

**Activist Profile
Van Perkins**



The Rio Grande Chapter salutes Van Perkins, our featured volunteer activist for this newsletter issue. This coal miner's son, born and raised in Standardville, Utah, took the long way to environmental activism. Although a 20-year member of the Sierra Club, he never did much beyond writing letters, saving his activist energy for the civil rights movement. His efforts in that arena resulted in an appointment to the California State Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.

After obtaining a PhD (Harvard) in U.S. History and Constitutional Law, Van enjoyed a career as a college professor and administrator at U.C. Riverside. Since retiring and moving with his wife Kathy to Santa Fe in 1991, Van has become an invaluable member of the Chapter. He volunteered to help out "as needed" with the Chapter's lobbying efforts during this past legislative session, and ended up putting in long days at the Roundhouse. His ability to speak knowledgeably and articulately to legislators on many issues helped to make the session better than most.

Primarily interested in public lands issues, Van currently serves on the Chapter Conservation Committee, and is Conservation Co-Chair of the Santa Fe Group.

**Franklin Mountains
Clean-up Nears**

by John Sproul

Thanks to the efforts of U.S. Rep. Ron Coleman, the FY 1994 Defense Appropriations bill includes \$1.15 million to begin surface clearance of unexploded ordnance from the Castner Range on the east side of the Franklin Mountains in El Paso. Conservationists view this development with great enthusiasm but also with trepidation.

Castner Range is an old artillery firing range Fort Bliss no longer uses. It covers 7000+ acres, extends virtually to the Franklin Mountains ridgeline, and includes some of the most scenic and ecologically significant parts of the mountains. The Franklin Mountains Wilderness Coalition, including the Sierra Club's El Paso and Southern New Mexico groups, has long recommended that most of Castner Range be added to Franklin Mountains State Park.

After the Army has cleared the area of unexploded artillery rounds, no one is likely to challenge conveyance of the upper elevations to the Park. The lower elevations are a different story. For those who look at land and see only dollars, that broad grassy sweep along the freeway looks irresistible. You can bet on behind-the-scenes maneuvering by some to keep the lower elevations of Castner Range out of the Park. Write to thank Rep. Coleman (U.S. House of Reps., Washington, D.C. 20515) and urge him to keep working hard to get *all* of Castner Range added to Franklin Mountains State Park.

[The author is president of the Franklin Mountains Wilderness Coalition, and a member of the El Paso Group.]

Scuds Aimed at Alamogordo

by Marianne Thaeler

The Draft EIS Theater Missile Defense Extended Range has been released. The preferred alternative is to shoot offensive scud type missiles from Green River, Utah, and Fort Wingate, N. M. toward White Sands Missile Range, beginning in 1994. The defensive missiles are to be shot from WSMR and Ft. Bliss. The impact area is WSMR. The scuds will pass over El Malpais Wilderness Area, Bosque del Apache, and San Andres Wildlife Refuge. According to BLM, scud boosters are to be dropped into El Malpais, and roads will need to be bulldozed to retrieve the boosters. Copies of the DEIS are available by calling 1-800-603-3030.


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RIO GRANDE SIERRAN

News of the Rio Grande Chapter
Sierra Club • March/April 1994

New Mexico Legislative Summary *Reality Check*

by Doug Fraser, Chapter Lobbyist

The second session of the 41st New Mexico Legislature concluded February 17, and following some extended catching up on sleep, I can look back to say—we had a good one.

That is, the Club was successful in passing legislation on three of our priorities: tire recycling (see article on page 5), wildlife habitat protection, and state water planning.

Wildlife Habitat Protection

As anticipated, we received strong legislative support on this issue. The Speaker of the House, Ray Sanchez (D-Alb.) introduced a bill to statutorily create a Conservation Services Division within the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish. Its new duties will include managing, enhancing, researching and conserving wildlife habitats. Senator Tom Rutherford (D-Alb.) shepherded the legislation through the Senate. Funding for the program was in jeopardy at one point, but Rep. Max Coll was able to salvage \$500,000 from an initial request of \$2 million, with the approval of five professional positions. We anticipate asking for a substantial increase next year.

A related House Memorial to accommodate concerns of ranchers was also introduced by Rep. Sanchez. It was the result of protracted negotiation among lobbyists for the Sierra Club (Van Perkins and Sue McIntosh), Conservation Voters Alliance (Peter Russell and David Henderson), New Mexico Cattle Growers (Bill Humphries), and the Farm and Livestock Bureau (Jeff Witte). The memorial requests that the State Game Commission establish a committee "to review and make recommendations regarding the direction and

scope..." of the new Conservation Services Division.

Even though this Division has existed within the Department of Game and Fish for some time, the importance of its statutory recognition with accompanying general fund appropriation (as opposed to funding from hunting license fees) cannot be overestimated.

Regional Water Planning

Rep. G.X. McSherry (D-Deming) introduced a bill calling for \$500,000 for regional and statewide water planning. In the waning hours of the session, and through the concerted efforts of Rep. Richard Knowles (R-Roswell) and Speaker Sanchez, \$350,000 was secured for water planning. State Engineer Eluid Martinez has agreed to work with concerned public groups, particularly the Sierra Club, on how best to utilize these funds.

Motor Oil Recycling

Sen. Edward Lopez (D-Santa Fe) introduced a Senate memorial requesting the Governor to create an "oil recycling task force to identify state and private oil recycling strategies and environmentally protective and cost-effective used oil management standards..." The task force will make recommendations to the next legislative session. The Governor has indicated his support for the measure, which passed the Senate.

Salt Cedar Eradication

Sen. Tim Jennings (D-Roswell) and Rep. Bob Light (D-Carlsbad) introduced companion measures to restore "native riparian vegetation and wetland areas..." along a six-mile stretch of the Pecos River above Lake McMillan. Although the object was innocent enough, the plan called for aerial herbicide application, with few monitoring controls and little concern for subsequent erosion problems.

Primarily through the efforts of Roger
(continued on page 5)

The Land Office's Proposed New ADC Policy and a Sierra Club Response

by Sue L. McIntosh

In February, New Mexico State Lands Commissioner Ray Powell, Jr. announced a proposal aimed at managing the use of federal personnel to control livestock predators on state trust land. The proposal has drawn some criticism from environmentalists who charge that Powell is backing away from former Commissioner Jim Baca's policy on Animal Damage Control (ADC). However, a reality check reveals that Powell has actually improved upon Baca's own good work.

Baca had reviewed ADC practices on state lands and had determined, correctly, that the essentially unregulated status quo was no longer acceptable. He then constructed a new policy on federal predator control and presented it to ADC officials on a take it or leave it basis. ADC left it, and Baca announced ADC would no longer be allowed to practice their arts on state lands. Baca's contract remained on the table when he left New Mexico last year to head the BLM.

When Powell took over as Commissioner, he soon determined that the ADC issue was probably the most controversial problem he faced. After Baca banned ADC on state trust lands, the New Mexico Department of Agriculture, with help from ADC, began to train ranchers in the use of animal-killing toxicants. The wider use of those devices has led
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FRIENDLY REMINDER

You'll soon be receiving a letter from the Chapter describing our accomplishments over the past year, and, yes, asking for money. Please contribute what you can. We need it more than we ever have!

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Rio Grande Sierran is published by the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club as a membership benefit for Sierra Club members living in New Mexico and West Texas. Send address changes to The Sierra Club, 730 Polk St., San Francisco, CA 94109. Nonmember subscriptions at \$10 per year are available from the Albuquerque office; please allow 8 weeks for processing.

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Contributions are welcomed from members and non-members. Send to *Rio Grande Sierran*, 3312 Camino Prado Vista, Santa Fe, NM 87505. Articles should be submitted by the 15th of the month prior to publication. Preferred format is on Macintosh disc as Microsoft Word file. Other formats may be compatible--check with editor. Letters and articles are subject to abridgement at the editor's discretion.

Printed on 100% post-consumer waste newsprint by PrintWorld in El Paso.

From the Chair...

At the Chapter retreat in September, 1993, we chose our priorities for 1994. One of the goals of our top priority, water quality and quantity, was to obtain funds for and expand the statewide planning process of the State Engineer Office. The goal of our second priority was to pass legislation for recycling tires, oil, and/or batteries. The goal of another priority was to obtain funding for and increase the effectiveness of the Conservation Services Division of the Game and Fish Department.

The process begun at our retreat in 1991 and continued in 1993 and 1994 is working for us. Last year, we got the New Mexico Mining Act passed. This year, we met all three legislative goals.

Thanks and congratulations are due to:

■ everyone who participated in the process of choosing our goals and persisted in supporting them despite the temptation to be distracted by other important issues;

■ Doug Fraser, who spent many hours before the session conferring with interested persons and researching various approaches to recycling, in addition to his masterful handling of the legislative process;

■ George Grossman and Van Perkins who volunteered to help as needed but ended up playing a crucial, full-time roll in our lobbying effort;

■ Vickie Gabin, Sue McIntosh, and

Roger Peterson who provided essential expertise for the lobbyists;

■ Peter Russell, Lynda Taylor, and other members of the Conservation Voters Alliance lobbying team whose cooperation with our lobbyists made the achievement of our goals possible;

■ David Henderson and Lois Hermann of the Audubon Society, and Edith Pierpont of the League of Women Voters who spent many hours testifying before and following the work of legislative committees;

■ Speaker of the House Raymond Sanchez (D-Albuquerque) and Representative Richard Knowles (R-Roswell) for their help on the water planning bill;

■ Senator Roman Maes (D-Santa Fe) and Rep. Gary King (D-Moriarty) for their work on the tire recycling bill;

■ Speaker Sanchez, Rep. Max Coll (D-Santa Fe), and Sen. Tom Rutherford for their efforts in expanding and funding the Conservation Services Division;

■ Governor King for his special message on tire recycling and support of the Oil Recycling Task Force;

■ State Game Commissioners James Koch and David Salmon for their work on the Conservation Services Division bill;

■ and the *New Mexican* for its February 7 editorial in support of tire and oil recycling.

Please take time to express your appreciation to as many of these individuals as possible.

—Gwen Wardwell, Chair
 Chapter Executive Committee

LETTERS

Dear Editor:

I have just been reading the "Driving on Earth" quiz on the back page of the February issue, and it seems to me the numbers in questions 2 and 4 contradict each other. Question 2 says "Santa Fe County has 107,106 motor vehicles... A single tree can absorb 13 pounds of carbon dioxide per year from the atmosphere. How many trees does Santa Fe county need to absorb the CO₂ emitted by its cars?" The answer given as correct is 4,219,976. Question 4 says the typical car emits 20 pounds of CO₂ from each gallon of gasoline burned.

If the typical car travels 10,000 miles per year and gets 20 miles per gallon, in a year it burns 500 gallons of fuel and emits 10,000 pounds of CO₂ 107,106

such objects would emit 1.07 billion pounds of CO₂. At 13 pounds per tree per year, to absorb this material would require 82,389,231 trees.

I think that 10,000 miles per year is conservative. And 20 mpg is generous. No reasonable alteration of these assumptions can make the figures given agree even within the same order of magnitude...In view of these discrepancies, it seems wise to check the numbers in the other questions also. I bring these matters up because I thought you would rather have them pointed out by a Sierra Club member than someone [else]... I know I would.

Thomas Lee Boles
 Alamogordo, NM

Time for Reform at the N.M. State Land Office

by Kevin Bixby

Imagine you inherited a large fortune at an early age. You don't know exactly how much it is, but it is enough to support you for the rest of your life if managed prudently. How would you handle your new wealth? Would you try to maximize long-term interest and dividend payments? Or would you jump at the opportunity for any kind of return, even if it meant squandering the principal itself?

Most people would obviously follow the first path, but the latter course has been the one followed by the New Mexico State Land Office for most of its 80-plus years of existence. This little known agency is entrusted with managing a fortune that belongs to all New Mexicans — nearly 9 million acres of land and 13.4 million acres of subsurface estate. The Land Office is supposed to administer these lands to produce revenues in perpetuity for public schools, universities, and other public institutions.

Despite lacking basic environmental policies, as well as the staff, resources, and information needed to manage its lands properly, the agency continues to allow livestock grazing, oil and gas development, mining and other uses of its lands with minimal oversight, with the result that the core of our inheritance — the biological diversity and the ecological functions found on these lands — has been diminished and continues to erode away.

It is time to take a hard look at this agency that has operated in obscurity for so long.

Brief History

When New Mexico became part of the U.S., Congress granted it certain lands out of the public domain for the support of schools and other public institutions. For the most part, these lands comprised the same four sections in each township. Ultimately more than 13 million acres were granted through various acts of Congress.

To prevent this endowment from being squandered as had happened in other states, Congress stipulated that the lands were to be held in trust for the beneficiary institutions, that they could not be used for other purposes, and that the lands and natural products found on them were not to be sold for less than "true value." As a result (and because ranchers found it less expensive to lease rather than buy state rangeland for the first half of this century), New Mexico has managed to hang on to more of its initial grant of "school

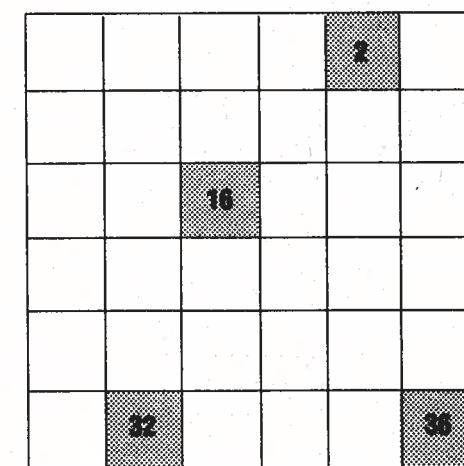
lands" than other western states. An elected position of Commissioner of Public Lands was created by the State constitution to act as trustee for these lands. The post is currently occupied by Ray Powell, Jr.

Virtually all state lands are leased for grazing, which brings in about \$6 million annually. About the same amount is collectively generated from mining, business leases, land purchase contracts, and right-of-way fees. The real money maker for the beneficiary institutions, however, is oil and gas, which generates approximately \$108 million annually in bonus payments, rentals, and royalties — more than 85 percent of total trust land revenues. Revenues from oil and gas have been on a downward slope in recent years, a trend expected to continue.

The Problems

In its younger days, the Land Office basically catered to its primary users — ranchers, oil and mining companies — and was content to accept whatever these constituencies were willing to pay. Early commissioners had close ties to the ranching industry. Employment at the agency was a political reward. On the ground management was left up to the lessees.

Things have improved in recent years, but not by much. The agency still resembles an accounting operation more than a land management enterprise. Field staff are greatly outnumbered by clerical and administrative personnel. Strategic planning is virtually nonexistent, as is environmental expertise. The focus continues to be as much on pleasing traditional user groups as serving the benefi-



Typical distribution of state trust lands within a township in New Mexico. A township consists of 36 sections, each section being one sq. mile.

ciaries. In short, the Land Office still lacks the basic staff, policies, resources, and incentives needed to manage its lands responsibly.

Biological Resources

The Land Office administers a wealth of biological resources. While much of its estate consists of nondescript grassland and pinon-juniper woodland, there are many biologically significant features. For example, there are hundreds of miles of riparian habitat along permanent and ephemeral watercourses, including portions of the Rio Grande gorge in Taos County. There is U-Bar Cave in Hidalgo County, formerly home to one of the largest maternal colonies of Mexican freetail bats in the Southwest. There are prairie chicken leks on the eastern plains, desert springs in Eddy County, endangered cacti populations, elk wintering grounds, etc.

What is not clear is the extent of these resources, because the Land Office has never considered them important enough to inventory. It was not until Jim Baca's second term that a biologist (the author) was even hired, a position that is now vacant.

Worse, the agency still lacks even a basic process for evaluating the environmental impacts of activities it permits on state lands. The Land Office annually processes hundreds of applications for such things as herbicide brush control projects, prescribed burns, oil pipelines, fences, powerline right-of-ways, flood control projects, etc. In most cases, no attempt is made to ascertain environmental impacts prior to approving these activities. There is no procedure for doing so, and even if there was, there are few, if any, employees with the expertise to do the job.

The result, of course, is an environmental disaster. I have heard, for example, of prescribed burns being approved and conducted in areas occupied by federally endangered plants, an incident unusual only in that the mistake was discovered afterwards. I am aware of Harris hawks abandoning their nest on state land because of oil well drilling nearby. I have seen many of the hundreds of authorized and unauthorized waste dumps on state lands; indeed, when I was in the field, I often knew I was on state land by the amount of garbage present.

The contrast with federal land management is striking. I have seen powerline configurations on state lands that the BLM would not allow because of the electrocution risk to eagles. I have seen miles of net wire sheep

Land Office Reform

(continued from page 3)

eagles. I have seen miles of net wire sheep fencing on state lands that is prohibited on federal land because it prevents the movement of pronghorn antelope. The list goes on. One can only begin to imagine the ecological damage caused by the Land Office's ongoing neglect of its biological resources. Who knows what permanent loss of productivity has occurred, or how many populations, perhaps species, have been extirpated?

A Leadership Vacuum

At the heart of the problem is the failure to incorporate into policy the idea that species and ecosystems, i.e. biodiversity, are integral components of state lands, and as such, should be preserved as part of the corpus of the trust administered by the Land Office. As Aldo Leopold pointed out, land is a community of living things. This community is the ultimate source of renewable resources such as forage for livestock, game habitat, timber, scenery, and perennial surface water flows. Diminish the ecological capacity of state lands, and you reduce long-term revenue generating potential.

Land Office policymakers justify their resistance to change by claiming that the agency is prevented by law from spending money to protect resources on state lands. This odd notion seems to have its origins in a 1920s' case (*Lake Arthur Drainage Dist. v. Field*) in which a court prohibited the Commissioner from spending money to develop state lands, in this case for drainage and irrigation works. But in that same case, the judge opined that it was absurd to think that the Commissioner was prevented by law from making expenditures to protect state trust lands. Nonetheless, the "hands tied" theory has been repeated so often it has become a Land Office mantra.

Consequently, the Land Office has no budget and virtually no staff for resource protection because it never asks the Legislature to appropriate money for that purpose. Instead, the agency relies on its lessees, other agencies, or well-meaning volunteers to fence out riparian areas, for example, or to stabilize eroding hillsides. Of course, this abdication of stewardship responsibilities provides a convenient excuse for not hiring staff or spending money to protect resources, thus "maximizing" revenues without upsetting the status quo — all of which keeps the Legislature, beneficiaries, and traditional user groups happy.

Grazing

Livestock have unfettered reign over virtually every acre of state trust land. About the only places they are not found are in steep canyons, and not coincidentally, those are the only places where you will find relatively healthy riparian areas on state lands.

Ties to the ranching industry run deep at the Land Office. Many middle level managers are weekend ranchers themselves, or have friends or family in the business. Some were political appointees who came in under former Commissioner Bill Humphries (now with the New Mexico Cattle Growers Association), and managed to convert their status to protected bureaucrat. Not surprisingly, a dim view is taken of reforms, and reformers, who threaten the status quo as it relates to the livestock industry.

There are, of course, good and bad land managers among state grazing lessees. However, two factors work against good range management on state lands. First, the grazing fee is based on carrying capacity. The better shape the land is in, the more you pay; hence, an unscrupulous operator can reduce grazing fees by overgrazing.

A more significant concern is the comparative indifference of the Land Office to the issue of livestock numbers on its lands. Unlike the BLM and Forest Service, the Land Office does not specify how many head of livestock can be grazed under its leases, other than to set a carrying capacity on which to base fees. There is no prohibition against running more cattle or sheep than this number. Although the Commissioner has the authority to cancel leases for mismanagement of the land, the strongest action I ever heard being taken against a lessee who consistently overgrazed his state land was to suggest that he consult with the Soil Conservation Service to develop a grazing management plan.

One positive thing the Land Office began doing during Baca's second term is to reduce grazing fees for ranchers who keep their land in good condition. However, in light of the small number of lessees and nominal fee reductions involved, the benefits have been more symbolic than anything else. Also, the program does little to encourage responsible caretaking of riparian areas because methods for specifically evaluating the condition of these areas are not utilized.

Oil and Gas Development

The Land Office is even more reticent to displease its prime benefactor in the revenue generation game, the oil and gas industry, which operates on state land with virtually no environmental accountability. For example,

there is no attempt to assess environmental impacts before siting oil and gas developments. A lessee can bulldoze a patch of endangered plants to put in a well pad, and no one would ever know or care. Nor are there adequate reclamation requirements for disturbed sites, such as blow-out pits.

(Ostensibly, the Oil Conservation Division (OCD) is supposed to regulate oil production activities in New Mexico to protect the environment. However, when I mentioned the potential threat to endangered species, I was told by the head of OCD's Environmental Section that the agency "doesn't get involved with endangered species.")

An example of the Land Office's deference to oil and gas lessees is its position on the heater treater issue. Heater treaters are gas-fired apparatuses associated with oil and gas wells that are fatally attractive to birds and bats. The animals use the vent stacks for nesting and roosting, only to be incinerated, asphyxiated, or trapped to die of dehydration or starvation. The problem can be easily solved by installing inexpensive cone-shaped coverings over the stacks.

Despite abundant evidence that heater treaters are responsible for the deaths of thousands of birds and bats annually, the Land Office has refused to take action, not even to make a polite suggestion to its lessees to address the issue voluntarily.

In another version of the "our hands are tied" excuse, the Land Office also claims that it is powerless to regulate oil and gas activities because changes to the basic language of oil and gas leases must be approved by the Legislature. But this ignores two facts: 1) all Land Office leases contain a general provision that requires lessees to comply with all applicable laws; and, 2) heater treater-caused bird and bat deaths are a violation of the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and possibly the Endangered Species Act.

If laws are being violated, doesn't the Land Office as lessor have the right to require corrective measures to ensure compliance with its leases? One can only surmise why the Land Office has declined to assert its authority in this area, or why it has not asked the Legislature to strengthen environmental requirements in oil and gas leases.

Inadequate Field Resources

There are only thirteen field employees (known as land use specialists) around the state to monitor all state trust lands. While hardworking, they are hopelessly overburdened and under-equipped. Some of them have districts encompassing more than one million acres. Except for Santa Fe, they work

out of cubbyholes donated by the beneficiary institutions, largely without the benefit of computers, fax machines, copiers, or even adequate ventilation. The land use specialist in Farmington, for example, has to vacate his "office" in the auto body paint shop at San Juan Community College when the students are painting, or risk lung damage.

Although in many respects they are the most knowledgeable Land Office employees about the reality of managing trust lands, they are often the last to hear about Land Office decisions made in Santa Fe, and have a difficult time getting basic information they need. The only way for them to find out who leases a particular tract of state land, for example, is to call Santa Fe.

What Needs to Happen

There are many other problems, but the bottom line is that the Land Office needs leadership truly committed to environmental protection, and willing to take political risks to put that commitment into practice.

My recommendation is that the Sierra Club push for the specific reforms listed on this page, and require that Land Commissioner candidates commit to these reforms as a prerequisite to receiving our endorsement. Otherwise, we'll be stuck with four more years of mismanagement of our inheritance.

[The author served as State Land Office biologist until December, 1993. He is also the author of a 1991 report entitled "Protecting Biodiversity on State Trust Lands."]

Legislature

(cont. from front page)

Peterson and Van Perkins of the Sierra Club, and Peter Russell of the Conservation Voters Alliance, we were able to obtain some very important concessions from the sponsors: First, approval must be obtained from the Departments of Game and Fish, Agriculture, and Environment for all control, restoration, and monitoring work. Secondly, landowners must agree to bind their lands to a management plan for 16 years. The Club had serious questions as to the efficacy of this proposal in either restoring native grasses or in saving water, but time will tell.

Interim Legislative Committee

Sen. Shannon Robinson (D-Alb.) and Rep. J. Roger Magdalena (D-Jemez Pueblo) introduced companion memorials, which both passed their respective chambers, to create an interim legislative committee to "review

Ten Needed Reforms

The following reforms are needed to correct decades of neglect and set the Land Office on the right track.

1. Promulgate a Land Office rule that declares it to be general policy to protect biological resources and the environment on state trust lands.
2. Create an environmental bureau within the Land Office and place under the direction of an Assistant Commissioner for Environmental Affairs (a position that was eliminated after Jim Baca departed).
3. Establish an environmental review process to screen all proposed activities on state lands, including lease renewals.
4. Develop a strategic management plan for riparian areas and other biologically significant resources that addresses long-term objectives, management options, and funding and information needs.
5. Give field staff the support and resources it needs, including adequate office space and equipment, four-wheel drive vehicles, computer access to lease records, and global positioning devices for determining precise field locations.
6. Promote recreational use of state lands as a sustainable source of revenues. Allow outside vendors to sell recreational access permits, as is done with hunting licenses. Produce a guide to outstanding recreational sites to advertise the best areas and minimize conflict with other state land users.
7. Eliminate grazing subleases. Overgrazing by unscrupulous, "cut and run" sublessees causes far more environmental degradation than is justified by the additional revenues generated by subleases.
8. Establish a comprehensive predator control policy that covers all users, not just ADC agents, and is set forth in a rule rather than a contract with a single agency.
9. Begin strategic planning to find new, sustainable uses for biological resources, and innovative ways to make biodiversity pay. Some possibilities: establish piñon nut harvest areas and permits; restructure the current hunting easement with the Game and Fish Commission to encourage grazing lessees to manage for wildlife; and create a new class of stewardship leases for conservation purposes.
10. Seek legislative changes at the federal and state levels that indisputably establish the authority of the Land Commissioner to protect state lands.

pressing environmental and natural resource issues." Passage of these memorials should help in avoiding surprise legislation and in negotiating with affected industries.

Tire Recycling Bill Passes Legislature

by Doug Fraser

Once again, the state has a major new environmental program with passage of a measure that promotes the conversion of old tires into road asphalt. The act establishes a comprehensive regulatory program as well as industry incentives. Major provisions are as follows:

1. Declares as public nuisances all tire dumps that are not licensed by the Department of the Environment as tire recycling facilities, and directs their clean-up through cooperative city, county, and state effort.
2. Directs the Environment Department to conduct a statewide assessment by 1995 of the extent of the waste tire problem.
3. Mandates the adoption of regulation by March 1, 1995, for enforcement and implementation.
4. Provides for enforcement by the Environment Department.
5. Funds various programs, most particularly a rubberized asphalt program for cities, counties, and the State, to defray any additional costs in using old tires in road building.

The Tire Recycling Act will be funded by a one dollar hike in annual car registration fees. We anticipate further changes to the law next year based on the results of the Environment Department survey, but we are now off and running.

Passage of this legislation was made possible by the tireless efforts of Sen. Roma Maes, who carried the matter for the past year by Rep. Gary King, who strengthened the legislation, and by the support of Governor King. Support also came from industry and the New Mexico Municipal League.

"Miracle" Memorial Passes

Something of a miracle happened this session of the Legislature. Environmentalists and ranchers joined forces to support the same House Memorial. The measure, co-sponsored by two representatives usually on opposite sides of issues (Max Coll and G. J. McSherry) directs the N.M. Dept. of Game and Fish to compile info on non-lethal methods of predator control and to report back next year with recommendations. The bill was unanimously approved by the House.

Reality Check

(cont. from front page)

cants. The wider use of those devices has led to a more dangerous situation for wildlife and domestic animals.

Powell's new proposal emphasizes the use of animal husbandry techniques that reduce the exposure of sheep and cattle to predators, favors non-lethal techniques to deter predator activity, and allows limited use of lethal means, directed at specific offending animals, to protect livestock. The draft "Predator Management For Livestock Protection on New Mexico State Trust Land—Position Statement" provides for the following:

"In the event that non-lethal preventative methods and husbandry practices fail to provide relief from predation of livestock, or are demonstrated to be impractical when applied to site specific conditions, the limited use of lethal means may be justified...State land grazing lessees who choose to utilize assistance from...Animal Damage Control (ADC) for lethal control methods must be able to demonstrate the need and why alternatives are not appropriate."

Further details of the Position Statement are as follows:

■ Some activities that would affect non-target animals, such as toxicants (M-44s), snares or body gripping traps would not be permitted, nor would the practice of denning.

■ ADC agents would be allowed to use leghold traps only if they are commercially manufactured padded- or rubber-jawed traps and are checked every 24 hours.

■ Taking animals with firearms would be permitted.

■ Grazing lessees would have to notify the State Land Office in advance whenever lethal predator control is used, and written notification must be sent within 72 hours.

■ ADC would be required to document the need for killing a predator, and would be required to provide an explanation of why alternative means would not work.

Progress from Baca to Powell

The contract Baca offered to ADC before leaving the Land Office would have been an improvement over the manner predator control had been accomplished on state lands in the past. However, in many ways, Powell's new proposal exceeds the protection afforded wildlife under Baca's policy. For example:

■ Mass, indiscriminate killing tools such as M-44s are banned in Powell's policy while they were allowed in Baca's.

■ The new proposal bans the use of inhumane steel jawed traps and requires a 24-hour check on any padded or rubber jawed devices used. Baca allowed the continued use of steel-jawed traps and would have required only a 48-hour trap check.

■ The new proposal places strong emphasis on public disclosure of ADC practices and provides that, when necessary, state land office personnel would accompany and monitor ADC personnel and activities in the field.

■ The new proposal requires ADC to submit quarterly reports that document the need for predator control (confirmed losses and method of confirmation) and the reason why alternative methods were not feasible. The reports must include a summary of non-lethal methods tested, the number and species of animals captured during trapping or shooting operations, as well as information regarding the location of operations (including the ranch name/lease number), and a general habitat description of the affected areas.

The Sierra Club's Response

The Land Office's draft proposal is not perfect. Some very important questions are left unaddressed.

■ The proposal currently states that methods must target individual animals responsible for predation of livestock "to the extent reasonably discernible." This language must be further refined. The Sierra Club suggests the following substitute language:

"Methods must target individual animals responsible for predation of livestock unless the operator can demonstrate that substantial and persistent efforts to identify the offending animal have failed and only in those instances where confirmed losses can be attributed to coyote predation. Where an operator is able to make such a demonstration, and where lethal control methods are otherwise appropriate and approved, the operator may take only the minimal number of individuals reasonably calculated to include the offending individual. The operator may take no more than five individuals at a time before allowing a sufficient amount of time to monitor whether the offending animal has been taken."

We believe that the only predator species that can withstand a certain level of indiscriminate lethal control is the coyote. This determination is based upon years of high levels of individual coyotes being taken in New Mexico, without a demonstrable sustained decline in coyote populations. Coyotes are a highly adaptive species with prolific reproduction patterns, and have been able to withstand a historically massive onslaught

and campaign of eradication while avoiding a long term decline in population viability.

These characteristics have not been documented in other predators, including black bears, mountain lions and bobcats. New Mexico black bears are actually declining in numbers, and probably not capable of withstanding indiscriminate lethal control without additional decline. Other large predators present similar difficulties, including lack of study and knowledge, and therefore require a more conservative management approach than what may be acceptable with the coyote.

■ The issue of aerial gunning is not directly addressed. The Sierra Club believes that aerial gunning and other preventive lethal control methods should not be permitted. It is an indiscriminate, precautionary method of livestock protection which should be supplanted with non-lethal precautionary tools, such as shed lambing, range riders, guard dogs and other intensive husbandry techniques. Operators with a demonstrated need for precautionary protection should receive federal/state (ADC) financial aid to implement non-lethal precautionary methods in lieu of the large resource expenditures associated with airborne and other lethal methods.

■ In the event ADC officials acquiesce to the Land Office's prerequisites, we assume that the Position Statement would be followed by a formal contract with ADC. In such a contract it is imperative that the following clear statement be set forth that allows lethal control...

"only in the event that an operator is able to demonstrate that substantial and persistent non-lethal methods and husbandry practices have failed to provide relief from unacceptable levels of predation of livestock, or are demonstrated to be technologically impossible when applied to site specific conditions."

■ The Sierra Club believes that the Commissioner should set a threshold level of loss, in terms of a percentage of the operator's herd, under which no lethal control would be allowed. It is unrealistic for operators to expect a zero loss of domestic livestock due to wild predators. While we all benefit from the products produced by the livestock industry, the industry must expect some loss to predators. Only unusual predation which presents a real and substantial threat to an operation's continued viability should be countered with lethal control. New Mexico's wildlife populations should not be lethally manipulated to provide selected individuals with an additional margin of profit.

The Land Office's Position Statement currently has no legal force. The proposed

New Land Office ADC Policy a Step Backwards

by Pat Wolff

[The author is a candidate for State Land Commissioner. Other candidates will be given an opportunity to express their views on this subject in future issues.]

Ray Powell, Jr.'s proposal to allow the U.S. Animal Damage Control wildlife killers to return to state trust lands should be opposed by the Sierra Club. His proposal is a regressive move that would reverse the eviction notice given to ADC by former Land Commissioner Jim Baca on Nov. 17, 1992.

In February 1992, Baca ordered the cessation of ADC activities, pending the signing of a contract between the two agencies. The ever-arrogant and intransigent ADC agency thumbed its nose at the State Land Office, leaving Baca with only one choice: the eviction of ADC.

"We have tried without success to work with ADC," Commissioner Baca said in a press release at the time. "It has become apparent that ADC has outlived its usefulness as a Federal agency. This agency, which uses public funds to destroy wildlife for private industry has shown it is nothing more than an anachronism in this day and age."

ADC slaughtered 2.2 million mammals and birds in the U.S. in FY 1992. It has not changed one iota since it was kicked-off state trust lands by Jim Baca. The truth is, ADC's predator control program is little more than a predator persecution program that has more to do with ignorance and prejudice than with livestock protection.

■ In FY 1991, ADC provided direct operational or technical support to only 2,000 complainants—less than one-half of one percent of all New Mexico residents. Only 371

state land ranchers had signed agreements with ADC when Baca evicted ADC.

■ Ranchers can afford to protect their own livestock. In 1990, gross ranch income in New Mexico was \$119,000 while net ranch income was \$37,000—about \$10,000 more than the income of the median New Mexican family. (1991 N.M. Progress Econ. Review)

■ Coyote killing may even exacerbate predation problems, according to numerous biologists. As Dr. Robert Crabtree, a professor of biology at Montana State University in Bozeman has noted: "By disrupting the social system of the coyotes, the Government is just making the problem worse." (New York Times, June 9, 1991)

■ Taxpayer-financed wildlife killing rewards negligent livestock management and encourages dependency on the Federal government.

In addition to allowing the return of ADC, Powell's proposal is unacceptable for the following reasons:

■ It does nothing to halt wildlife poisoning, trapping, denning or aerial gunning by ranchers on state trust lands.

■ It allows ADC to use "padded" traps—which are just as non-selective and injurious as unpadded trap, and fails to address aerial gunning by ADC.

■ There are no enforcement provisions. Who is going to make sure ADC is checking its traps every 24 hours?

■ Better animal husbandry and livestock protection techniques are merely "encouraged"—not required of the lessees.

■ Allowing wildlife killing "in circumstances where non-lethal methods are demonstrated to be ineffective" is a major loophole since some ranchers will always say non-lethal methods don't work.

■ The proposal has no force of law. We need wildlife protection policies promulgated as rules that can be enforced.

■ Powell's press release suggests that this proposal was developed by participants in a Land Office discussion group last fall. In fact, the participants never came to a consensus that ADC should be allowed to operate on state trust land. Nor did we advance any other specific proposals.

Some have justified ADC's return by claiming that wildlife killing by ranchers will run rampant if ADC "professionals" are curtailed. But ADC just adds to the legal and illegal slaughter of wildlife already going on in New Mexico. The only difference is, they're

doing it with our tax dollars.

Last August, the Albuquerque Journal reported that some ranchers are using M-poison devices on state trust land, often violation of EPA regulations. I urged the State Land Commissioner to ban this activity but he has not. M-44's are a threat to public health and safety, as well as to wildlife whether they are set by ADC or private individuals. Their use should not be tolerated.

Instead of returning to the dark days of ADC, we should be rewarding responsible ranchers who co-exist with wildlife. Why use the funds now being diverted to ADC seed money for a cooperative insurance fund that could be used to cover legitimate, documented livestock losses? Why not require grazing lessees to use proven non-lethal livestock protection techniques? There are many positive alternatives to ADC—let's use them. The State Land Office leases trust land to a rancher for about 50 cents an acre. At that price, there is no need to sacrifice our wildlife to "sweeten the deal."

The Executive Committee of the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club voted July 5, 1993 in support of the following resolution: "Be it resolved that the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club continue to support the ban of Animal Damage Control activities on state trust land. We also urge the State Land Office to promote non-lethal livestock protection methods and to recognize and reward environmentally responsible grazing lessees who use these methods."

Sierra Club members should not allow this position on ADC to be reversed.

[The author is a member of the Chapter Executive Committee and a former Chapter Wildlife Issues Chair. She is the author of "Waste, Fraud Abuse in the U.S. Animal Damage Control Program."]

CVA Legislative Report Available

A 70-page report on the fate of more than 180 environmentally-related bills and moratoriums in the most recent New Mexico legislative session will be available from the Mexico Conservation Voters Alliance March 15 for \$7. Order from NMCVA, 40497, Albuquerque, NM 87196 or call (471-1454 in Santa Fe.

Reality Check

(cont. from previous page)

the members of the citizen and operator group that discussed the issue last fall. The Sierra Club has been represented in the ADC discussion group by Chapter Chairperson Gwen Wardwell. The Club intends to continue its involvement in this process and will continue to pursue biologically sound and reasonable predator control policy on New Mexico state trust lands.

[The author is Chapter Wildlife Issues Chair.]

ALBUQUERQUE GROUP

MARCH GENERAL MEETING

HISTORICAL WILDLIFE OF NEW MEXICO

By Susan Gorman

When the first European explorers came to New Mexico, they found a land of vast deserts and rugged mountains inhabited by flora and fauna and people with a rich heritage and a close relationship with their world.

Dan Scurlock, Environmental Historian, will tell us about the natural world of New Mexico then and provide perspectives on the changes that have occurred as the population has expanded over the last several hundred years. Using slides and music, he will take us back to that land that used to be right here in our backyards.

The March meeting will be on Monday, March 21st, at 7:30 PM, UNM Law School, Room 2401, on the northwest corner of Mountain and Stanford NE. Please bring a cup and enjoy goodies provided by the Albuquerque Group. Preceding the main program, we talk about upcoming events and outings, recaps of recent outings, and alerts on issues. Please come!

ATTENTION PHOTOGRAPHERS !!

APRIL GENERAL MEETING: CHACO CANYON - VIEWS AND PERSPECTIVES

By Susan Gorman

Come and relax to a multi-media trip to Chaco.

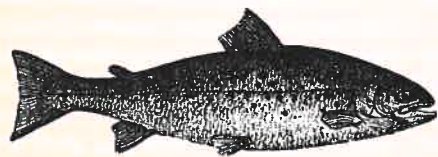
We're taking a break from politics, issues and activism to just sit back, look at slides, photos and possibly videos and artwork of Chaco Canyon, feel the peace and spirits of the place.

Anyone who has visited Chaco has felt the spirit, seen the incredible skills of the builders of the rock walls and rooms and marveled.

If you have favorite photos, slides or videos of Chaco, you are invited to participate. Call me and let me know what you would like to contribute to this special program. This will be my last program so help me make it a success by contributing your favorite views of Chaco. Call me at 265-3231 to volunteer.

The April meeting will be on Monday, April 18th, at 7:30 PM, UNM Law School, Room 2401, on the northwest corner of Mountain and Stanford NE. Please bring a cup and enjoy goodies provided by the Albuquerque Group. The time for announcements about upcoming events, outings and alerts will be short.

Please come!



CALENDAR

Unless otherwise noted, meetings held at the Club office at 207 San Pedro NE.

Mar 3: Mexican Wolf Coalition, 7:30 PM
 Mar 8: Activities & Special Planning Meeting, 7PM Sierra Club Office
 Mar 14: Executive Committee Meeting, 7PM
 Mar 21: Sierra Club General Meeting, UNM Law School, Rm 2402, 7:30 PM
 Mar 28: Conservation Working Session, 7:00 PM
 Apr 5: Activities & Special Planning Meeting, 7PM Sierra Club Office
 Apr 7: Mexican Wolf Coalition, 7:30 PM
 Apr 11: Executive Committee Meeting, 7PM
 Apr 16: 12 noon Deadline for articles for May-June group newsletter. Macintosh preferred. Call Dorothy if supplying hardcopy only.
 Apr 18: Sierra Club General Meeting, UNM Law School, Rm 2402, 7:30 PM
 Apr 25: Conservation Working Session, 7:00 PM

NATIONAL FOREST? NOT!

The blue jays squawk overhead, while deep, powdery snow sparkles in the light from the clear blue sky. The land is home to coyotes, red and gray fox, mountain lions, black bear, bobcats, deer, eagles and many other creatures. Soon however, it may be home to over 800 housing units, 1600 cars and a golf course.

Shoulder to shoulder with the Cibola National Forest near Tijeras lies this 2400 acre tract of land. It also used to have National Forest protection, but was traded to the City of Albuquerque during the early '80's in the Elena Gallegos exchange. The City has tried relentlessly to sell the land to developers ever since (to increase the coffers for open space - sense the irony?). Most developers have found the land too rugged to develop - until recently.

The land is currently under contract to a developer who proposes to build over 800 homes, and allow "recreational" uses - such as a golf course, club house and swimming pool. No wildlife study has been done, and the only "open space" left within the development will be high ridge tops that are not suitable for development anyway.

A number of neighborhood associations, horseback and mountain biking groups are currently working with the developer to try to save more of this land. However, because the City of Albuquerque still owns the land it should be held responsible for not destroying the rural character (including wildlife habitat) of the East Mountains. After all, this land is used by folks from the City as well as local residents. The present trail system proposed by the developer just isn't enough. At a minimum, more of the land than presently proposed should be saved.

If you want to make your views known about the unsuitability of this development, call Mayor Martin Chavez at 768-3000. For more information, and other ways to help, call Sierra Club member Mike Osborn at 281-9347.

Potluck Schedule - March & April

Continuing our newly revived (and very enjoyable) Albuquerque Group tradition, following is the schedule for upcoming potluck suppers.

All members are welcome for both of these gatherings. For those of you who haven't come to one, why don't you join us!! There's no formality, just a chance to meet some of your fellow members in a casual and friendly atmosphere.

March 13

Marsha Cohen has again offered her home (the December Holiday party was at her house). Her address is 1304 Linda Court in Corrales. To get there go across Alameda Blvd; turn right (North) on Corrales Road for about 1/3 mile; turn left on Cabezon Road and go 2/3 of a mile or so; turn on Calle Linda and then onto Linda Court. Her phone number is 897-1591 if you need additional directions. Plan to get there about 5 PM; we will eat about 6 PM.

April 10th

Rhoda and Irv Karp will be our hosts for April. Their address is 605 Mark Lane NE. To get there, take I-40 to Tramway, North on Tramway to Copper; turn right (East) on Copper; turn right on Parkside, which is the 5th street; after a short distance, turn right again onto Mark Lane; continue on Mark Lane through the stop sign and their house is on the right. Their phone number is 271-4932 if you need additional directions. Plan to get there around 5 PM; we should eat at 6 PM.

See you there !!

OUTINGS

Abbreviations: WSA-Wilderness Study Area SW-Sandia Wilderness NM-National Monument SC-Sierra Club

Sun Mar 6 Leisure Miles: 3 Car: 3 Geological Windows Hike, Petroglyph NM

These geological windows are above the escarpment, and below the volcanoes. Bring camera, binoculars, and sturdy shoes. RSVP.

Leader: Ike Eastvold 255-7679

Sun Mar 6 Moderate Miles: 5-6 Car: 190 Pajarito X/C Ski Trail

This is a X/C ski trail that starts just past the downhill ski area. The trail crosses some wide open meadows, and returns by a nice downhill glide. There is a possible option of skiing up to the overlook into Valle Grande. Call Stan for meeting time and location at 292-9138. Bring lunch.

Leader: Barbara Stone

Sat-Sun Mar 12-13 Strenuous Miles: ? Car: 500+

Mt. Bierstadt and/or Other, Colorado 14ers Snowshoe

Take it easy with the Mountain Goat on another easy relaxed, very slow paced trips. Probably involves 15 mile in 4 hours with a 5000 ft elevation gain, then descending in 15 minutes, and getting to the roadhead in pitch black.

Leader: Stefan Verchinski 888-1370

Sat Mar 12 Leisure Miles: ? Car: 3 Kid's Petroglyph Hike, Petroglyph NM

[Albuquerque Group is proud to announce the startup of a Kid's section in the Outing's program under the direction of Warren Smith. These once a month trips will be focused on kids, but adults are welcome to help or attend. Trips will vary from museums, zoos, building bird feeders, caves, kite flying, etc.. Emphasis is placed on the single parent situation.] This first trip will look at the petroglyphs at a slow pace for a short walk. Bring a lunch. Meet at the corner of Montano and Unser at 9:00 AM

Leader: Warren Smith 891-4709

Sat Mar 12 Leisure Miles: 4 Car: 20 South Sandia Trail, SW

Walk to waterfall and cave continue on to the crest if group is enthusiastic and snow permitting. Bring lunch. Meet at SC office at 9:00AM

Leader: Bob Cornish 255-6037

Sun Mar 13 Moderate Miles: 6-8 Car: 150 X/C Ski in the Pecos or Jemez

We will look for some place with fairly decent snow. Ski about 8 miles round trip. We may try Aspen Vista, Windsor Trail, etc.. Bring lunch, sunscreen, and water. Meet behind Winchell's at San Mateo and Academy at 9:00 AM. Call David 344-8693 for details.

Leader: Susan Larsen 897-2527

Sun Mar 13 Potluck

At Marsha Cohen's home. See group news. Marsha 897-1591

Sat Mar 19 Strenuous Miles: 8-12 Car: 190

Mt. Taylor Telemark Ski
Climb up the south face of Mt Taylor and then ski down through a magnificent bowl. Climbing skins and telemark skis and telemark turns are required. We may pick another peak if snow conditions warrant. Call for details.

Leader: Nick Persampieri 281-7845

Sat Mar 19 Leisure- Moderate Miles: 4-6 Car: 110

Ojito WSA Hike
Ojito WSA lies within the confines of the Ojito Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). Part of the ACEC that lies outside of the WSA is now being proposed for mining by Centex for use at their plant in Bernalillo. Centex may have developed this idea quickly to escape restrictions from the implementation of the New Mexico Hardrock Mining Act. An appeal has been filed by the NM Wilderness Study Committee and asks for the consideration of gypsum board recycling. We will wander about on this exploratory hike, hoping to glimpse a shark's tooth, petrified wood, and other fossils among the various rock formations, or take a look at the dinosaur tracks. Bring lunch.

Leader: John Wright 247-4353

Sun Mar 20 Leisure- Moderate Miles: 4-6 Car: 80

Phoenician Petroglyphs, Indian Ruins, and Fossils Hike
Near Los Lunas area along the Rio Puerco. We will hike to the petroglyphs, whose origins are a mystery, but are similar to Phoenician design. We hike to some ruins on a mesa top and then into an area of fossils and rocks. A long time wanderer of the area will guide us. Meet at UNM Physics parking lot at Lomas and Yale at 8:00 AM.

Leader: David Morrison 344-8693

Sun Mar 20 Moderate-Strenuous Miles: 4 Car: 130

Las Conchas Trail To East Fork Parking Lot X/C Ski
A beautiful hike in spring, summer and fall, it is just as beautiful in the winter when it is covered with snow. A moderate X/C ski overall, expect strenuous conditions as we climb from the canyon floor up to the East Fork Ridge Trail

Leader: Will Richardson 299-6257

Wed Mar 23

Outing Leader Training
Ten minute condensed segments covering insurance, first aid, safety, meeting place and trail concerns, winter considerations, natural history, trip writeups, national policy, leader handbooks, outings loca-

tions, publicity, first aid kits, and future projects. Beer provided, send out for pizza. SC office from 6-9:00 PM

Sat Mar 26 Bake Sale and Flea Market (see ASP section)

Sun Mar 27 Moderate Miles: 4-6 Car: 240

Amole Canyon X/C Ski
A beautiful X/C ski area just outside of Taos. Bring lunch, dress in layers. Contact Stan for details 292-9138.

Sun Mar 27 Leisure- Moderate Miles: 3 Car: 110

Indio Mesa Hike
Near San Acacia lies this mesa with petroglyphs on the rim, ruins on the top, a lunch spot overlooking the Rio Grande below. We continue down into a marsh area to look for waterfowl. Meet at 9:00 AM at the UNM Physics parking lot at Yale and Lomas.

Leader: Richard Riviera 266-5267

EMBUDITO TRAIL Service Project

Saturday, April 2 8:30AM to 3:00PM

[Please note the date change from the last issue] This is the Annual Project on the Albuquerque Group's adopted trail. This time around we will clear the wildlife drinkers, do some concrete work on the lower spring, do some rock work on a middle trail section, and clearing brush from the upper trail section. Bring shovels, pruners, other tools, lunch, day pack, and water. Some tools provided by the Forest Service. We should have something for everyone. **Cold Drinks Provided.** Take Montgomery east past Tramway to the first stop sign at Glenwood Hills Dr.. Take Glenwood Hills north for about .75 mile, turn east onto the road leading out of the housing to the Embudito trail parking lot. Come out when you want and stay as long as you can. Hiking will range from 2 to 10 miles. For more information call David 344-8693

Sat Apr 2 Leisure Miles: 3 Car: 210 Trinity Site, WSMR

Out on White Sands Missile Range is the site of the explosion of the first atomic bomb. After about 40(?) years the area remains closed to the public except for two visitor days a year. Radioactivity of the area will persist for a long time to come. Great refresher course for Chernobyl, future WIPP, and the lies from Los Alamos. This trip will leave early, other side trips possible. Call for details.

Leader: Tom Leck 256-7217

Sun Apr 3 Moderate Miles: 4-6 Car: 300

X/C Ski- Northern New Mexico
The snow should still be good up North. Contact Stan at 292-9138.

Saturday, April 9 9:00AM- 2:30 Seventh Annual Petroglyph National Monument Cleanup

We will continue on our second 100 tons of garbage to be removed from the monument. Join the 50 people from the Friends of the Albuquerque Petroglyphs, the Sierra Club, Volunteers for the Outdoors, the Indian Pueblos, and other groups as we tackle the mesa top above the State Park area. Take Unser Blvd, past the Petroglyph State Park, onto the top rim of the escarpment. Meet at the covered metal canopy structure to the north. Bring lunch, water, gloves, sturdy shoes, shovels, rakes, and wheelbarrows. Come out when you can and stay as long as you like. Cold drinks and garbage bags supplied. For more information, call Ike 255-7679, or David 344-8693.

Sat Apr 9 Leisure Miles: 0 Car: 0 Kid's Outing- Go Make and Fly a Kite

We will have some recycled materials for sitting down to the process of assembling a kite, and then put it to the air. Great introduction to thermals, weather, and climate without saying a word. If you are older, but feel like a kid, we could use your help. Store bought kites are welcome. Please bring a roll of string, available cheap at a hobby store. Meet at 10:00 AM at Holiday Park on Candelaria between Juan Tabo and Tramway.

Leader: Warren Smith 891-4709

Sun Apr 10 Moderate Miles: 6 Car: 210 Chain of Craters WSA

Ponderosa, pinon, and juniper surround several craters. We will climb a few of these cinder hills. The BLM has not recommended this area as a Wilderness Study Area for inclusion into a NM Wilderness bill due to Ramah Dineh (Dineh has superseded the word Navaho) religious use of the area. A proposal is being looked at in the environmental community to consider this area as Wilderness with Native American religious exemptions. Bring lunch. Call for details.

Leader: John Wright 247-4353

Sun Apr 10 Moderate- Strenuous Miles: ? Car: 180

Last Chance Downhill/ Telemark
Taos Ski Valley closes after this weekend. Take advantage of reduced prices to show off what you've learned this year. Contact Stan 292-9138.

Sat Apr 16 Strenuous Miles: 5 Car: 130 Cabezon Volcanic Plug Climb

To the NW of San Ysidro lies this climb of 1400 ft. No ropes or climbing gear are required, but plenty of exposure and loose rocks. Limit 10 with leader's approval. Bring lunch,

Leader: Harvey Pommer 292-7684

Sun Apr 17 Leisure Miles: 3 Car: 2 Boca Negra Arroyo Hike, Petroglyph NM

This area contains impressive petroglyphs and ancient Anasazi water control systems for irrigation. Bring sturdy shoes, binoculars, and camera, RSVP

Leader: Ike Eastvold 255-7679

Sat Apr 23 Moderate Miles: 4 Car: 80 Slickrock Canyons Hike

Just to the north and west of San Ysidro is some BLM land with canyons of slickrock with small pools in the bottoms. Meet at 9:00AM at the Sierra Club office, 207 San Pedro NE. Bring lunch.

Leader: Bob Cornish 255-6037

Sun Apr 24 Leisure- Moderate Miles: 3-4 Car: 160

El Malpais NM Hike - Westside
We may hike to El Calderon, a crater on the west side of the monument. We may hike into some of the ice caves. Bring lunch. Call for meeting location and time.

Leader: Tom Leck 256-7217

Sat Apr 30 Leisure Miles: 3 Car: 0 Oxbow Hike

Three hours. Plenty of waterfowl, song-birds and the occasional hawk. Meet at St. Josephs and Coors at 9:00AM.

Leader: David Morrison 344-8693

Sat May 1 Leisure- Strenuous Miles: 1 Car: 160

Santa Fe River Service Project
In conjunction with the Santa Fe Group, Tree NM, NMVFO, some of the Santa Fe schools and neighborhood associations we will do river bed enhancement, and plant trees and scrubs. Various other events are planned such as a trout release. Bring wading shoes and clothes, shovels, tin snips, pruning shears, lunch and water. Meet Behind Winchell's at San Mateo and Academy at 8:30 AM.

Leader: David Morrison 344-8693

Sat May 7 Moderate Miles: 12 Car: 110

Dome Wilderness Hike
This wilderness lies adjacent to Bandelier NM. We will start in from the south side above Cochiti, hike to a waterfall, then continue to St. Peters Dome within the Dome Wilderness. Bring lunch. Meet behind Winchell's at San Mateo and Academy.

Leader: Nick Persampieri 281-7845

Sat- Mon May 29-30 Utah Car Camp

We are not decided on which of the areas we will hike. How about 3 days in the Escalante, 3 days in Canyonlands, Dark Canyon, Dirty Devil, or Grand Gulch?

Sat- Mon May 28-30 Apache Kid Wilderness Backpack

Southwest of Socorro lies the predominant San Mateo Peak. We will climb

3000 ft from desert to subalpine life zones to the summit with tremendous views into the distance. We will take a hike to place flowers at Apache Kid's gravesite.

Leader: Tom Leck 256-7217

May- Jun Rafting the Rio Grande Sat Jun 4 National Trails Day Service Project

Sat- Sun Jun 11- 12 Hamilton Mesa Dayhike or Backpack

Sat Jun 18 Rio Grande Cleanup by Raft, Kayak and Canoe

July (early) Comet Impact of Jupiter Car Camp, Magdalena Mountains

Outings Photography Contest

Deadline is April 1, 1994. Prizes: First Place receives \$50 gift certificate from Camera and Darkroom, Second place receives dinner for two at Adam's Table- Vegetarian Best Wilderness Study Area and Service Project photos, each receives a bottle of wine from Las Nutrias Vineyard

The Activities and Special Planning Committee is open for suggestions to improve attendance at our "Sierra Club General Meetings". All aspects of the meetings are open for suggestions, including meeting place, day and time, meeting agenda, main programs, etc. Please call Stan with ideas or complaints 292-9138.

Saturday March 26 Rummage and Bake Sale

We need you to look through those closets and garages to gather all your unwanted items. Bring all your used items that you would like to contribute and baked goods to a parking lot sale at the Sierra Club office. Sale will be from 8:00AM until mid afternoon. You can bring your stuff by Friday evening between 6 and 8PM or before 8:00AM on Saturday. If you have large items or trouble transporting items, we will have people with trucks to drop by your home to pick them up. We need volunteers to watch the tables, etc.. Call Marsha Cohen 897-1591

Sun May 22 Annual Albuquerque Group Picnic

We have a hike, maybe some compass navigation or wildflower identification. We will definitely be playing volleyball and tossing horseshoes. From 1- 5:00 PM. Some place on the east side of the Sandias.

the LORAX

MARCH MEETING

Our March meeting is always a fun meeting, because it is our annual Show and Tell for the latest in camping and backpacking gear. Please come to find out the best equipment to meet your needs. If you are new to camping and backpacking, this is an excellent meeting to go to.

The program will start at 7:30 pm on Wednesday, March 30, at St. Paul's Methodist Church, 7000 Edgemere (two blocks east of Airway.) For more information, call Ted Mertig, 852-3011.

APRIL MEETING

We have a special guest from the Sante Fe Group to speak at the April meeting. Sue McIntosh was instrumental in the 1993 passage of the New Mexico mining law reform. Sue will talk about the implications of the New Mexico law and the process involved in legislative reform.

The program will start at 7:30 pm on Wednesday, April 27, at St. Paul's Methodist Church, 7000 Edgemere (two blocks east of Airway.) For more information, call Ted Mertig, 852-3011.

Don't Forget...

BEGINNING BACKPACK SERIES CONTINUES
6:15 pm (right before both meetings)
Please join us!



The Environmental Center

Needed: Used Equipment for ICQ... Please drop your unwanted camping and backpacking equipment off at the Environmental Center for the El Paso Sierra Club Inner City Outings group or call Richard Rheder at 544-5659 for other arrangements.

It might make the difference in some kid's attitude about the environment and the world we live in.

Help Preserve our Environment... The Center continues to need an office manager, a recycling coordinator and a volunteer coordinator. Please contact the Center (532-9645), John Sproul (545-5157) or Ted Mertig (852-3011) if you can volunteer one or more days per month.

Act NOW to Convince EPA to choose El Paso... Write to Carol Browner, Director of the EPA, to emphasize the importance of locating a regional office in El Paso. There will be an EPA regional office which will deal with border environmental issues, and we need to convince her that El Paso is the most effective location. Send your comments to Ms. Carol Browner, U.S. EPA, 401 M St. SW, Washington, D.C.

GROUP DIRECTORY

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chairman/Public Lands	Ted Mertig	852-3011
Vice Chair/Outings	Mike Episcopo	833-3770
Secretary	Joe Rodriguez	833-9655
Treasurer	Kathy Sunday	584-9301
Member	Betsy Julian	544-5741
Member/ICO	Richard Rheder	544-5659
Member	Debbie Tomaselli	584-3929

CONSERVATION

Environmental Quality	Tom Brasfield	584-8739
Franklin Mtns	John Sproul	545-5157
Political Action	Jim Bell	581-8864
Population	OPEN	

ADMINISTRATION

Environmental Center	OPEN	
Group/LORAX Mail	Bill Phillips	772-6503
Hospitality	Barbara Mertig	852-3011
Membership	Carol Morrison	545-1701
Office Rep.	Neil O'Hara	565-4735
Publicity	OPEN	
LORAX Editor/SIERRAN	Wyona Turner	585-0251

Sierra Club Environmental Center
800 S. Piedras
532-9645, 532-4876

Please send any changes or corrections in membership to
Carol Morrison, Membership Roll
728 Kern Drive/79902

Send LORAX information to
Wyona Turner, Editor, 331 Vista del Rey, 79912

CLUB NEWS

Conservation on the Line...The El Paso Group is reviving a tradition by holding regular monthly conservation meetings. All members are welcome to attend. The meetings will be held on the second Wednesday of every month at the Environmental Center. Starting time will be 7 pm. The next meeting dates will be on March 9 and April 13. This is a good opportunity to learn about important environmental issues and provide an excellent means for you to become active.

Hospitality Needed...The Southwest Regional Conservation Committee is meeting on April 23-24 in El Paso. There are 12 people who will need rooms for the weekend. If you can help, please call Tom Brasfield, 584-8739.

CALENDAR

March 5-6	Rio Grande Chapter EXCOM Retreat El Paso, TX
March 30	Beginning Backpacking Series (6:15 pm at 7000 Edgemere) General Meeting (7:30 pm at 7000 Edgemere)
April 6	EXCOM Meeting (7 pm at 800 So. Piedras)
April 12	Deadline for El Paso newsletter information (send to 331 Vista del Rey, 79912)
April 23-24	SWRCC Meeting
April 27	Beginning Backpacking Series (6:15 pm at 7000 Edgemere) General Meeting (7:30 pm at 7000 Edgemere)
May 4	EXCOM Meeting (7 pm at 800 So. Piedras)

OUTINGS

SAPILLO CREEK KEY EXCHANGE BACKPACK

Gila Wilderness

DATE: March 12-13, 1994 (NOTE: date change)
CLASS: Moderate +
LIMIT: 12, (6 in each direction)

leader approval and reservations required
LEADER: Rollin Wickenden, 598-8042 (home)
Wesley Leonard, 747-6649 (work)

We will depart El Paso early Saturday morning and drive to our respective trailheads. If all goes as planned, Rollin's group will hike in on Trails 233 (Cow Creek) and 231 (Sheep Corral Canyon) to our campsite among the sycamores along Sapillo Creek. Wesley's group will hike in on Trail 247 (Spring Canyon) to the same campsite. On Sunday, we will exchange car keys and each group will hike out via the other group's route the day before. Come learn the way of the Cougar. Roundtrip mileage is about 15 miles. Elevation gain is less than 1,000'. Come see the Gila Wilderness before the crowds of summer arrive. This trip is subject to cold, rainy weather. Call Rollin or Wesley early for reservations.

EL CAPITAN SERVICE TRIP

Guadalupe Mountains National Park

DATE: March 11-13, 1994
CLASS: Moderate
LIMIT: 12, workshop required
LEADER: Richard Rheder, 562-1999(wk), 544-5659(hm)

Sponsored by Inner City Outings, we'll ride on Friday evening to carcamp at the Pine Springs group site. On Saturday morning we'll ride high-clearance vehicles along a rough dirt road to the Williams Ranch. We'll carcamp at the Shumard campsite near the end of the El Capitan Trail. On Saturday and Sunday, we will work developing that site. The Park rangers will provide tools and supervision. ICO outing rules will apply: no alcohol, cigarettes, or risqué banter. Participants must attend a pre-outing workshop at 6 pm on Tuesday, March 8.

GRAND CANYON BACKPACK

Grand Canyon National Park

DATE: March 19-24, 1994
CLASS: Moderate +
LIMIT: 11, leader approval and reservations required
LEADER: Mike Episcopo, 833-3770

Join us for this fantastic Spring Break adventure to the Grand Canyon.



SPRING BREAK HIKE OR RAFT TRIP

Gila Wilderness, NM

DATE: March 19-23, 1994
CLASS: Easy
LIMIT: 16, leader approval and reservations required

Rafts will not be provided
LEADER: Ted Mertig, 852-3011

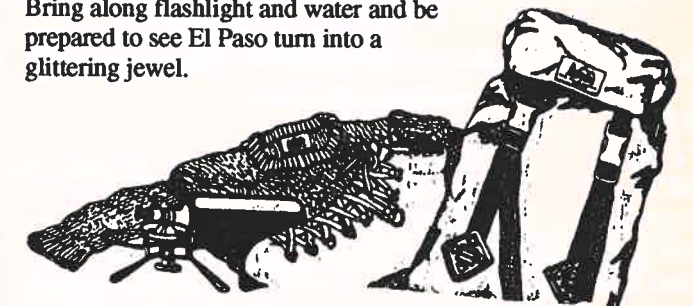
We will leave El Paso Friday night at 6:00 pm and drive to Grapevine Campground to spend the night. The following days we will, depending on the level of water, either hike along or float the main stream of the Gila. It is approximately 36 miles to the takeout point below Turkey Creek. This is an excellent opportunity to fish, hike or explore this section of the Gila. Arrangements for the car shuttle will be made in advance. There will be a per vehicle charge for this service. This is an easy hike, but there will be many water crossings. Call Ted for details.

COMMANCHE PEAK MOONLIGHT HIKE

Franklin Mountains

DATE: Saturday March 19, 1994
CLASS: Moderate
LIMIT: 30, leader approval and reservations required
LEADER: Dale Harris, 544-7149

We will meet at the intersection of Robinson and Kingery off Scenic Drive at 6:30 pm. We will take our time ascending the steep road on this three-mile jaunt with a 1,000' elevation gain. Bring along flashlight and water and be prepared to see El Paso turn into a glittering jewel.



BEGINNING BACKPACKING SERIES

DATE: Wednesday, March 30, 1994
CLASS: Fun with lots of information
LIMIT: None
LEADERS: Experienced Sierra Club Backpackers
Join us at 6:15 pm for the Beginning Backpacking Series...right before the General Meeting at St. Paul's Methodist Church at 7000 Edgemere.

EL CAPITAN TRAIL BACKPACK

Guadalupe Mountains National Park

DATE: March 26-27, 1994
CLASS: Moderate +
LIMIT: 6, leader approval and reservations required
LEADER: Michael Bromka, 532-2652

Come camp at the newly developed Shumard site. To get there, we'll hike the loveliest trail in the Guads, with no significant uphill stretch in our day in: Ogle the Lone Star State's most impressive rock face close enough to kiss it.

OUTINGS

LOWER PAINTED GROTTO DAYHIKE

Carlsbad Caverns National Park

DATE: Saturday, April 2, 1994
 CLASS: Easy
 LIMIT: 12, leader approval and reservations required
 LEADER: Carl Horkowitz, 755-3968(hm), 755-9344(wk)

Early Saturday morning we will depart the city of El Paso for the 2 1/2-3 hour drive to the mouth of Slaughter Canyon in the Carlsbad Caverns National Park. Our six mile round trip hike will take us deep into spectacular West Slaughter Canyon, to the rock shelter adorned with Indian Paintings known as Lower Painted Grotto. No elevation gain. One of the nicer hikes in the area. Don't miss it!



NORTH FRANKLIN PEAK DAYHIKE

Franklin Mountains State Park

DATE: Sunday, April 3, 1994
 CLASS: Moderate +
 LIMIT: 25, leader approval and reservations required
 LEADER: Michael Bromka, 532-2652

We'll carpool from Albertson's to conserve parking space and entry fees at the Tom Mays trailhead. Bring your lunch, water and expect a brisk 3-4 hour workout, up and back. El Paso's Acme offers a view in all directions.

SLAUGHTER CANYON CAVE (NEW CAVE) DAYHIKE

Guadalupe Mountains

DATE: Saturday, April 9, 1994
 CLASS: Moderate
 LIMIT: 15, reservations required by March 31
 LEADER: Carol Morrison, 545-1701

Join us for a guided flashlight trip through an undeveloped cave in the Guadalupe Mountains. We will leave El Paso at a civilized hour, schedule a lunch break and arrive at the cave entrance by 1:00 pm. The National Park Service guided tour requires a flashlight, water, and sturdy hiking boots. At times the tour may include walking steep slippery slopes and using a rope as a hand-line to climb a slope. Part of the tour includes sitting in total darkness. Photography is permitted. For further information, give Carol a call.

GUADALUPE PEAK DAYHIKE

Guadalupe Mountains National Park

DATE: Sunday, April 10, 1994
 CLASS: Moderate +
 LIMIT: 20, leader approval and reservations required
 LEADER: Michael Bromka, 532-2652

This vigorous nine-mile dayhike gets you sweating in its first half hour then eases up to meander from view to majestic view. You won't see the peak till your final half-hour schlog of conquest. Come eat your lunch on the rooftop of Texas.

SAN ANDRES CANYON BACKPACK

Lincoln National Forest

DATE: April 16-17, 1994
 CLASS: Moderate
 LIMIT: 12, leader approval and reservations required
 LEADER: Roy McCloud, 505-437-0179

This is an off-trail backpack through a picturesque area of the Lincoln National Forest. We will meet in Alamogordo, NM in the north parking lot of Burger King at 9:30 am on Saturday. From there we drive to our trailhead south of High Rolls off Westside Rd. Our campsite is located in a meadow which has spring water nearby. An optional dayhike to a lookout point above San Andres Canyon is possible. This off-trail hike requires all

participants to stay together. Call Roy in Alamogordo for reservations and details.

JOIN THE SIERRA CLUB AND OTHER ENVIRONMENTALLY MINDED ORGANIZATIONS CELEBRATE EARTH DAY ON

SUNDAY, APRIL 17, AT CHAMIZAL NATIONAL PARK.

Don't miss this opportunity to enjoy the day at the Chamizal. Call Ted Mertig (852-3011) for more details.

ALAMO MOUNTAIN DAYHIKE AND BACKPACK

Corundas Mountains, NM

DATE: April 23-24, 1994
 CLASS: Easy for dayhike, Moderate for backpack
 LIMIT: None for dayhike, 10 for backpack
 LEADERS: Bill Phillips, 772-6503 and Mike Episcopo, 833-3770

We will leave El Paso early Saturday morning for the 50-mile trip to Alamo Mountain, which contains one of the largest petroglyph sites in the state of New Mexico. After viewing the petroglyphs and having lunch those who opt for the dayhike only will return to El Paso, while the backpackers will drive a short distance to the northeast corner of the mountain where the climb to the top will be. The climb is off-trail with a 1,500' elevation gain. All water must be carried in. Call early for reservations and further details.



BEGINNING BACKPACKING SERIES

DATE: Wednesday, April 27, 1994
 CLASS: Fun with lots of information
 LIMIT: None
 LEADERS: Experienced Sierra Club Backpackers

Join us at 6:15 pm for the Beginning Backpacking Series...right before the General Meeting at St. Paul's Methodist Church at 7000 Edgemere.

OUTINGS

INDIAN HOLLOW BACKPACK

Organ Mountains, NM

DATE: April 30 & May 1, 1994
 CLASS: Moderate
 LIMIT: 12, leader approval and reservations required
 LEADER: Alice Anderson, 505-523-5179 and Rafaela Schuller, 755-3345

Sooooo it's time again to visit Indian Hollow!! Ja Ja, come on let's go, and get some fresh air and view the beautiful peaks of the Organ's. Ja, our campsite is located just below massive Sugarloaf Peak. Soooooo we can meet at Albertson's on North Mesa at 9 am on Saturday and carpool to Aguirre Springs campground. Sunday morning it's hot mountain nettle soup and an exploratory dayhike. Sooooo give us a call early, Ja Ja, for this fun outing.



HOLT MOUNTAIN BACKPACK

Gila Wilderness, NM

DATE: May 7-8, 1994
 CLASS: Strenuous
 LIMIT: 8, leader approval and reservations required
 LEADER: Kathy Sunday, 584-9301

Located in a scenic area of the Gila Wilderness, the trail to Holt mountain presents a strenuous, challenging hike with a 3,000' elevation gain. The exciting vistas from the top are well worth the effort. We will leave El Paso Friday night and carcamp at Sheridan Corral. Saturday morning we will drive the short distance to the trailhead. Our hike to a camping spot near the summit of Holt Mountain will be about six miles on a generally good but steep trail. We will arrive in camp early enough for some dayhiking in the high country with excellent views overlooking Big Dry. Water will have to be carried about 3/4 mile from Holt Spring to our campsite. Call Kathy early for additional information and reservations.

PLAN AHEAD FOR THESE SUMMER TREKS!

- June 19-26 Gila Wilderness Backpack
(Laurence Gibson, 594-7342)
- July 9-17 Weminuche Wilderness (CO) Backpack
(Laurence Gibson, 594-7342)
- August 6-14 Wyoming Backpack - either the Tetons or the Wind River Range
(Laurence Gibson, 594-7342)

OUTING REPORTS

Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument Carcamp, 1/15-17/94

A Sierra Club first took place over the three-day weekend of January 15-17 as an adventuresome group of 12 Sierrans and one dog visited Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument in warm, sunny Arizona. It all began Friday afternoon with our drive to the NM/AZ border to camp for the night in Steins. Saturday morning we completed the remainder of the arduous 465 miles and arrived at the group campsite unscathed and full of expectations. Sunday was devoted to checking out the visitor center and dayhiking three of only seven trails located within this vast wilderness area. All of our hikes originated from the spectacular Ajo Mountain Drive, a 21-mile loop where organ pipe, saguaro, and teddy bear cholla dominate the rugged landscape. We first hike Arch Canyon where a massive natural arch is located, ate lunch, and later hiked Estes Canyon and Bull Pasture loop which offered up a commanding view of the Ajo Mountain range and surrounding area. Later after a short drive to the border, we walked over to pike around in a no-name town just north of Sonoyta, Mexico. Monday all left early for El Paso except for Richard and Mary Lou, who opted for an early morning bike ride to Sonoyta and back. Participants included: Rollin, Kathy, and Susie Wickenden, Megan Graham, Pat Wood and companion

pup, Rafaela Schuller, Richard Rheder, Mary Lou Parker, and Leader Mike, Maria, Dionne "Teddy Bear Cholla", and Brian Episcopo.

Bush Mountain Backpack, 2/5-6/94

The wind was steady and strong but not unbearable as we made our way up the Tejas Trail from the Pine Spring campground on Saturday morning. We took a break for lunch at the junction of the Tejas and Bush Mountain Trails. It was there I began to fear we may not have brought enough food for the trip, as five of us searched through the tall grass frantically for a dropped M&M. We never did find it. Still hungry, we had no choice but to press on to our campsite at Bush Mountain. One of the friendly deer from the herd that hangs around the area probably enjoyed a real treat. The sky was very clear that night, and Alice gave us an interesting astronomy lesson as she identified various stars, constellations and other celestial phenomena. Sunday dawned beautiful and breezy. After lunch, several of the group opted to tackle Hunter Peak on the way back to the parking lot. Making the trip this year were Alice Anderson, Michael Bromka, Peter Skaates, Joe Rodriguez, Mike Episcopo and his daughter Dionne, and Leader Kathy Sunday.

SANTA FE GROUP NEWS

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

TUESDAY, MARCH 15, 1994

JOURNEY TO MAGICAL BHUTAN



The March general membership meeting will highlight the kingdom of Bhutan. Lynda Taylor, long-time environmental activist and a staff member of the Southwest Research & Information Center in Albuquerque, will show her slides and share her experiences in Bhutan with us.

Bhutan is nestled in the eastern Himalayas, between Tibet and India, with extraordinary natural beauty, a rich culture and history derived from Tibetan Buddhism, and warm, friendly people. Lynda and her fiance Robert had the unequalled pleasure of trekking in the Himalayan foothills for almost two weeks with a group of ten people, including four Bhutanese. They averaged 13 to 15 miles a day, hiking between 12,000' and 16,000' elevation as they wove their way through river valleys, mountain passes, rural Bhutanese houses, and passed temples, fortresses, and shrines.

This sounds like a delight for the armchair traveler and for those thinking of trekking in the Himalayas. The meeting, which is free to all, will be held at the Unitarian Church (on Barcelona between Don Gaspar and Galisteo) Tuesday, March 15, 1994, at 7:30 PM.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE NEWS

The Executive Committee of the Santa Fe Group will meet at 5 PM at the Sierra Club Office, 440 Cerrillos Road, on Monday, April 4, and then again on Monday, May 2, 1994. Everyone is welcome to attend. As you have probably guessed, the Ex Com now meets regularly on the first Monday night of the month!

The Conservation Committee of the Santa Fe Group meets at 7 PM on the fourth Tuesday of each month at the group office. All conservation matters to be brought before the Executive Committee should be presented first at the Conservation Committee meetings for discussion and recommendation. The next meetings are March 22, and April 26, 1994, 7:00 PM.

>> SANTA FE GROUP OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS <<

Co-Chairs — Mark Mortier*	983-5870	Political Committee — Ken Hughes*	988-9297
— Norma McCallan*	471-0005	Newsletter Editor — Kay Carlson	982-3926
Secretary/Treasurer — Lionel Soracco*	983-6715	Phone Tree — Martha Anne Freeman*	438-0697
Conservation — Van Perkins*	983-8801	Social/Membership — Patty Bray	989-1924
— George Grossman*	982-1024	Kids' Sierra Club — Justine Freeman	988-9126
Chapter Representatives - Sue McIntosh*	982-4146	Recycling/Office — Carolyn Keskulla	982-9570
— Norma McCallan*	471-0005	Education —	
Publicity —		Outings — Norbert Sperlich	983-1962
Fundraising —		— Norma McCallan*	471-0005
* Member of the SF Group Executive Committee		Vickie Gabin*	986-7315

Terms expire 12/94: Hughes/McIntosh/Freeman/Perkins
12/95: McCallan/Mortier/Soracco/Gabin/Grossman

ALERT . . .

One of our members reports a high incidence of broken car windows at the designated Trail Parking area for the Rio en Medio Trail at the end of 72A out of Tesuque.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES . . .

Social Worker needed . . . to handle tea and coffee at our monthly meetings. No experience necessary. A good way to meet fellow Sierrans.

Publicity Hound . . . get the word out to the world about our great hikes and interesting meetings. Spend a few minutes a month alerting the media.

Call Norma (471-0005) or Mark (983-5870)

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

TUESDAY, APRIL 19, 1994

SAVING ENERGY WITH THE SUN. an ultimate family project

The April general membership meeting will feature a local pioneer in the field of solar energy, Bill Yanda. In the summer of 1991, Bill's family and his brother-in-law's family built a simple mountain cabin on 35 remote acres north of the Santa Barbara divide. The construction was made an educational adventure for their seven children, ages 5-18. Criteria was that the cabin be inexpensive, under \$10,000; all solar, including solar electric lighting; as little impact on the land as possible; complete in six weeks; equal participation for kids and adults; and fun for all.

Bill will discuss this endeavor, showing slides of the building process and solar components. If there is time, he will also answer questions and discuss basic passive solar design and building principles.

Bill has been totally committed to solar usage since 1974 when he wrote the first book on using attached greenhouses as passive solar collectors for homes. The book has sold over 250,000 copies in English, French and German editions. He has written and produced three solar movies and a children's book on energy and the environment and has been a consultant to the DOE, USDA, TVA, UNESCO and many other entities. In 1978 Bill and his wife Susan founded Brother Sun Inc., a building products company, which was sold last year. Since 1974 he estimates he has worked with owners and designers of over 10,000 sunspaces and passive solar projects. Currently he is working on two solar books, a novel and a screenplay and keeps his hand in teaching by working with Solar/Adobe Associates and the Santa Fe Community College. He offers private design consulting services, emphasizing solar greenhouses and sunspaces.

New Mexico is the ideal place to put the sun to work in your home and business. Come hear firsthand from this knowledgeable and interesting Santa Fean. The meeting, as always, will be held at the Unitarian Church (on Barcelona between Don Gaspar and Galisteo) Tuesday, April 14, 1994, at 7:30 PM. The meeting is free and open to all!

NOTES FROM THE CHAIRS' CORNER . . .

We are honored to be the new co-chairs of the Santa Fe Group, and look forward to a full and productive year.

For some time, we have been concerned about the small attendance at the Group's monthly meeting. It has not been a sudden decline, but rather a slow, yet steady, attrition. Where once there were 40 to 50, even 60, people at the general meeting, there are now 15 to 20, perhaps at best 25 to 30. Since the Santa Fe Group, which covers all of Northern New Mexico, has close to 2,000 members, many of which live in or near Santa Fe, this is a pitifully small percentage. Yes, we know Santa Fe has an extraordinary number of happenings on any given evening. It also has a remarkable number of environmental groups and organizations, some of which put on meetings/programs, all of which may ask a commitment of time or money from you as individuals. We also realize that for some of you it is a time of financial hardship and you may be trying to hold down several jobs. But we would urge each and every one of you, whenever possible, to come and join our program meeting on the third Tuesday of each month (except three summer months and December). Generally the speakers are good, often

very good, and the topics timely and stimulating. It is rewarding to meet other members or see old friends. If you are fearful of night driving, or need transportation, call and we will arrange carpooling.

If you have complaints, comments or suggestions about the meetings, please call one of us, or leave a message on the Sierra phone machine. We want these occasions to be truly meetings of, by and for the membership. If there are better ways to achieve this, we and the rest of the Executive Committee are certainly open to trying.

Mark Mortier and Norma McCallan

TELEGUIDE® SANTA FE

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Call for Up to Date Info
on Santa Fe Sierra Club
Enter Category # 2500
for General & Membership Info
for Upcoming Hikes # 2501
for Club Meetings & Events# 2502

>>>>>>>>> SANTA FE GROUP OUTINGS <<<<<<<<<<<

Sat Sun March

- 5 Lionel Soracco (983-6715) Moderate Cross-country Ski Trip to wherever there is snow. Leave 8:30 AM.
- 5 Brian Johnson (983-5672) Moderate Hike Martinez Canyon, north of Abiquiu. 10 miles RT. Lve 8 AM.
- 6 Jeff Jones (984-2389) Very Easy Hike in Eldorado area. Good for families with small children. Meet at 10 AM at the main (second) entrance to Eldorado (Avenida Vista Grande).
- 6 Norbert Sperlich (983-1962) Moderate Hike near La Cienega (Santa Fe River Canyon), mostly off-trail. Call leader for reservations and departure time.
- 12 Bob McKee (672-3426) Moderate/Strenuous Hike up Water Canyon (near White Rock). Some bushwhacking. About 9 miles roundtrip. Call for time and meeting place.
- 13 Victor Atyas (471-7545) Easy/Moderate Hike to Tent Rocks. Leave 9 AM.
- 19 Norrine Sanders (984-0386) Easy Hike up Arroyo Chamisa. Leave 8:30 AM.
- 19 Joe Whelan (984-0746) Moderate Cross-country Ski Tour to wherever there is snow. Leave 8:30 AM.
- 20 Julie Montoya King (438-7197) Moderate Hike to Window Rock. Leave 8 AM.

Sunday, March 20 to Saturday, March 26

- Bill Donahue (983-3675) Ski/Winter Leadership Skills Week, San Juan Mountains, Colorado. See write-up elsewhere in this issue.
- 26 Arnold and Carolyn Keskulla (982-9570) Easy Hike in the Pojoaque Barranca. Leave 8:30 AM.
- 27 Steven Janus (988-4137) Strenuous Hike in the Sandias, through Chimney Rock Canyon to the Crest and return on the La Luz Trail. Call for leader approval and time of departure.

Thursday, March 30 to Sunday, April 3

Norma McCallan (471-0005) 4-day Car Camp with Moderate Day Hikes in Canyonlands National Park, Utah. Leave Wednesday afternoon.

Sat Sun April

- 2 Lionel Soracco (983-6715) Moderate Cross-Country Ski Trip to wherever the snow is. Leave 8:30 AM.
- 3 Norbert Sperlich (983-1962) Moderate Hike to Otowi Ruins/Bayo Canyon. 8 miles roundtrip, mostly off-trail. Call leader for information.
- 9 Joe Whelan (984-0746) Moderate Cross-Country Ski Trip Call leader for destination. Leave 8:30 AM.
- 10 Norma McCallan (471-0005) Moderate/Strenuous Hike on Tunnel Spring Trail (Sandia). Dogs allowed. Leave 8 AM.

15-16-17 Friday-Saturday-Sunday

- Bob McKee (672-3426) Bandelier Backpack to Painted Cave. Call leader for details.
- 16 Norrine Sanders (984-0386) Moderate Hike in Diablo Canyon and along Rio Grande. 9 miles roundtrip. Leave 8 AM.
- 17 Steven Janus (988-4137) Moderate Hike some off-trail, on west face of Atalaya to Talaya, and back by way of Castle Rock. Leave 8 AM.
- 23 Victor Atyas (471-7545) Easy/Moderate Hike to Tent Rocks. Leave 9 AM.

★ ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE / ISSUE HIKE FOR APRIL ★

- 24 WITH MEMBERS OF THE SKI AREA CONTAINMENT COALITION — Mark Mortier (983-5870) Moderate Hike in Ski Basin expansion area. Leave at 8:30 AM.
- 30 Arnold and Carolyn Keskulla (982-9570) Easy Hike from Tesuque. Leave at 9 AM.



Interested in ski touring, but nothing is scheduled? There may be a last-minute trip or if there is sufficient interest one may be arranged. Call John Turnbull (982-9329) Santa Fe or Stan Kuchak (292-9138) Albuquerque.

SIERRA CLUB -- Santa Fe Group · 440 Cerrillos Road · Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501 · 505/983-2703

Sat Sun May

★ ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE / ISSUE OUTING FOR MAY ★

- 1 SANTA FE RIVER CLEAN-UP DAY Meet 10 AM, Alto Park (on West Alameda). A variety of events, including tree planting, habitat rehabilitation and trout release. Jointly sponsored by the Sierra Club, Petroglyphs por los Niños, Trees New Mexico, River Guardians, Sweeney and Agua Fria Elementary Schools, Santa Fe High School, and several neighborhood organizations. George Nagels (982-9454) (local Sierra Club contact) JOIN IN !!
- 1 Bob McKee (672-3426) Moderate Hike on the Quemazon Trail near Los Alamos. 9 miles roundtrip, 2200' elevation gain. Call for time and meeting place.

★ ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE / ISSUE HIKE FOR MAY ★

- 7 Ted Williams (984-2664) RETURN OF THE RIVER Easy Tour Mr. Williams, a civil engineer, has a dream [endorsed by the Old Santa Fe Association, among others] of having water running down the Santa Fe River all day, every day, all year long!! Walk several stretches of the river with him and see how he would achieve this exciting goal, and control flooding and erosion. Leave 9:30 AM.
- 7 Caroline Glick (984-3184) Strenuous Hike to Thompson Peak, via Glorieta Baldy. Considerable elevation gain. Call for reservations.
- 8 Norbert Sperlich (983-1962) Strenuous Hike Shaggy Peak and Deer Creek. Mostly off-trail. Call leader for reservations.
- 8 Jeff Jones (984-2389) Easy Hike on the Chamisa Trail. 4¾ miles roundtrip. Slow pace, suitable for parents with small children. Leave 9:30 AM.
- 14 Norrine Sanders (984-0386) Strenuous Hike to the Stone Lions in Bandelier from Ponderosa Campground. Leave 8 AM.
- 14 Victor Atyas (471-7545) Easy Hike on the Frei Trail in Bandelier from the campground to Ceremonial Cave. Leave 9 AM.
- 15 Art Judd (982-3212) Moderate Hike somewhere up in the high country. Leave 8 AM.
- 21 Stephen Janus (988-4137) Moderate/Strenuous Hike to Cerro Picacho and St. Peter's Dome via Sanchez Canyon. Considerable off-trail and elevation change. See some of the most remote portions of Bandelier. Leave 8 AM.
- 22 Arnold and Caroline Keskulla (982-9570) Easy Hike up Aspen Vista Road. Leave 8:30 AM.
- 28 Lionel Soracco (983-6715) Moderate Hike from Black Canyon campground, plus . . . some off-trail . . . hiking boots required. Leave 9 AM.
- 29 Elizabeth Altman (471-8490) Moderate Hike on Buckman Mesa. Leave 9 AM.

Monday, May 30 (Memorial Day)

Julie Montoya King (438-7197) Moderate Hike Hermit's Peak [near Las Vegas] 8 mi. RT. Leave 8 AM.

Thursday to Monday, May 26 to 30

Norma McCallan (471-0005) 5-day Backpack to Dark Canyon, Utah. Leave Wednesday noon. Will probably go down Woodenshoe Canyon and return via Peavine. 37 miles and some day hikes up side canyons. A beautiful, remote canyon system. Expect hot days.



THE EARTH'S BIRTHDAY PARTY . . . Earth Day will be a whole lot different this year. It will involve children, ages 4 to 7, and butterflies, thousands of them. If you are a kindergarten or first grade school teacher, public or private, or do home schooling with your children, or are simply interested in what is going to be a fun-filled event, please call Kay Carlson (982-3926) with the SF Citizens Environmental Task Force.

Outings Note -- All outings, unless otherwise specified, leave from the PERA parking lot at the corner of Paseo de Peralta and Old Santa Fe Trail (across the street from the State Capitol and Corbae). Carpooling will be arranged at the parking lot, and each hiker should come prepared to pay 5 cents a mile to the driver of the car in which hiker rides. Hikers should bring a lunch, water, sturdy hiking boots or shoes, and clothing suitable for the weather — leader reserves the right to turn away anyone whose equipment or experience appears unsuitable. Leader has the right to alter destination of hike or cancel the trip due to weather, unfavorable conditions, or insufficient numbers of participants. Unaccompanied minors must have written permission from parents or guardians to participate; permission forms are available at the Sierra Club office. Dogs not permitted on hikes unless noted otherwise. Telephone leader for details of the individual hike.

THE LOG SOUTHERN NEW MEXICO GROUP

Outings

March 12-13, 19-20. Archeological field work - no special skills required. volunteer to help stabilize a Butterfield Stage Coach Stop located on state owned land. Call Ben Zerbey 526-6207.

March 26. A moderate to difficult day hike to Kilbourne Hole and Aden Crater. Bring water and a lunch, wear hiking boots, and don't forget a hat and sunscreen! Call Jim Basler at 521-4822.

April 9. A tour of the Ladder Ranch. Bring lunch and water. Plans have not been finalized. Call Marianne Thaeler at 522-3421.

April 23. A moderate to difficult hike to Dog Canyon. Bring lunch and water, remember the hat and sunscreen. Call Jim Basler at 521-4822.

Meetings

February 24. General Membership Meeting. 7:30 PM, in 107 Science Hall, NMSU campus. Janice Hartly, State Land Office will speak with slides on "Cultural Properties on State Trust Lands".

March 9. Executive Committee members invited. 7 PM at 2015 Huntington Dr., Las Cruces. Call Marianne at 522-3421 for details.

March 24. General Membership Meeting. 7:30 PM, in 107 Science Hall, NMSU campus. Jim Winder, member Southern New Mexico Group Executive Committee, will speak with slides on "Riparian Restoration - an Economic Benefit to Ranchers".

April 13. Executive Committee Meeting, 7 PM at Southwest Environmental Center. Call Marianne at 522-3421 for details.

April 28. General Membership Meeting. 7:30 PM, in 107 Science Hall, NMSU campus. Topic to be announced later or call Marianne at 522-3421.

NMSU STUDENT SIERRA CLUB:

All meetings are held in 107 Science Hall at 7:30 PM. Meeting days are March 2, April 6, and April 21. April 21 the speaker will be Richard Spellenberg, the topic "Chihuahuan and Sonoran Vegetation". For more information about the NMSU STUDENT SIERRA CLUB and its activities call Lori Schmirerer at 524-9126.

Group Directory		Education Committee	
Chair, Marianne Thaeler	522-3421	Andrew Hands	523-9059
Vice Chair, Myra Price	524-0261	Jim Winder	267-4227
Secretary, Kris Paulsen	523-9059	Conservation Committee	
Treasurer, Ben Zerbey,	526-6207	Marianne Thaeler,	
Student Advisor, David Pengelly	646-3901	BLM, FS and Military	522-3421
Student Director, Schmierer	524-9126	Erika Kocsis,	
Outings Chair, Jim Basler	521-4822	Water Conservation	522-0726
Programs Chair, David Pengelly	646-3901	Tony Chiaviello,	
Membership, Tony Chiaviello	525-1802	Grazing issues	525-1802
Publicity, Cheryl Blevins	524-4861	Ben Zerbey,	
Agriculture, Jim Winder	267-4227	National Parks	526-6207
Sierra Seniors, Marian Nygard	522-4689		

FAMILIAR ENVIRONMENTAL ACRONYMS

by Marianne Thaeler

EA means Environmental Assessment. This document is the lowest level of environmental review, and the most common.

EIS means Environmental Impact Statement. This document is required by governmental agencies for major activities.

DEIS means draft Environmental Impact Statement. This document is a draft released to the public to solicit public Comments in order to learn about possible effects from the public's perspective BEFORE the EIS is prepared so that any required changes can be made.

FEIS means final EIS. This is the final document upon which a decision or determination is made.

Programmatic EIS means EIS which is required to be extensive. It includes activities that are multi-faceted and/or to extend over a long period of time.

Now that you have mastered the "lingo" perhaps you would be interested in reading one of these public documents. They are prepared by all government agencies such as the U.S. forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. contact your local BLM office, or Forest Service office and request a list of environmental documents being prepared or if they have a list you can see. In most cases environmental documents are not difficult to read, and they do describe specific anticipated government actions. New Mexico has so much federally owned and controlled land, it behooves all persons who care about the environment to read one of these documents and look at them with a discerning eye. All member of the public are allowed to make written Comments to these documents, check in the front pages for the Deadline by which the comments are to be sent. If you have visited the area, or if you are a property owner in the area be sure to mention in the beginnings of your Comments.

If you have gotten this far, you are an environmental activist! Look for the names of others who may have similar interests or concerns or call the chair of your Sierra Club GGroup. For the Southern New Mexico Group, call Marianne at 522-3421.

ACCESS PERMITS TO OTERO MESA NOW AVAILABLE IN LAS CRUCES

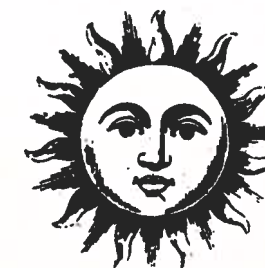
In October 1992 Fort Bliss Texas/New Mexico rescinded the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) long standing authority to issue access permits to McGregor Range and Otero Mesa.

In January 1994, after outcry from the public and environmental groups, authority to issue Access Permits for Otero Mesa was returned to the BLM...FOR DONA ANA COUTY RESIDENTS ONLY.

The BLM has requested the authority to issue Access Permits in Otero county and the City of Alamogordo Residents (Otero County Commission has offered to provide office space) and to others (visiting family and friends perhaps). Ft. Bliss has denied this requested authority. This does not seem fair!

At present, Access Permits are available to the public at offices located 26 miles south of Alamogordo on Hwy. 54, then 5 miles east of the McGregor Range Headquarters Rd. The offices are located in a metal building (unmarked) and offices are only open in week days during business hours OR for Dona Ana County Residents at the BLM Caballo Resource Area offices 1800 Marquess St. (between Boutz and Valley Dr.).

If you are interested in visiting the pristine grasslands on Otero Mesa and seeing the antelope play, get an Access Permit, take a picnic! If the present system is inconvenient for you WRITE our US Senators and Congressman and complain. The Southern New Mexico Group has complained and gotten authority returned to BLM in Las Cruces, but your help is needed to restore full authority to the BLM in behalf of all the citizens and residents of Otero County particularly.



PATRIOT MISSILES TO INVADE HIKING AND CAMPING AREAS
 Update - Otero Mesa, McGregor Range, Ft. Bliss in New Mexico
 By Marianne Thaeler

Otero Mesa was a "scatter area" for the Hercules Missile program of yore. Otero Mesa is not a "contaminated area", all live ordinance was removed years ago. It is not an "impact area". The Department of Defense has a private "DOD Personell Only" hunting preserve on and below the Otero Mesa escarpment.

The Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for the Joint Training Exercises Roving Sands at Fort Bliss, Texas and New Mexico and White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico (FPEIS) has been released. The focal point of this document is Otero Mesa, an area of New Mexico which is managed for multiple use by the Bureau of Land Management, Caballo Resource Area. The federal legislation Public Law 99-606 and Congressional Record which withdrew these lands to the military is clear that recreational uses of Otero Mesa were to continue after withdrawal of the lands to the military. This includes use of the area for grazing, hunting, camping, hiking and wildlife watching. And, until now these activities have been enjoyed by many. There are 14 grazing units on Otero Mesa. (The story of Grazing on Otero Mesa must wait for a future article.) The Southern New Mexico Group has taken an organized Field Trip to the Mesa, and the Native Plant Society in Alamogordo has scheduled a similar Field Trip in 1994.

Otero Mesa has 4 Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) and a Wilderness Study Area designated by BLM. The State of New Mexico, Dept. of Game and Fish, has told the Army that Otero Mesa has the most productive herd of pronghorns in the State. Only antique muzzle loaded gun hunters are allowed to hunt on the Mesa for two days. There are deer, quail, and varment hunting seasons.

Roving Sands is a familiar name in southern New Mexico. It has been an annual exercise for Reserves for years. Without changing the name the US military has changed the exercises to Regular Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines mock wars, and has expanded the exercises to include Otero Mesa. Troops are inserted onto BLM lands WEST of the Organ Mountains in Dona Ana County. Fifteen (15) patriot missile sites have been placed on Otero Mesa in Otero Mesa. "Public Meetings" were held, BUT NOT ONE MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC ATTENDED any of the meetings. (Transcripts of the "public meetings" in the Final EIS so show and state.)

The Southern New Mexico Group and others sent written Comments to the Draft EIS. BUT THEY WERE NOT INCLUDED IN THE FINAL EIS. The BLM has objected to the expansion, the US Fish and Wildlife has objected, the State of New Mexico Game and Fish has objected, the Sierra Club and other environmental and recreation groups (hunters) have objected, ranchers have objected. All these voices have not been heard.

Copies of the Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement Roving Sands Joint Training Exercise Program for Ft. Bliss, Texas and New Mexico and White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico are available from:

Mr. Arver Ferguson, Jr.
 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
 Fort Worth District
 P.O. Box 17300
 Fort Worth, Texas 76102-0300
 ATTN: CESWF-PL-RE/Ferguson
 OR telephone (817) 334-3246.

DEADLINE FOR COMMENTS IS March 21, 1994.

Write and object!!! Otero Mesa is an area of pristine grassland with watchable wildlife that should be protected. Send copies of your letter to our Senators and Congressmen and object!! There should be No military exercises on Otero Mesa. Congress said in 1986 (PL 99-606) that Otero Mesa should be managed by BLM under the Federal Land Policy and Management Policy Act of 1976 - that means grazing and recreation. If you are writing Comments you may be interested in the information below. Your Comments to the Army Corp of Engineer to this FEIS are important since the number of Comments received must be significant

