological Park
903 Tenth St. NW
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87102

★



Photo by Curtis Carley, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

HAIL AND FAREWELL

by John Colburn, Albuquerque

Back more years than I care to admit, I ventured out from the relative safety of the El Paso Group of the Sierra Club into the wilds of a Rio Grande Chapter ExCom meeting in Socorro.

There, in the company of such old-timers as Bob Watt, Brant Calkin, Joe Leach, Frank Bond, and Don Campbell del Norte, I began hearing about three really fantastic people who seemed to be doing most of the work in the Chapter--almost every environmental action somehow involved Howard, Bob, and Phil. They didn't make that ExCom meeting--probably out saving the world from itself--but their presence certainly was felt. I was disappointed that I didn't meet them that day.

Later I learned that I had the names in the wrong order; it was Bob and Phil and Howard, sort of like a three man vaudeville act. Still later I found out that it was Bob and Phillenore Howard--not a vaudeville act, but a husband and wife team that was actually accomplishing more for the good of the environment than at least three other people.

Bob and Phillenore came to Albuquerque from San Antonio more than a dozen years ago, bringing with them considerable experience from fighting environmental battles for the Lone Star Chapter. Not wanting to rest on their laurels, they soon got into the tick of the good fight in New Mexico. Rio Grande Sierrans from the early Seventies are full of articles by and about the Howards.

They were instrumental in founding the Albuquerque Group, and Phillemore has served as Chair of the Group. Both have been active on the Chapter ExCom, and both have served terms as Chapter Chair as well as many other positions of leadership.

Bob served as Rio Grande Chapter delegate to the Sierra Club Council, Council Vice-Chair, and Council Chair and was appointed to several of the Club's national committees. He was elected to the Board of Directors and now serves as the Vice-president of the Sierra Club.

Phillenore has served as the Chapter's delegate to the Southwest Regional Conservation Committee and as Chair of the national Club's membership committee. She was appointed

position with a medical laboratory in Connecticut and has already begun work there. Bob will remain in Albuquerque to sell their house and settle affairs before joining her in New England.

The Rio Grande Chapter will sorely miss Bob and Phillenore, but we wish them all the best in their new home and endeavors.

Hasta luego. *

AMERIWEST PLANS HUGE DEVELOPMENT IN SANDIA MOUNTAINS

An Albuquerque developer, AmeriWest Corporation, has submitted an application with the State Engineer for rights to 900 acre-feet/year of water to serve a massive subdivision it plans to build on the east side of the Sandia Mountains.

AmeriWest owns 3670 acres of undeveloped forest land east of State Highway 14 and north of San Antonito Elementary School. The Corporation plans to subdivide the land into two-acre lots, with up to 1800 new homes to be built.

Residents of the La Madera area adjacent to AmeriWest's property are extremely concerned about the impacts that the development would have on domestic water wells and the rural lifestyles they now enjoy. AmeriWest's plans call for up to 16 water wells, each 2400 feet deep. The Corporation has already stated that it would not be willing to connect current residents, whose wells are only 600 feet deep, to its water system if the shallower wells go dry as a result of water usage by the subdivision.

A hearing on the water rights issue is scheduled for April 8 at 9 AM at an undecided location in Albuquerque. The State Engineer will entertain discussion on the issues of unappropriated water rights and possible impairment of existing rights. *

WATER AND CLIMBING OUTINGS BANNED BY SIERRA CLUB

by John Colburn

Due to severe restrictions on its insurance covering certain types of outings, Michele Perrault, Sierra Club President, has directed that chapters and groups may no longer conduct outings involving the use of any type of watercraft or mountain/rock climbing above American Alpine Class 3.

CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP

Are We Growing?

by Jane Colburn, Albuquerque

In terms of numbers, the Rio Grande Chapter in 1985 had good news and bad news. Encompassing the whole of New Mexico and three counties around El Paso, Texas, the Chapter has a membership now totalling 3613, up 2.6% in the past 12 months.

From a different source and, hence, not reconciling with the above, the Group totals are:

Albuquerque	1457
Santa Fe	1350
El Paso	362
Southwestern	209
Tularosa Basin	124
Four Corners	99

Due to boundary changes mandated by Chapter ExCom, change data is not valid nor reported.

Though conceived in high energy two years ago, Four Corners is no longer a functioning group, per National criteria. For purposes of conservation issue updates, members are within boundaries of the Santa Fe group and will receive that newsletter in months to come.

While no self-respecting CPA would use a 7-month interval, May-November, these reports are before me now. They contain what I see as relative bad news.

	Non-renewals	New Members
Albuquerque	237	208
Santa Fe	214	206
El Paso	53	77
Southwestern	32	36
Tularosa Basin	20	23
Four Corners	27	9
TOTALS	583	559

Smaller groups are to be congratulated for increasing their numbers, at least, while larger ones have more work to do. Incidentally, Santa Fe issues a challenge to Albuquerque--claiming their membership will surpass that of the Chapter's largest city in 1986.

While new members bring concern and commitment, non-renewing ones leave a void that implies "reinventing the wheel" for one action or another. Member retention is a concern of Membership Committees at all levels of the Club. I request those electing non-renewal to contact the local chair, membership chair, or ExCom member for a non-intimidating "exit interview". Information passed on might make a new member's experience more durable.

TRIP REPORT:

Cabazon Wilderness Study Area

by Jim Fish, Placitas

On New Years Day, I made my first trip to the southeastern portion of the Cabazon Wilderness Study Area. Cliff Crawford, professor of biology at UNM, accompanied me. Fortunately, our approach was from the south by way of Ojito and the utility right-of-way between Ojito and Cabazon. After the hike, we attempted to leave to the north via the Cabazon bridge to discover that it has been closed due to flood damage last summer.

The portion of the WSA through which we hiked is characterized by incised mesa topography with mixed grama-galleta steppes and pinyon-juniper woodlands. Although some of the area is covered primarily with snakeweed and cholla and is severely eroded, the range condition of most of the area appears to be excellent with healthy populations of diverse native grasses, forbs, and shrubs. In the May 1985 New Mexico Statewide Wilderness Study (volume 2, page 4-27), two enclosures associated with stock tanks are listed as the only habitat improvements in the WSA. The ground cover within both enclosures is quite dense. The fence around the southern one, however, has fallen down at one end and the area is starting to show wear from use by horses and cattle.

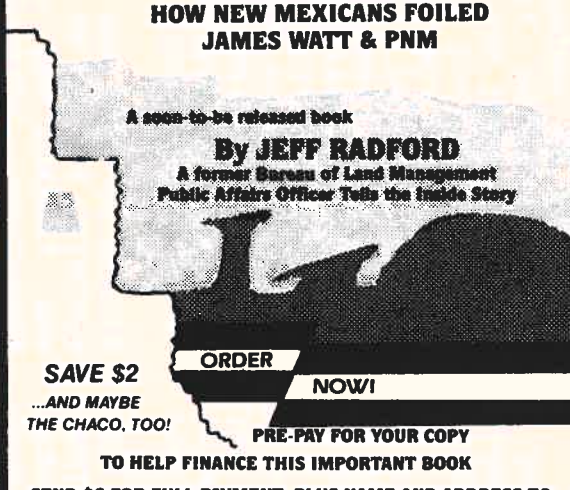
We saw twelve species of birds including a prairie falcon and large flocks of mountain and western bluebirds. A porcupine grazing on juniper berries detained us at one point while I burned half a roll of film on him. We also found one badger burrow, signs of mice and ground squirrels, and one set of deer tracks leading down a slope.

The only evidence of recent visits by man were concentrated around the stock tanks and along their access roads in the form of cans and paper trash. Some minimal off-road vehicular travel was noted.

Overall, the southeastern portion of the Cabazon WSA is a natural, diverse, and interesting area with stunning views of Cabazon Peak and Cerro Chafo in close; of Cerro Cuate, Bear Mouth, and Cerro Parido to the west; and of Cerro de Nuestra Senora in the far distance to the south. It adds significantly to the visual resource and the opportunities for solitude in the Cabazon WSA. Acquiring the state land southwest of Cabazon Peak, as proposed by the BLM and the State Land Office, would further increase the diversity of a Cabazon Wilderness by picking up the cliffs and the lower-lying habitats located there and would enhance manageability as a result of better defined boundaries. *

THE CHACO COAL SCANDAL
HOW NEW MEXICANS FOILED
JAMES WATT & PNM

A soon-to-be released book
By JEFF RADFORD
 A former Bureau of Land Management
 Public Affairs Officer Tells the Inside Story



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BOOK REVIEW:

The Chaco Coal Scandal
 How New Mexicans Foiled
 James Watt & PNM

Anyone interested in coal leasing and mining issues in New Mexico should put this book on their reading list. The soon-to-be-published manuscript documents in detail the fight waged in the early 1980's by the environmental and Navajo communities to prevent the leasing and subsequent stripping of thousands of acres of land in the San Juan Basin.

As a former employee of the Bureau of Land Management, author Jeff Radford was privy to decisions and actions within the Bureau which were not known by the general public. The insight revealed in the book provides ample evidence that the consideration and preparation of coal leases and related energy projects by the BLM was indeed a scandal. Improper, immoral, and even illegal activities seemed to be the order of the day at all levels of the Bureau, up to and including high officials in the Interior Department.

As an activist who was involved with the fight against the coal development being proposed by the BLM, I found that the book provided me a more complete understanding of some of the issues and events than I think I had at the time they occurred. The book assembles pieces of the puzzle together, describing the effects our actions had on actions and attitudes within the BLM.

And the book inspired me. It describes how a grassroots effort was able to generate a groundswell of opposition and effectively stall the plans of the energy companies and James Watt's Interior Department to open the most fragile and arid coal region in the country to massive energy development. After finishing the book, I finally came to realize just how much the environmental community in this state

accomplished against huge odds. Finally, the book serves well as a handbook for future activists in this field. It should provide the new activist with the knowledge and understanding to effectively pick up the fight when leasing in the San Juan Basin again becomes a hot issue. Since that day is not far off, I would encourage anyone interested in the future of the Basin to read this book. *

-- Dave Glowka



SOUTHWEST NM GROUP NEWS

Officers for the 1986 Executive Committee of the group are:

- Chair - Ben Zerbey
- Vice-Chair - Larry Daughenbaugh
- Secretary-Treasurer - Pam Mack
- Editor - June Price
- Outings - Don Krider
- Conservation - Walter Herriman
- Forest Planning - Chet Warwick
- Toxics - Isabelle Burns
- Membership - Don Krider
- SCOPE - Paxton Price
- Member - Jim Graham
- Member - Floyd Hellyer *

Send your newsletter contributions to David Glowka, Star Route Box 282 B, Tijeras, NM 87059

* Photographs, articles, stories, poetry, graphics, announcements, book reviews, drawings *

MEMBERSHIP FORM

YES, I want to join! Please enter a membership in the category indicated.

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

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

SPECIAL CATEGORIES

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

All dues include subscription to Sierra (54) and chapter publications (\$1).

MEMBER INFORMATION:
 New Member Name _____
 Address _____
 Phone _____ Zip _____

GIFT MEMBERSHIP: If you are giving this membership as a gift, please enter your name below (we will send a special gift card in your name):
 Donor Name _____
 Address _____ Phone _____ Zip _____

Check here if you would like to be billed for renewal of this gift membership next year.

Mail To: **Sierra club** FRIP CODE W413
 RIO GRANDE 6321 P.O. Box 7959, San Francisco, CA 94120

Send your newsletter contributions to David Glowka, Star Route Box 282 B, Tijeras, NM 87059

* Photographs, articles, stories, poetry, graphics, announcements, book reviews, drawings *

CALKIN ENDORSED FOR NEW MEXICO COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC LANDS

by Ron Grotbeck, Albuquerque

Brant Calkin, the first member of the New Mexico environmental community to run for statewide public office, was endorsed for his bid as the Commissioner of Public Lands by the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club. The endorsement by the ExCom followed a recommendation by the Chapter's SCCOPE, the local organization overseeing political action within the geographical jurisdiction of the Rio Grande Chapter. The endorsement establishes, for Club political activists throughout New Mexico, the authority to act in Calkin's behalf in the name of Sierra Club.

Brant Calkin is a truly unique individual, even among conservation activists. He has spent the majority of his life working for an improved environment in the Southwest. In 1943, at age 9, he came to New Mexico with his parents. He grew up in Los Alamos and attended the University of New Mexico, where he earned a B.S. degree in biology.

He worked 10 years at the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory in the fields of electrochemistry and high temperature chemistry.

Brant was one of the founders of the Rio Grande Chapter, and he served as Chair from 1969 to 1972. In 1970 he left the Laboratory to become an environmental consultant, and in that year he was also named as Executive Director of the Frontera del Norte Fund of the Sierra Club Foundation, a post he has held continuously since then. Also in 1970 he was elected to the State Board of the New Mexico Citizens for Clean Air and Water.

His activism at the local, regional, and national levels of the Sierra Club led to his election as its national President in 1976. He spent much of that year travelling throughout the country, especially to Washington, where he represented the Club's interests before Congress and the administrative agencies.

In 1977 Brant became a

see Calkin, page 6

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Sierra Club
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The Rio Grande Sierran

January/February 1986

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THE RIO GRANDE CHAPTER OF THE SIERRA CLUB

January/February 1986



Photo by Jim Fish

Cabezon Wilderness Study Area from Southeast

(see Trip Report, page 11)

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