

The Rio Grande SIERRAN



THE RIO GRANDE CHAPTER OF THE SIERRA CLUB

Summer 1986

WILL THE 99TH CONGRESS PRESERVE EL MALPAIS?

by John Somers, Albuquerque

EL MALPAIS--"The Badlands"--The variety of terrains and vegetation ranges from the aptly-named Chain of Craters delineating the Continental Divide on the western periphery; through the grassy plain overlying the older lava flow of the West Malpais; to the imposingly rugged, more recent El Malpais lava field; and the naturally sculpted sedimentary sandstone formations on the east side. The distinctive red and black cinder cones of the Chain of Craters loom like isolated but somehow-linked sentinels to form a natural western boundary.

The rolling plains of the West Malpais have given me important hours and one very satisfying full day of calming, unthreatening solitude. Gem-like ice caves and miles of lava tubes have given me unanticipated, and therefore all the more appreciated, delight-

ful experiences under the scorched, rugged surface of the lava field. The lava itself has scraped and bruised me and made me cognizant once again of Nature's power; has made me look northward to Mt. Taylor and realize that the volcanic energies here sleep but almost certainly will awake someday to resculpt this land, to protect itself, and to lay waste to our feeble efforts to protect or to exploit it.

But now an unnatural storm arises to cloud the future for El Malpais. Encouraging developments in the long and continuing effort to protect El Malpais have been succeeded by new challenges.

The good news: Congressman Bill Richardson's National Monument legislation (H.R. 3684) has successfully emerged from the House of Representatives, adopted in early July. Late changes in the bill were relatively minor but included a ban

on commercial woodcutting and gathering. As you may be aware, wilderness advocates were unable to get Wilderness designation for the four BLM Wilderness Study Areas east of Highway 117 (Rimrock, Little Rimrock, Pinyon, and Sand Canyon). However, the House bill does include 179,000 acres of Wilderness (El Malpais, West Malpais, and Chain of Craters) within the Monument. The four eastside WSA's remain in study status and thus can be recommended as part of BLM's statewide Wilderness recommendations, due this fall. An excellent detailed report on the bill and features and history of the area is available in Report 99-708, issued by the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs (available upon request from Congressman Richardson's office).

Thanks and congratulations to all who have written letters,
see El Malpais, page 11

2ND ANNUAL ENDANGERED SPECIES FAIR

by Susan Larsen, Albuquerque

Did you know that New Mexico has 185 state-listed endangered species and 25 federally-listed endangered species? Come find out about them at the 2nd annual Endangered Species Fair. The event is to be held at the New Mexico Museum of Natural History on September 6, 1986. Speakers, films, exhibits, live animals, musicians, food, and a wildlife art sale will all be a part of the fair. Special guest star will be Steve Martin with his free-flying bird show. Admission to the event is **FREE!** The hours will be from 10 AM to 6 PM for indoor presentations and 6 PM to 8 PM for outdoor entertainment. The Museum is located at 1801 Mountain Rd NW, 1/2 mile east of Rio Grande Blvd.

The fair is sponsored by:

NM Museum of Natural History
NM State Game and Fish Dept.
Rio Grande Zoo
Sierra Club Wildlife Committee

Funding is provided through the "Share with Wildlife" program of the NM Game and Fish Dept. ♦

CALKIN'S WIN IN THE PRIMARY

by Don Meaders, Albuquerque

To the surprise of the political pundits, Brant Calkin swept to an impressive victory June 3 in the Democratic primary for New Mexico State Land Commissioner. "It was the perfect victory, come from behind and totally unpredicted," said campaign manager Pamela Brodie. This win is a major victory for the environmental community and once again shows that we can, with our money, minds, and bodies, make a difference.

In a campaign marked by innovations--starting with the massive petition signature drive, continuing with a unique challenge that survived a Supreme Court test, and ending with a multi-media blitz--we surprised them all!

Robert Siebert with the Conservation Voters Alliance headed up another first in New Mexico as he and his volunteers did door to door canvassing which raised funds and support for Brant. The Sierra Club also helped in the massive volunteer effort to get signatures on petitions (16,000 of them). Winning the challenge of another candidate's

see Win, page 11

SIERRA CLUB ENDORSES RAY POWELL FOR GOVERNOR

At its July 26 meeting, the Rio Grande Chapter Executive Committee formally established Sierra Club endorsement of Democratic candidate Ray Powell for Governor of New Mexico. The endorsement was based on two factors:

1) Powell responded very favorably to a questionnaire sent to him by the Sierra Club Committee on Political Education (SCOPE); and

2) Republican candidate Garrey Carruthers failed to respond to the questionnaire, but his record on environmental issues is dismal, at best.

Among the issues addressed by Powell in his response is his favorable attitude toward additional Wilderness designation in the state. On the question of construction of a railroad to serve destructive coal strip mines in the San Juan Basin, Powell believes that an environmental impact statement should first be written. If such a railroad could be built without environmental damage and if it were shown to be of economic benefit to the state, then such a railroad should be

see Powell, page 9

SOCORRO WSA's

by Carl Popp, Socorro

Of the WSA's near Socorro, the BLM draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) last fall recommended as suitable for wilderness portions of six of them, for a total of 125,255 acres. Below are descriptions of these six areas and of one more which we feel deserves wilderness designation. See maps on pages 6 and 7 for the locations of these areas.

Sierra Ladrones The Ladron, visible from Albuquerque and located only 15 miles west of Bernardo and I-25, has long been a prime candidate for wilderness designation. The top of Ladron Peak, reached by a short but arduous hike, is over 9000' high and offers commanding views of the surrounding country. The lowest elevation in the WSA is 5200', providing almost 4000' of relief through rugged terrain where one can find a surprising sense of isolation. The WSA bounds on the east with the Sevilleta Wildlife Refuge (a de facto wilderness) which effectively extends the size. The southern boundary of the WSA is the Rio Salado, highlighted by the Salado Box, a narrow constriction between the Ladrones and Lemitar Mountains. Archaic Indian cultural sites are prevalent in the WSA, especially along the Salado. The DEIS recommended 31,244 acres for wilderness. Our recommendation includes an additional 3,440 acres.

Continental Divide This area, aptly named, is bisected by the Continental Divide. It is located southwest of Datil, NM and surrounds 9212' Pelona Peak. Continental Divide is a study of contrasts with high, rolling grasslands to the south and east and ponderosa pine-covered canyons to the west. Antelope are common, and evidence of mule deer and elk use is prevalent. Among other historic sites is Bat Cave which is on the National Register of Historic Places. Should the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail be routed through the WSA (a clearly logical possibility), this potential wilderness will take on additional significance. Our recommendation is 50,200 acres vs. 35,635 in the DEIS.

Antelope This WSA is primarily rolling desert and provides a good example of Chihuahuan desert vegetation. Solitude is outstanding and views from the area are magnificent. The southern portion of the WSA borders on the Little San Pascual Mountain Wilderness on the Bosque del Apache Wildlife Refuge. The DEIS recommended 9,900 acres while the Socorro Group recommends 19,000 acres.

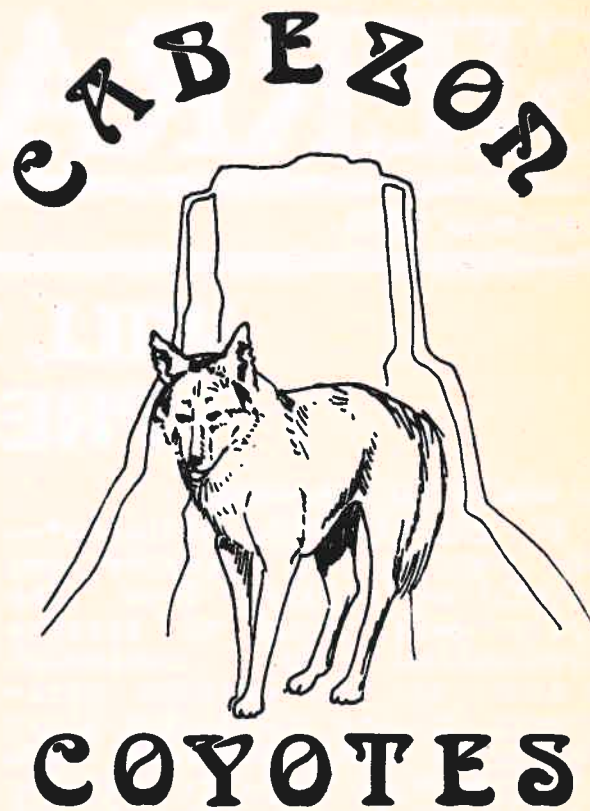
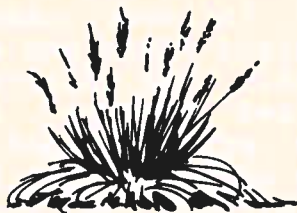
Horse Mountain Located about 25 air miles southwest of Datil, NM near Old Horse

Springs just north of Highway 12, Horse Mountain WSA is small but provides a surprisingly remote and rugged environment with canyons, ridges, wildlife, trees, and wonderful vistas from the heights. Our recommendation is 7,000 acres compared to 4,432 recommended for wilderness in the DEIS.

Jornada del Muerto This WSA, located along the original Jornada del Muerto of the Spanish settlers, is visible from I-25 near Black Mesa south of San Antonio, NM and consists primarily of an old lava flow. The volcanic cone is near the western boundary. Windblown dust and sand from the Rio Grande have created small, saucer-like, grassy depressions within the lava flow that support a variety of wildlife including antelope and black reptiles which have adapted to the color of the lava. The area provides outstanding scenic values and solitude. The DEIS recommended 31,244 acres. We support a slightly larger area of 35,900 acres.

Sierra de Las Canas This WSA is located directly east of Socorro and provides the skyline of colorful Santa Fe formation sandstone which can be seen from I-25. It is actually within hiking distance of Socorro (about 5 miles) if one is willing to ford the Rio Grande. Vistas of the Rio Grande valley from the WSA offer a panorama from the Ladrones on the north to the San Mateos and San Andres on the south. The DEIS recommended 12,800 acres; we recommend 14,500 acres for wilderness.

Stallion Although the DEIS identified 24,258 acres of this WSA as potentially suitable for wilderness, the recommendation was to drop it from further consideration. Stallion is a rugged area located only 14 air miles northeast of Socorro and consists of steep escarpments on the east and north sides grading from a 7,100' altitude to canyons draining to the south at altitudes of 5,500'. The vegetation is primarily pinyon-juniper and grassland. Wildlife ranges from deer to raptors. We strongly recommend inclusion of the Stallion WSA in the "further study" category in the process because of its outstanding wilderness characteristics. We have identified an area of 37,358 acres as suitable for wilderness designation. ★

**BLM VOLUNTEER GROUP FORMED**

by Jim Fish, Placitas

A different sort of coyote can be found roaming the Cabezon area these days. They wear official BLM volunteer caps and patches, may be carrying radios, and may even be driving government vehicles. The group, Cabezon Coyotes, was organized to assist the BLM in the management of the Cabezon, Ojito, La Lena, Empedrado, Ignacio Chavez, and Chamisa Wilderness Study Areas. The primary function of the group is to patrol the areas, observing for and reporting any impairing activities such as off-road vehicular travel, wildlife poaching, fuelwood cutting, plant collecting, and removal of cultural resources. Other functions of the group include placing signs, picking up litter, helping with minor construction projects such as fence building to close off illegal ways, gathering scientific and visitor-use data, and consulting with BLM staff on management plans.

We now have eleven members in the group, with several other people expressing an interest in joining. I would like to have perhaps two dozen active members so that we can cover most of the weekends in the spring and fall without any of us having to go out more often than we would anyway.

If you think you could stand spending two or three weekends a year in the fascinating Rio Puerco Valley, let me know and I will set you up for a "no obligation" tour.

If you would rather spend time in El Malpais, BLM is interested in someone organizing a similar group for that area. Please contact Mike Pool or Rick Hanks at the BLM Rio Puerco Resource Office, 505/766-3114.

Thanks to Joan Acoya for the logo. ★

WILDERNESS ETHICS

Edited by Jim Fish, Placitas

Where were we before Dave and I got too busy to produce the Summer Edition of the Sierran? Oh yes. Back in the March/April issue, Tom Mayer shared with us his perspective on the use of mountain bikes. He also pointed out that they are banned from most wilderness areas and national parks. I questioned this ban, and suggested that large pack trains should be banned instead. Below, Patrick Hogan responds. Thanks, Patrick. Sorry for the delay.

I am still looking for articles and opinions related to the ethical use of wilderness. So far, our topics have been campfires, dry camping, horses, and mountain bikes. Out of over 3600 members in the Rio Grande Chapter, I have heard from less than a handful of you. Where do the rest of you stand on these and other issues? For example, should dogs be banned from wilderness areas? What about hunting, trapping, prospecting? What about surface collecting? ★

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

ANOTHER MOUNTAIN BIKER'S PROSPECTIVE

by Patrick S. Hogan, Dulce

Like Tom Mayer, I am a mountain bike enthusiast. However, I am opposed to bicycle use in designated wilderness areas. I feel that there are plenty of places to bike, including BLM land, National Forest land, and some National Parks. The less public-use pressure a wilderness area receives, the more it will be a "wilderness", and prohibiting bicycle use will certainly lessen the impact of potentially heavy public use. This policy would definitely benefit the wildlife in wilderness areas, and protecting the wildlife in these areas is a major reason for their very existence. Allowing bikes, but limiting the numbers allowed, would be difficult to enforce.

The issue of animal pack

LEAVE IT LAY

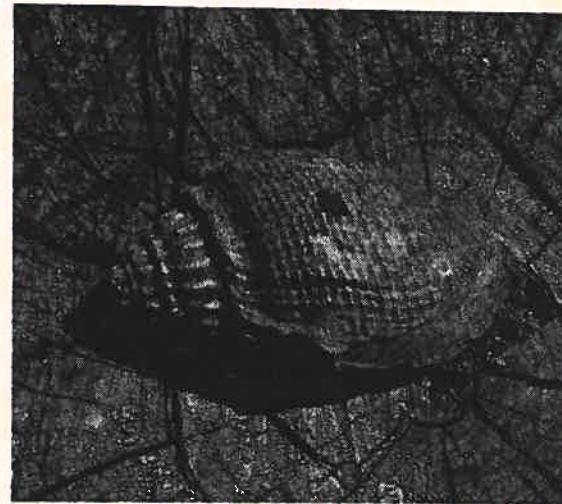
A pot sherd. A piece of petrified wood. A shiny rock. A cactus. All basically worthless if hauled home. Momentos, but otherwise of little or no value.

Take, for example, the pot sherd. Museums are full of pot sherds. So are thousands of boxes in closets, garages, attics, and basements. Yet, you come across a broken bit of pottery in the wilderness; the markings are unusual; you take it home as proof that you found a real site of antiquity. You show it to an archaeologist friend and she scolds you for breaking the law. If it turns out to be of academic interest, she scolds you as well for destroying evidence. You show it to another friend and he shrugs, "A pot sherd. So?"

trains using wilderness areas (and consequently tearing up trails) is a more difficult question to address. I personally would prefer that they not have access either; however, tradition is on their side. Pack animals have been used throughout this land since man first began to roam it. Also, there are the political implications. If we try to ban pack animals entirely, it might become extremely difficult to establish any more wilderness areas, or even to continue protection of existing ones, and it's difficult enough as it is. Closing wilderness areas to nothing but human foot travel would bring opposition from too many corners, and might endanger the whole concept. I suggest limitations both on the number of pack animals allowed into these areas and on the trails open to their use. Although difficult to enforce, this approach might be worth a try.

With or without restrictions on pack animals, I'll vote to keep our wilderness areas truly wild and "machine" free. This constraint certainly won't stop me from occasionally leaving my bike in the garage and hiking into my favorite wilderness. It'll be a pleasure to have still a place just to slow down and hike without being passed by bikes all day long. ★

Fossilized Gastropod



Better to leave it lay. Give the next person who stumbles onto it in the wilderness the opportunity to experience the same thrill you did. Better yet, take your friends to the sherd. They might enjoy the trip. You never know.

What about the cactus? If a rare species, by all means, leave it grow. Furthermore, don't tell anyone where it is without a blood oath of secrecy. If a common type, go buy it from the nursery instead of collecting it and contributing to its future rarity.

You may argue: but there's thousands of pot sherds on this mound, and cacti everywhere. Why can't I take just one? So, you take one. The next visitor takes one. A bus load of high school kids all take one. Fifty, a hundred years down the road, the mound has been dug, scraped, scattered. An ugly sign in the middle of it states:

"This mound once was covered with broken Indian pottery. The mesa in the distance was the site of an Anasazi ruin removed piece by piece over the years. To see the kinds of cacti native to this area, check your neighbors' yards."

Note: Articles made and used by previous cultures are protected by the 1906 Antiquities Act and by the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 against unauthorized removal by either excavation or surface collecting. Furthermore, excavation for any reason and plant collecting are prohibited in most federal areas except by permit. At this time, legislation modeled on the above acts is being drafted to protect paleontological resources such as the fossilized shell in the photograph. Perhaps I should take it back to where I found it. ★

CHAIR'S COLUMN

by Jack Kenney, Santa Fe

First a very big THANK YOU to Betsy Barnett of Los Alamos, who recently relinquished her position on the National Board of Directors of the Sierra Club. She has been on the Board for two terms, and according to the regulations was not eligible for another term. On behalf of all members and in particular on behalf of the Chapter, we express our thanks for your wonderful representation of our causes and our region. We hope, Betsy, that you will relax for a while, but we know that your interest in our causes will not let you get the long rest you deserve. WELL DONE, BETSY!

John Colburn also deserves more than a mere thank you for all his constant work as our fearless leader, our Secretary, and our conscience in matters environmental. John has taken a leave of absence from the Executive Committee. His place for the rest of the year will be ably filled by John Somers, who will continue to serve as Chapter Wildlife Chair. Ned Sudborough has agreed to serve as Secretary. Thanks John S. and Ned. And sincere thanks to John Colburn for his enthusiasm, keen perceptiveness, and personal support.

The Chapter sends our thanks to two agencies and one individual who have given us financial support as we addressed comments and developed public enthusiasm for evaluation of the five New Mexico forest plans. We have had fiscal support from The Wilderness Society, a generous check from REI, and generous support to pay for advertisements to generate public interest on the Santa Fe National Forest Plan from Elizabeth King of Tesuque. Thanks to all.

Your hard-working SCOPE Committee deserves a vote of thanks for thorough canvassing of candidates for state and congressional offices. Now it's your turn to get involved (see articles on page 1 and the back page).

Navajo Nation Discussions

Debbie Sease (from the Washington Sierra Club office) and I were Club representatives and guests of the Navajo Nation (Chairman Zah) and the Institute for Resource Management (Robert Redford's group) at a July seminar held in Crownpoint and Chaco Canyon to discuss Navajo problems and opportunities. The environmental and business communities were represented by top notch heavy hitters, and the discussions were heated and interesting. Congressman George Miller (7th Dist., CA) was the moderator and did well to steer the seminar focus on: future efforts

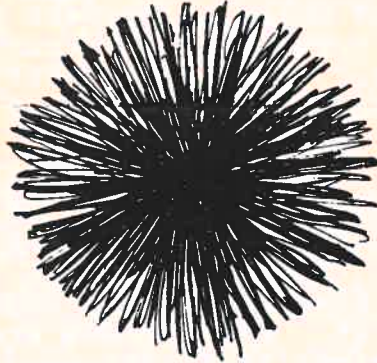
concerning the proposed Dineh Power Project (formerly the New Mexico Generating Station); native inputs into environmental policy-making; economic alternatives for development on the Navajo Reservation; and environmental education on the Reservation. The Institute for Resource Management will work the Tribe and other seminar participants in organizing follow-up discussions on the issues addressed.

Acid Rain

Acid rain is still on the table. Contact Representatives Skeen and Lujan, and ask them to support H.R. 4567. And thank Rep. Richardson for his co-sponsorship of the bill! There still is a good chance of enacting strong and badly needed acid rain control legislation in 1986. It is up to our representatives, and to you.

The Malpais

The Malpais' future is still up in the air (see article, page 1). Write to your Senators and Representative and ask that they preserve the entire area covered by the House bill! ✪

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
NOW OPEN FOR
NOMINATIONS**

by Jack Kenney, Santa Fe

The Chapter Nominating Committee is now seeking your suggestions for candidates to run in the elections for Chapter Executive Committee positions this year.

If you have a gripe about the Club or the Chapter, or if you would like to reorient our priorities, now is your chance. Submit your name or the name of your chosen nominee to your Group Chair, the Nominating Committee, or any member of the Chapter Executive Committee (see directory, page 5). One person can make a difference.

We need new blood in the Chapter ExCom; we need to break the current male monopoly on the ExCom; and we need enthusiasm and devotion to specific environmental causes. I cannot overemphasize that the vitality of the Chapter depends on the energy, enthusiasm, and maturity of our ExCom, so please consider who you would like to have guiding the Chapter during the years 1987, 1988, and 1989, and make a recommendation. ✪

EDITOR'S NOTES

by Dave Glowka, Tijeras

What happens when you're a volunteer editor and your professional life suddenly undergoes a big change? What do you do when the May/June issue of the Sierran is due and you're working nights and weekends on the job you get paid to do? And, finally, what is the only option available when September is staring you in the face and you haven't been able to work on anything "green" since last April? Presto! The "Summer 1986" edition of the Sierran.

My sincere apologies to the membership for the 5-month lapse since the last issue. If I hadn't been so busy, I would actually feel guilty. I can only take comfort in the fact that as a volunteer, I am entitled to lapses in performance on environmental issues.

The El Malpais Struggle

We can only assume that Sen. Domenici means well when he throws up so many obstacles to preservation of El Malpais. After all, there probably is not a piece of real estate in the whole state that is more worthy of immediate protection and has fewer conflicts with preservation--no minerals to speak of; insignificant and surely substandard timber resources; and substantially no other productive, competing uses.

Why then does the Senator oppose immediate and comprehensive preservation?

Maybe it's because he believes that management of El Malpais can be properly divided between the BLM and the Park Service; but in 1980 the Senator created legislation that created multiple management of several Chacoan Outliers, with disastrous results. Some of the sites have been vandalized and looted, and to date there is still not an adequate protection plan in place for these priceless remnants from the past.

Maybe the Senator believes that National Monuments shouldn't be run by the BLM; but different Wilderness areas are currently being managed by at least four agencies within the federal government, and how well these areas are managed depends only on the will of the agencies and the direction of the Administration, not on their historical roles.

Maybe the Senator feels that there is no rush to get legislation in place; but we should remind him that the statewide BLM Wilderness recommendations are due this fall, and the resulting Wilderness designation process will keep us all, environmentalists and Congressional delegation alike, very busy for the foreseeable future. ✪

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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).

WILDERNESS COALITION RECEIVES \$2000 FROM REI

Recreational Equipment, Inc. of Seattle, Washington, recently sent the New Mexico BLM Wilderness Coalition a check for \$2000 to assist in the publication of a statewide wilderness proposal currently being prepared by the Coalition. The proposal is to be offered as an alternative to the recommendations of the Bureau of Land Management with regard to wilderness designation for approximately 1.5 million acres of roadless BLM land in New Mexico. The BLM recommendations will be contained in the New Mexico Statewide Wilderness Study Draft Environmental Impact Statement scheduled for release on September 1, 1986. The Coalition intends to release its proposal in late September.

The New Mexico BLM Wilderness Coalition is an ad hoc group of individuals dedicated to the permanent protection of BLM wild lands as wilderness. Other organizations supporting the Coalition's work are Cabezon Coyotes, Gila Wilderness Committee, New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee, Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, Nevada Outdoor Recreation Association, American Wilderness Alliance, National Parks and Conservation Association, Friends of the Earth, Sierra Club, The Wilderness Society, and Project Lighthawk.

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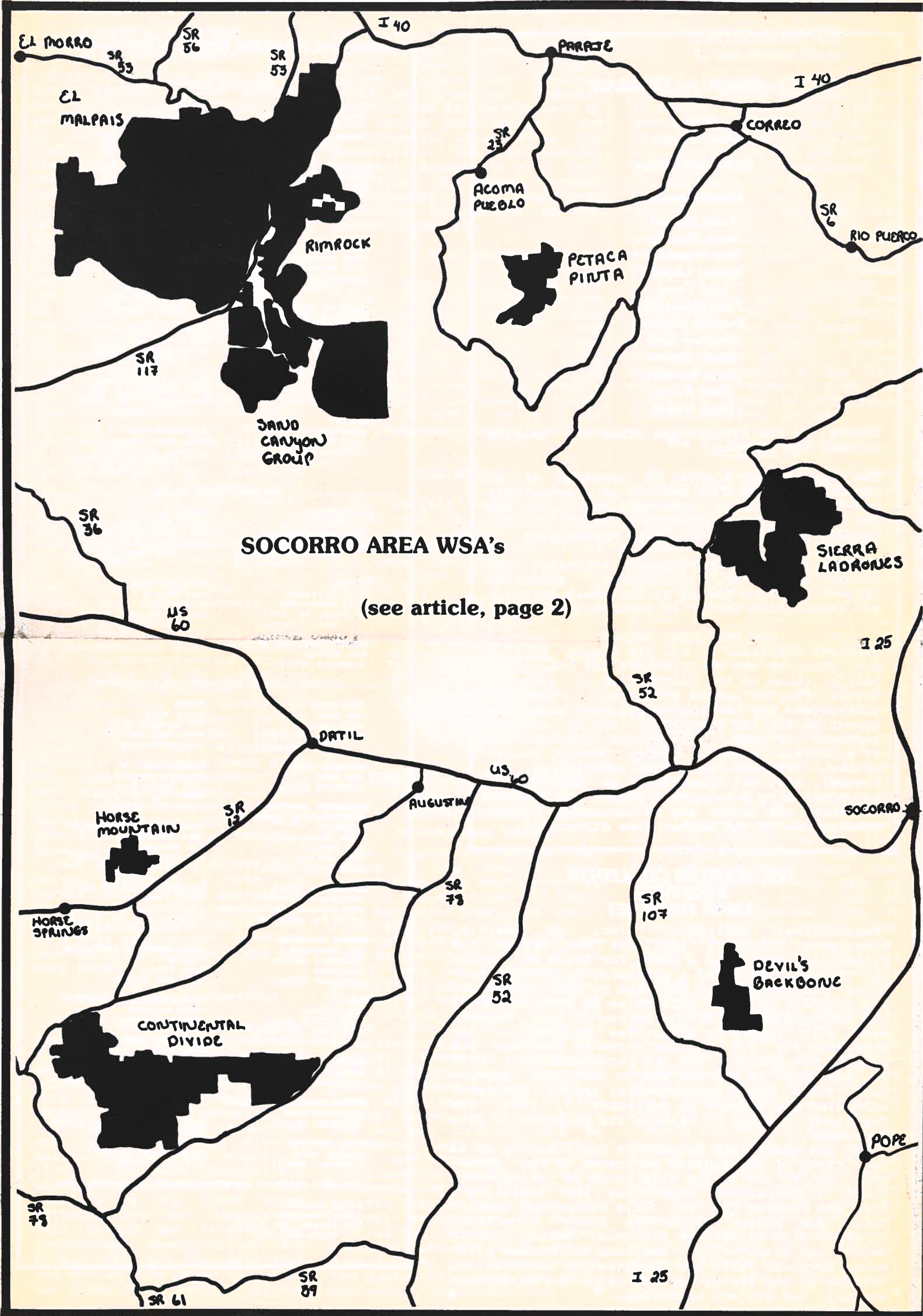
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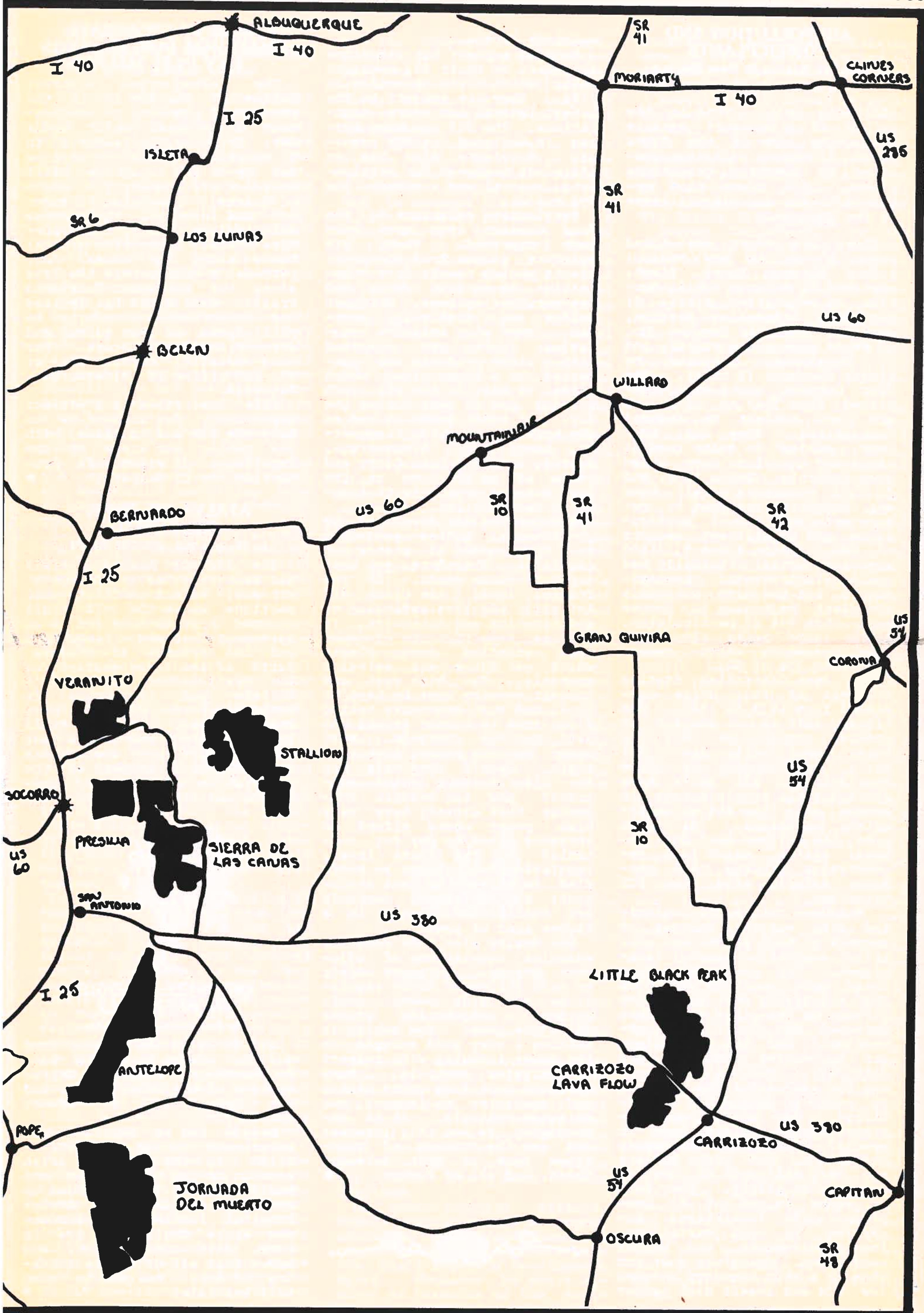
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AIR POLLUTION AND POWER PLANTS

Part II: Status in New Mexico

by Hank Taylor, Farmington

[Editor's note: This is the second of a two-part article explaining some of the facts about air-borne pollution produced by electric generating plants. The first half appeared in the March/April issue of the Sierran.]

There are three coal-fired power plants in New Mexico: 1) Four Corners Power Plant, operated by Arizona Public Service (5 generating units); 2) San Juan Generating Station, operated by Public Service Co. of NM (4 generating units); and 3) Escalante, operated by Plains Electric (1 unit). The Four Corners units were completed from 1963 to 1970 and are not subject to federal regulations. They are, however, subject to state regulations and therefore have emission controls. Units 1, 2, and 3 (572 megawatts total) have wet scrubbers designed to remove more than 99% of particulates and significant amounts of SO₂. Units 4 and 5 (1600 megawatts total) originally had small electrostatic precipitators but now have extremely efficient baghouses to remove more than 99% of particulates. These large units also have lime scrubbers which remove more than 72% of SO₂.

San Juan Generating Station consists of four units completed from 1973 to 1982. The oldest unit is not subject to federal regulations, but the three newer units are. All units are subject to state regulations. All units have electrostatic precipitators to remove more than 99% of particulate emissions. All units have the Wellman-Lord SO₂ removal system, which is a regenerative process that produces sulfuric acid from SO₂ emissions.

Nitrogen oxides are controlled with varying degrees of success at both plants by utilizing combustion control techniques. The newer San Juan units were designed for "low NO_x" and easily meet regulation limits; but the older units were designed for "efficient combustion," and the technology for converting them is very difficult. The basic technology for successful NO_x control is reducing combustion temperatures. New boilers are designed larger and with more or special burners and secondary combustion, but older boilers are very difficult to convert and operate safely. They tend to swing in and out of compliance with regulations, according to coal variations, load requirements, and burner conditions. Operators must run them on a thin boundary between low NO_x and unsafe high carbon

monoxide levels.

Escalante plant has limestone scrubbers on their 233 megawatt unit, which began operation in 1984. They are subject to the latest federal and state regulations. The SO₂ scrubber system is designed for 95% removal. Escalante also has an efficient baghouse for particulate removal and a modern low NO_x boiler.

Particulate emissions in the Four Corners area have been much improved. There are moisture plumes from the power plants which result from evaporation in cooling towers and wet scrubber systems. Nitrogen oxides are a continuing problem. Even when emission regulation limits are complied with, oxide products are converted to a brown cloud which seems to hang in the air each morning and go away during the day. It never seems as bad as the brown cloud which frequently hangs over Albuquerque, Denver, and Salt Lake City, and those of us who live in the Four Corners area hate to travel to those cities.

Regulations are developed by governmental bodies according to the needs of states or countries. Therefore, you have input to those needs. At the federal level, the Clean Air Act still requires extension or modification and extension. It can be rewritten to include old, existing power plants which can force air emission controls. The high cost and present economy must be kept in mind, and most arguments taking place seem to center around who will pay for controls. Most newer western plants have controls. Should they help pay for older eastern plant controls? How can eastern companies that already have very high power costs afford to increase rates to pay for controls? On the state level, regulations can always be modified to be more or less stringent; but additional controls are costly and result in a higher cost of power.

New Mexico also must consider emission regulations of adjacent states. It seems unfair to have stringent state regulations and high power costs without neighboring states doing the same. New Mexico is setting a very good example in the power industry with respect to emission controls. Many visitors come from other states and countries to inspect our emission controls. It is encouraging to see this interest and see the concern of countries such as East Germany, China, and all of Europe. ✦

BLM TO CELEBRATE NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS DAY IN EL MALPAIS

The Albuquerque District Office of the BLM is in the process of planning a celebration of National Public Lands Day, Saturday, September 6, in El Malpais. A station will be set up at the Sandstone Bluff Overlook off Highway 117 south of Grants. Depending on turnout and interest, the program will include short, interpretive hikes; discussion groups; tours along the roads; and, perhaps, a trek across the lava along the Dominguez-Escalante Trail. Rick Hanks has invited the conservation community to participate as tour guides and discussion facilitators. For more details, contact him at the BLM office in Albuquerque, 766-3114.

This invitation is a perfect opportunity for some of us to help the BLM and to share with the public our views on the importance of wilderness protection for El Malpais. ✦

ATALAYA MT. TRAIL REROUTED

by Thomas Sisk, FOREST TRUST

The Atalaya Mountain trail has been rerouted at its southern end. Recent conflicts over sections where the old trail crossed private land led to an agreement between landowners and the Friends of Atalaya. Parts of the lower section of the trail between St. John's College and the Santa Fe National Forest boundary have been rerouted. The new trail is well marked, and we ask that hikers shift their use to this new section in support of the cooperative effort of landowners and trail users. ✦



GET WELL, MAGGIE WE NEED YOU!

By Jack Kenney, Santa Fe

All of us in the Chapter send our best wishes to Maggie Fox, Southwestern Regional Representative of the Sierra Club, and our hopes for a speedy recovery.

Maggie had an unforgettable experience during her visit/climb in the Central Asian section of the USSR, when she badly broke a leg and ended up spending six days in a Soviet hospital looking for someone who spoke English. She is home, with bones re-set, and knows that all of us are thinking of her. Ask her to come



POWER LINE CONTINUES TO THREATEN WESTERN NM

by Paul Krehbiel, Socorro

El Paso Electric Company continues to propose the construction of a 345 kilovolt transmission line from near Springerville, Arizona to Deming, NM. The power line, under the title of the "Arizona Interconnection Project" by El Paso Electric, would provide El Paso and vicinity with cheaper coal-fired power from new generating stations near Springerville owned by Tucson Electric Power Company.

Some points of interest:

1. El Paso Electric does not actually need the power. They want it a) to reduce the cost of power to their customers, b) to enable them to shut down several oil- and gas-fired generating stations in the El Paso area, and c) to improve the reliability of their power service.

2. The power line would cross the western and southern part of New Mexico containing some of our most scenic and undeveloped lands.

3. El Paso Electric already owns unused generating capacity at the Palo Verde nuclear plant but does not want to use the power because its cost is not justified by need.

4. A number of alternative routes between Springerville and Deming have been identified and are being studied. Several of these, such as along the North Star road between Gila and Aldo Leopold Wildernesses, are out of the question and are being studied to make the EIS look good when it rejects them.

5. Probably only one or two of the alternatives fit within El Paso Electric's budget and ability to justify the line. These alternatives cross largely open and undeveloped country, where the power line would be visible from large distances.

6. An attractive route to El Paso Electric cuts across the southwestern part of the San Augustin Plains (having been forced out of a more desired central crossing by the Very Large Array radio telescope facility). It then heads south to Deming along one of several variations through similarly scenic and undeveloped land in the Winston-Chloride and Hillsboro areas, or through the largely private and beautiful Monticello Canyon, which contains a desert stream fed by a large spring in the upper reaches of the canyon.

7. Major variations of the above route pass very near to the Eagle Peak, Mesita Blanca, Horse Mountain, and Continental Divide BLM WSA's. One parallels the northern boundary within one mile of the Continental Divide WSA, across state land being recommended by the NM BLM Coalition as an addition

to the proposed wilderness. Alternative routes skirt other existing or proposed wildernesses or Wilderness Study Areas, as far away as Ladron Peak between Socorro and Albuquerque.

8. Local uproar over a last-minute switch by El Paso Electric to route the line through Monticello Canyon caused the BLM to abandon its efforts to finish an EIS internally. A "third-party" agreement is now in effect in which WIRTH Environmental Services of Phoenix will prepare the EIS from scratch. BLM remains the lead agency in the EIS, but WIRTH is being paid by El Paso Electric.

9. WIRTH is a professional and environmentally sensitive outfit but is in the business of routing power lines. The question of need will not fall within their purview or the purview of BLM.

The upshot of the situation is that El Paso Electric wants a "bargain-basement" (\$50 million) power line to provide more luxurious service to their customers. The line would damage the scenic, undeveloped environment of a part of New Mexico where few people reside to defend those scenic values.

Public scoping meetings were recently held in a number of communities in the area, and public comments are being accepted now on the issues and alternatives, and on the Arizona Interconnection Project in general. The address of WIRTH Environmental Services is 3737 N. 7th Street, Suite 211, Phoenix, Arizona 85014. The draft EIS will be finished in December, 1986; final EIS in April, 1987. Construction is planned to begin in 1988. ✦



Powell (from page 1)

permitted--but it should be built only by the private sector, without the use of public funds.

Powell would support an effective bottle bill to help reduce litter and conserve natural resources. He would work to reinstate solar energy tax credits, believing that the full potential of this clean and economical energy source has not yet been fully realized.

On administrative affairs, Powell believes that a representative of an environmental organization should serve on the state Economic Development Board. Moreover, he would appoint as Director of the Envi-

ronmental Improvement Division someone with a proven record of advocacy for environmental improvement.

Powell's past record on environmental issues includes successful opposition to a pulp mill that was to be located in Albuquerque several years ago. He was instrumental in adoption of the concept of open space in Albuquerque and creation of the Rio Grande State Park.

Garrey Carruthers, on the other hand, is the very embodiment of the Reagan Administration on environmental issues. Although he has tried to portray himself as a "savior" of the environment, particularly the Bisti Badlands, nothing could be farther from the truth (showing another propensity to act as a Reagan clone: misleading the public).

Carruthers was, in fact, an Assistant Secretary of the Interior under (you guessed it) James Watt. In that role, Carruthers was heavily involved in the scandalous administration of the federal coal leasing program of the early 1980's. The Bureau of Land Management, under Carruthers, actually opposed designation of wilderness areas in the Bisti Badlands until the proposals were whittled down to areas that had absolutely no conflict with coal development. Carruthers was also instrumental in: attempts to reduce public participation in the coal leasing process; in conducting coal lease sales in Wyoming, where the federal government lost hundreds of millions of dollars in potential revenue; and in proposing such preposterous leasing targets in the environmentally sensitive San Juan Basin that the whole scheme backfired and resulted in Congressional suspension of the federal coal leasing program (a purely unintentional outcome).

Once again, New Mexico voters are faced with a clear choice this November: to elect Ray Powell as Governor and to continue with progressive programs to protect and enhance the environment; or to elect Garrey Carruthers and fall victim to a roll-back of laws and regulations designed to protect the Land of Enchantment. With Ronald Reagan at the helm in Washington for (at least) two more years, it would be disastrous for an industry yes-man to take the reigns in New Mexico in 1987.

Current polls on the gubernatorial race are not at all encouraging. It thus behooves all Sierra Club members to take the lead and work toward a favorable outcome in the November elections. Please consider doing whatever you can! Contact Gwen Wardwell in Santa Fe (827-8140 at work or 983-5317 at home) if you can possibly help. ✦

*Calkin (from back page)***Power from the Grassroots**

A major factor the Calkin campaign's success is the strongly dedicated following he has earned in the environmental and progressive communities. The Sierra Club's endorsement was viewed as a big plus.

In addition, educators are taking a new interest in this office which has such a significant impact on funding for the state's public schools and universities. This was evidenced by the endorsement Brant received from the National Education Association (NEA).

Sportsmen and wildlife enthusiasts like his strong stand on permitting greater public access to state lands.

Without question Brant's volunteer organization was unsurpassed by any other campaign in the Primary and that included all of the gubernatorial campaigns!

Such active and vigorous grassroots support for a candidate in what is normally viewed as a "low-visibility, low-information race" is unprecedented. However there appears to be organized opposition to Brant's candidacy as well.

Ranchers around the state have challenged the new grazing fees set by present Land Commissioner Jim Baca. The case is in court at this time, and Brant has pledged to abide by the Court's decision.

The Republican candidate, San Juan county rancher William Humphries, has denounced Baca as being a "dictator" and is advocating an advisory board be set up with constitutional powers to impeach a Land Commissioner not to its liking.

Brant, who served as Baca's deputy commissioner, has been target for much of the flak.

Consequently, with this swirling controversy the Land Commissioner race is taking on a new prominence in the electoral scheme of things.

Referendum on the Environment

Baca was the first State Land Commissioner who exhibited a genuine concern for the environment. He enjoyed strong support from the Sierra Club in both his Land Commission race and his bid to become Mayor of Albuquerque. Brant's election would establish a tradition of electing Land Commissioners who are strongly conscious of environmentalist values. His loss would be perceived as a repudiation of the same.

James Watt for Governor?

Garrey Carruthers and Brant Calkin. There could be no more striking contrast between two candidates for public office.

Brant is a former National President of the Sierra Club.

He has spent his life fighting to preserve and restore our land and water. He has worked in resource management for 18 years.

Carruthers made his name as an aide and protegee of former Interior Secretary James Watt. Carruthers played a leading role in the Chaco coal leasing scheme that caused the great public outcry which ultimately proved to be the beginning of the end of Watt's reign at Interior. (See Jeff Radford's new book, The Chaco Coal Scandal.)

Carruthers was quoted in the Albuquerque Tribune (June 12, 1986) as expressing amazement at environmentalists' "fascination" with one of the "great men" with whom he had once been associated. He simply couldn't understand why they were so worked up about James Watt!

Yet most New Mexicans, (and even a good number of Sierra Clubbers) are still unaware of the Carruthers/Watt connection. What they see is a fresh, new face with a telegenic smile promising to provide dynamic and aggressive leadership. Unless there is a dramatic shift in public awareness on this score and if the polls are right, the chances are extremely good that we will see a clone of James Watt begin a four-year term as governor in January of 1987.

These are the Stakes

If indeed such an eventuality should come to pass, then it becomes critically important that Brant's campaign withstand the strong tendency for a Republican sweep down the ticket.

This is so for two very compelling reasons:

First, there is no way of predicting what horrid environmental and resource development policies might be hatched under a Carruthers regime. It would be critical to have Brant Calkin as a prominently elected public official, standing on guard, ready to blow the whistle at the first hint of environmentally unsound proposals. Under such circumstances we would need Brant more than ever.

Second, a Carruthers win combined with a Calkin defeat would be interpreted by politicians as a rejection by the voters of the idea that environmental concerns must be primary considerations in the formation of public policies respecting our natural resources.

Accumulated over years of arduous struggle, the political clout of the environmental movement in New Mexico would evaporate instantly. A Carruthers win/Calkin loss scenario, coming fresh on the heels of the Albuquerque mayoral debacle in which the Sierra Club invested so much of its

energy and prestige in Jim Baca's losing effort, would be especially devastating to morale. The Club's political credibility would suffer immeasurably. Anti-environmental forces would be utterly free to set the public policy agenda for a long time to come.

Senator Bingaman's reelection chances in 1988 would be jeopardized and the pressures on him to cave in on environmental issues would intensify.

Clearly, if the most dedicated enemy of the environmentalist cause had sought to devise a plan with which to completely wreck the environmentalist movement in New Mexico, that foe could hardly have devised a better one than this.

The Huge Task Ahead

With barely 70 days to go before the November 4th election there is much to be done.

We must redouble our efforts to get the word out to the public about Brant. Despite our best efforts, he still has relatively low name recognition with the general public.

The task for the environmental movement is to close ranks as never before. We must duplicate that great mobilization of 1982--the one that toppled Harrison Schmitt, that other admirer of the very same James Watt whose hideous spectre haunts us once more.

Brant's campaign is still in financial debt from what proved to be a very difficult and costly primary. But now an even more crucial test lies ahead.

Brant Calkin needs volunteers. Brant Calkin needs money for literature so that those volunteers will have something to distribute. He needs money for phones. And most importantly he needs money for television.

(To contact Citizens for Calkin, phone 268-4100 in Alby. or 982-8916 in Santa Fe. Write to P.O. Box 36796, Albuquerque, NM 87176) ★



**BRANT
CALKIN**
DEMOCRAT • STATE
LAND COMMISSIONER

El Malpais (from page 1)

phoned, and exerted themselves in this effort! Your expressions of support and the overwhelming public support expressed at the congressional hearings were invaluable in expediting House adoption of this bill. Rep. Richardson deserves our heartfelt thanks for sponsoring this high level of protection for El Malpais. He introduced the bill in November 1985.

The continuing challenge is to get an acceptable El Malpais bill from the U.S. Senate. Time is running out for this year's session of Congress; only three weeks of the 99th Congress remain after it reconvenes on September 8. In spite of our continued urging, we have not yet seen a bill introduced by either Senator Jeff Bingaman or Senator Pete Domenici.

Sen. Domenici just recently announced that he has arranged a tour of the Malpais area for William Mott, director of the National Park Service on August 30. Domenici in the Grants Daily Beacon, August 12, 1986: "After this visit, Mr. Mott would prepare a proposal of how the Park Service might help. We would then move with dispatch to get it through both houses of Congress and the White House." Could this have been done 3, 4, or even 6 months ago? Domenici in the Daily Beacon, November 25, 1985: "I am quick to tell you that I am extremely reluctant to just jump into this."...Study of the plans would indicate "in a couple of weeks" whether or not "we would have to rule out a park."! Then an editorial in the Daily Beacon, November 26, 1985: "Domenici says there is no reason to rush into this thing and do it wrong. Thank the Lord we have Sen. Domenici watching over us in Washington." If Congress adjourns in October without passing a Senate bill and resolving the differences between it and the House bill, we will be forced to start over with a clean legislative slate next year.

It must be noted that the BLM has labored diligently over the past several years to consolidate their ownership of this area. The New Mexico BLM office has swapped many, many sections of land elsewhere to Indian and other private landowners to remove the once-checkerboarded ownership pattern. Furthermore, involved conservationists have been heartened to see BLM personnel and administrators in New Mexico exhibit a growing interest in, and commitment to first-rate management of El Malpais. Will all this be undercut now by turning the area over to the National Park Service? And will an NPS Park or Monument be much smaller than the large

area proposed for protection in Richardson's bill? Only Pete knows what he really intends to do for (or is it to?) El Malpais.

Letters and phone calls to your Senators should stress the following:

a) Protection of El Malpais is of the highest priority to concerned citizens of New Mexico. Legislation should prescribe management based on the model provided by the national monuments previously designated by Congress and past administrations. Anything less will not do justice to this unique and valuable resource and will not provide adequate protection or public recognition for El Malpais.

b) The West Malpais and Chain of Craters must be designated as Wilderness now, along with the El Malpais Wilderness. Current BLM management (BLM Rio Puerco Area Resource Management Plan) stresses scenic and natural values in these areas and no longer emphasizes resource extraction (grazing and timber) which had earlier been considered as conflicting with Wilderness designation.

c) Cultural resources within the area must be protected. Cultural sites are numerous and have experienced prolonged pressure from looters, pot-rustlers, and vandals. There is still an invaluable resource remaining, but ever-increasing public pressure must be managed so as to protect this resource adequately.

d) No conflict with prospective Wilderness designation should be allowed in any potential park bill. Nothing in the House bill would preclude eventual Wilderness designation for the eastside WSA's. Likewise, management prescribed in a Senate bill must not preclude or impact adversely on the prospects for Wilderness for these eminently-qualified lands.

Please write your letters of support today!

Senator Jeff Bingaman
502 Hart Senate Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Pete Domenici
4239 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20510

Rep. Bill Richardson
325 Cannon Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20515

Mr. William Mott, Director
National Park Service
Washington, DC 20240

Secretary Hodel (Mott's boss)
U.S. Department of Interior
Washington, DC 20240

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Win (from page 1)

petitions required an enormous number of volunteer hours and the donated services of Dick Rubin and Bruce Throne, talented attorneys. Other activities conducted by campaign volunteers included; literature drops, sign painting and installation, huge mailings, phone banks, banner waiving, and over 500 contributors to partially fund this effort. We had wonderful groups in Albuquerque, Socorro, Santa Fe, Silver City, Deming, Taos, Los Alamos, and a sprinkling throughout the state, all of whom worked hard for Brant. We thank you!

Pamela Brodie, who guided and inspired this effort, has left for a job with the Sierra Club in California. She coordinated this effort, with help from Lynda Taylor, Susan Larsen, John Daniel, Kay Grotbeck, and Susan Tixier. Pam put in tremendous energy, hours, spirit, and inspiration--she'll be sorely missed. Let's not let her down.

We are left with a substantial debt and a general election campaign to fund. We know that many have already given to the cause, but it's time to get out the checkbook again because we must win the general election to make a real difference. If every chapter member sent in \$25 we'd be well on our way.

Thanks again for a job well done, and let's get back to work! (See article on current campaign status, back page.)

CALKIN IN TIGHT RACE FOR LAND COMMISSIONER

by John Daniel, Albuquerque

After a smashing upset in the Democratic Primary on June 3, (a victory due in large measure to the tireless efforts of hordes of Sierra Club volunteers), former national Sierra Club President, Brant Calkin is locked in a dead heat in his race for State Land Commissioner.

Quite simply, this race is shaping up to be the most hotly contested match-up in the upcoming November General Election.

For the Sierra Club and the entire environmental movement in New Mexico this all means a substantial raising of the political stakes.

Anatomy of a Cliff-hanger

Two recent polls point to a strong public dissatisfaction with the current administration in Santa Fe and that nearly a third of the registered Democrats are contemplating switching to the GOP gubernatorial candidate. One of the polls showed Powell trailing

Carruthers by a 46% to 30% margin with only 24% undecided in early August!

What does this mean for Brant, who is running as a Democrat?

Historically, statewide Democratic candidates standing for office below Governor can count on running about 4% ahead of the gubernatorial candidate. If Democratic Party standard bearer, Ray Powell, continues to show as poorly as these polls indicate, then this strongly suggests that Brant is in for the biggest fight of his career.

Powell is still little known around the state. He is an advocate of environmental quality and clean industry. He is continually reminding audiences that the first person to which he will always turn for counsel in these matters is Brant Calkin. Clearly it would make life easier if the Powell campaign begins to pick up.

And we all thought it would be so easy from here on out!

see Calkin, page 10

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The Rio Grande Sierran

Summer 1986

The Rio Grande SIERRAN



THE RIO GRANDE CHAPTER OF THE SIERRA CLUB

Summer 1986



Sandstone Bluffs near El Malpais

Photo by Dick Ruddy

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