

# Rio Grande Sierran



News of the Rio Grande Chapter Sierra Club  
July/August 1996

## Chapter Urges New Mexicans to Take Tough Steps to Use Water Wisely

The Rio Grande Chapter passed a Water Conservation Resolution at the June Executive Committee meeting. The six-point resolution urges all New Mexicans and appropriate officials to adopt the following conservation measures:

**1. Build no new golf courses.** "New Mexico can ill afford a million gallons a day applied to any more golf courses," according to Chair Van Perkins. "Recycled water is the only water that should be used for a sport born in wet Scotland."

**2. Neither construct new ski areas nor expand any existing ones.** "Skiing's application of artificial snow, which takes water away from down-mountain communities, can no longer be tolerated if this state is to handle a 100-year drought."

**3. Permit residential use of greywater.** "Plants can be saved during the drought if legal restrictions on the use of dishwater, washing machine outflow and shower water are immediately lifted."

**4. Apply treated effluent on public recreation areas.** "Spaces such as baseball fields would benefit from such applications while freeing up potable water for other uses."

**5. Switch from flood irrigation of fields to drip irrigation.** "Given that 85% of the state's water is used for agriculture, this is the biggest water saver of all. Up to half of all water applied to fields through the flooding practice can be saved

by converting to drip. Loans should be made available at long-term, low interest rates, to farmers willing to make the switch."

**6. Replace water inefficient plumbing.** "Reducing toilet flushes from 4.5 to 1.5 gallons adds up to

significant savings. We need to work to allow up-front financing from private companies willing to install new fixtures for public bodies, as is done for energy efficiency measures in public buildings. At the same time, municipalities and water utilities should follow Albuquerque's lead and fund a toilet trade-in program"

## Needed: Volunteers to Work on Water Issues

by Doug Fraser, Legislative Lobbyist

Starting on the morning of June 11, the New Mexico Legislative Interim Integrated Water and Resource Planning Committee met for two days to discuss the present drought and how the State should address the matter. They will be meeting monthly through November. Their next meeting is tentatively scheduled for July 11 and 12 in Belen and Albuquerque, respectively. (Thereafter, they will meet August 8 and 9 in Santa Fe; September 9 and 10 in Deming and Las Cruces; October 7 and 8 in Santa Fe; and November 7 and 8 in Tucumcari and Clovis. All dates are tentative and exact locations will be announced later.)

Chapter Chair Van Perkins asked me and Vice Chair George Grossman to find a few good water volunteers to track this emerging legislative emphasis on the conservation as well as the planning and allocation of our very limited water resources. What we need are people willing to follow the Interim Committee hearings around the State during the summer and fall. Hopefully, such a person or persons would follow the matter into the winter legislative session as well. The Chapter needs to know the legislative concerns and, perhaps more importantly, the interests of the individual legislators regarding water. This is only the second year of this Interim Committee and the first regular 60-day session for the Legislature to look hard at this issue following extensive summer and fall deliberations. If the last 30-day session is any indication, this upcoming winter session will be unprecedented in addressing water issues.

Water has in the past been the Chapter's number one priority. The Legislature will be looking to the Chapter for leadership on this issue. If you would like to volunteer to follow this Committee or to work on other aspects of the water issue, please call George Grossman (982-1024) or me (662-5204).

## Chapter Files Notice of Intent to Sue Conservancy Kills Endangered Fish

by Richard Barish

The Rio Grande Silvery Minnow was once one of the most abundant and widespread fish in the Rio Grande basin. However, the Silvery Minnow has been extirpated from about

95% of its historic range by human modifications of the river. The Silvery Minnow is currently found only between Cochiti Reservoir and Elephant Butte Reservoir. In 1994, the Silvery Minnow was listed as an endangered species under the federal Endangered Species Act.

### Excessive Diversions for Irrigation

Beginning on about April 12, 1996, the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District began diverting almost the entire flow of the Rio Grande into its irrigation canals. Prior to these diversions, about 70% of the remaining population of Silvery Minnows existed in the 35-40 mile stretch of the Rio Grande from San Acacia, about 12 miles north of Socorro, to the north end of Elephant Butte Reservoir. As a result of the District's diversions, the river dried up entirely from somewhere north of Socorro to Elephant Butte Reservoir, and many minnows died. An

<i>Inside</i>	
Primary Results	2
Uneasy Chair	3
New President	3
Overgrazing	4
Munitions	4
Electronic Club	5
Los Alamos News	9
Chapter Outings	14
New Members	15
Activist Profile	16
War on Environment Update	16

<i>Group News</i>	
Albuquerque	5-7
El Paso	8-9
Santa Fe	10-11
So. New Mexico	12



Rio Grande Chapter  
Sierra Club  
P.O. Box 9191  
El Paso, TX 79983

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
El Paso, TX  
Permit No. 2370

**Chapter ExCom will hold its annual retreat September 14 & 15 at The Black Range Lodge in Kingston All Members Welcome Call Chair Van Perkins for details, 505-983-8801**

**Executive Committee**

Van Perkins, Chair, Council Delegate (505) 983-8801  
van.perkins@sierraclub.org  
George Grossman, Vice Chair (505) 982-1024  
Blair Brown, Alb. Rep., Treasurer (505) 265-3231  
bblairb@aol.com  
Barbara H. Johnson, Santa Fe Rep. (505) 466-4935  
barbara.johnson@sierraclub.org  
Ted Mertig, Council Alternate (915) 852-3011  
tmertig@aol.com  
Craig O'Hare (505) 474-3842  
Mike Seidensticker, Membership (915) 544-5741  
76251.2520@compuserve.com  
Margot Wilson, So. NM Rep. (505) 744-5860  
margot.wilson@sierraclub.org  
Jim Winder (505) 267-4227  
jrwinder@aol.com  
John Wright, Secretary (505) 247-4353  
wright@apsicc.aps.edu

**Issue Chairs**

Conservation--Jack Humphrey/Kathy Love(505)243-5319  
humphrey@unm.edu  
Energy & Trans.--Ken Hughes (505) 474-0550  
ekemper@igc.apc.org  
Fundraising--Ford Robbins (505) 466-7665  
Grazing--Gary Simpson (505) 298-3315  
Inner City Outings--Ted Mertig (915) 852-3011  
tmertig@aol.com  
Military Issues--M. Thaeler (505) 522-3421  
marianne.thaeler@sierraclub.org  
Outings--Norma McCallan (505) 471-0005  
mccallan@stlib.state.nm.us  
Political--Craig O'Hare (505) 474-3842  
Water--Eric Ames (505) 751-0351(W)  
Wilderness--John Wright (505) 247-4353  
wright@apsicc.aps.edu  
George Grossman (505) 982-1024  
Wildlife--Julie Hicks/Martin Heinrich (505) 345-7832  
mtheinrich@aol.com

**Mining Oversight and Control Project**

Sue McIntosh, Director (505) 983-4254  
sierranm@aol.com

**Legislative Lobbyist**

Douglas Fraser (505) 662-5204

**Rio Grande Sierran**

Production Manager-B. Johnson (505) 466-4935

**Sierra Club Addresses:**

**Albuquerque Group**  
207 San Pedro Ave. NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87108  
(505) 265-5506

**So. New Mexico Group**  
P.O. Box 3705 UPB  
Las Cruces, NM 88003  
(505) 522-3421

**El Paso Group**  
800 S. Piedras  
P.O. Box 9191  
El Paso, TX 79983  
(915) 532-9645

**Southwest Regional Ofc.**  
516 E. Portland St.  
Phoenix, AZ 85004  
(602) 254-9330  
FAX: 258-6533

**Santa Fe Group**  
621 Old Santa Fe Trail #10  
Santa Fe, NM 87501  
(505) 983-2703

**Sierra Club National**  
85 Second St., 2nd Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94105  
(415) 977-5500

The *Rio Grande Sierran* is published by the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club as a benefit for Sierra Club members living in New Mexico and West Texas. (Make address changes by calling Membership Services at (415) 977-5649.)

Non-member subscriptions at \$10 per year are available from the Treasurer, Blair Brown. Send checks to 2226B Wyoming NE #272, Albuquerque, NM 87112. Please allow 8 weeks for processing.

The opinions expressed in signed articles in the *Rio Grande Sierran* are the opinions of the writers and not necessarily those of the Sierra Club. Articles may be freely reprinted for nonprofit purposes, provided that credit is given to the author and the *Rio Grande Sierran*. Please let us know. Products and services advertised in the *Rio Grande Sierran* are not endorsed by the Sierra Club.

Contributions are welcomed from members and non-members. Send to *Rio Grande Sierran*, B. Johnson, 1 Encantado Loop, Santa Fe, NM 87505 or by E-mail to barbara.johnson@sierraclub.org. Articles should be submitted by the 15th of the month prior to publication. Preferred format is via modem or on Macintosh disc as Microsoft Word file. Other formats may be compatible--check with the Production Manager. Letters and articles are subject to abridgement.

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

# Primary Election Results and Their Impact on New Mexico's Environment



by Craig O'Hare, Political Chair

As consumers, the old adage is, "You get what you pay for." Well, when it comes to public policy, "You get what you vote for." Unfortunately, not many New Mexicans exercised their privilege/obligation to vote during the June 4th Primary Elections. It's hard to say how a low voter turnout affected the Rio Grande Chapter's endorsed candidates, but it is, indeed, a disappointing reflection on the state of representative democracy in our state and country.

By and large, Sierra Club-endorsed candidates did well during the primaries, although there were a few notable losses that could negatively impact environmental decisions at the Capitol come January. Here's a wrap-up from the races and the outlook for the General Election. The voting percentages given were unofficial at the time we went to press. The phone numbers of the candidates are provided (where available) for your information should you wish to volunteer or financially contribute to a particular candidate. The Chapter will finalize its endorsements for the General Election by mid-August and will announce them in the next issue of the *Sierran*.

**State Senate**

Janice Paster (District 10-Albuquerque). *Won*, 75% of the vote. Sen. Paster chairs a key committee for us, Judiciary, and will face strong opposition from her November opponent, Ramsey Gorham.

Cisco McSorley (District 16-Albuquerque [247-1928]). *Won*, 68% of the vote. Rep. McSorley was one of the leading veteran environmental advocates during his long tenure in the House. Due to the large Democratic make-up of this Senatorial District, he should have a good chance of winning in November.

Shannon Robinson (District 17-Albuquerque). *Unopposed* in the Primary. This is a generally Democratic district, so it looks as

though Sen. Robinson has a good chance in November.

Ann Riley (District 18-Albuquerque [293-5868]). *Unopposed* in the Primary. Sen. Riley chairs the Rules Committee which oversees confirmations of gubernatorial appointments. She faces a very tough battle in the General Election with Mark Boitano.

Tom Wray (District 21-Albuquerque). *Lost* with 48% if the vote. Sen. Wray, one of the few Republican environmental voices in the Senate, will be sorely missed.

Leonard Tsosie (District 22-Crownpoint, Navajo Nation). *Unopposed* in the Primary and in the General Election. Sen. Tsosie has repeatedly been a key vote on the Conservation Committee.

Michael Sanchez (District 29-Belen). *Unopposed* in the Primary. A heavily Democratic district gives him an excellent chance in the General Election.

Liz Stefanics (District 39-Santa Fe). *Lost* by roughly 50 votes. At press time, Sen. Stefanics was considering asking for a recount of the votes. She's been a leader on the Conservation Committee, particularly in water management issues. Her absence from that Committee would be a huge loss.

**Of Special Note:** Long-time anti-environmental Sen. Tom Benavides lost to Linda Lopez (District 17) in the Primary. Sen. Benavides consistently opposed our positions. We look forward to working with incoming Sen. Lopez, who is unopposed in the General Election.

**State House of Representatives**

R. David Pederson (District 5-Gallup). *Won*, 55% of the vote. *Unopposed* in the General. Rep. Pederson is sure to continue to be an

(con't on page 15)

## ORGANIC RANCH PRODUCTS

A committee of the Southern New Mexico Group is interested in developing alternative markets for the few New Mexico ranchers who practice sustainable agriculture. The first effort will focus on the production of organic hamburger produced in accordance with an environmental standard. The product will be derived from only mature cows and bulls which are free-range raised without the use of pesticides, hormones or antibiotics. The ranch that produces these animals must show marked ecological improvement over the past two years and must not practice wholesale predator control.

The hamburger will be ground lean with a minimum of fat then fresh frozen in one pound packages priced at about \$1.99. Initial sales will be through direct orders with individuals; however, associations with like-minded retailers are desired. We ask that all of you who are interested supporting this product or who have

contacts with restaurants, grocers or food distributors please contact Jim Winder at HC 66, Box 38, Deming New Mexico, 88030, (505) 267-4227 or email: jrwinder@aol.com.

### WILDERNESS : THE FOUNDATION OF CULTURE

A Workshop on BLM Wilderness in New Mexico

Hosted by the New Mexico Wilderness Coalition and the Santa Fe Group of the Sierra Club

Featured Speaker - Bill Richardson, U.S. Representative to Congress

October 5, 1996 in the Unitarian Church, Santa Fe

For more information, contact Courtney White at 982-5502

As most of you are well aware, a recent Sierra Club referendum on forest policy netted a new national policy that demands a ban on all commercial logging on public land. Although the referendum did not muster anything resembling a mandate (less than 7% of the Club's total membership voted in favor of the ban), it is official Club policy. Now we must live with the consequences and I, for one, am rather alarmed.

Wise-Use antagonists, abetted by a salacious press whose appetite for controversy is downright carnal at times, are already demagoging the new no-cut policy as Exhibit A in environmentalism's continuing slouch toward extremism. True or not, it is terrible timing. Just when it seemed that the flames of conflict could not get any higher, along comes a new log for the rhetorical fire—placed there by Sierra Club hands.

Worse is the spin coming out of Club headquarters in San Francisco. The new policy, we are reassured, will "not tie the hands of local groups or chapters in any way." And yet, according to another memo, "if asked, Does the Sierra Club favor the elimination of commercial logging on federal lands? anyone speaking in the name of the Club will explain that we do. This is clearly and unequivocally our ultimate policy objective." The answer to this awful contradiction, we are told, is "explicitly stated in background materials."

#### Moderation vs. Extremism

I'm upset because, as anyone who has read this column knows, I believe the solution to the myriad problems confronting us and the environment on which we depend, lies in moderation, not more extremism. As a society we must learn to curb our appetites, acknowledge our mistakes, and check our exploitative instincts. We must teach others to live in moderation, which is not the same thing as denial, so that we might all have a bright future together.

This is no less true for activists in the environmental movement than it is for all those "others" out there—Wise Users, industry executives, ignorant consumers, as well as the 80% of Americans who insist, in poll after poll, that they want a healthy environment. In fact, it is more true for us. We cannot preach moderation while behaving like an extremist organization, as this no-cut logging policy would have us do. To do so destroys our credibility, which, in turn, destroys our ability to effect change. Moderation is as moderation does, no matter how explicitly stated in background materials.

Policies such as this one indicate that we are poised to become the elitist bastards our enemies have been accusing us of being. There is simply no other way of interpreting it, in spite of the spin. It is a brass-knuckle policy. It suggests that the Club is ready to swing wildly and

energetically at any person who eyes a tree as a source of revenue. There are no nuances in this bullring, no compromises, and no common ground; the forest products industries, no matter how big or small, will view this policy as a threat to livelihoods, and by extension, their lives. It is an invitation to rumble.

Rather than spin in circles until they become dizzy, I think our leaders in the Sierra Club should admit that the no-cut policy is elitist and either embrace it wholeheartedly, or fight to overturn it. To do neither is pure bureaucracy. Either we become the narrow-minded know-it-alls we are accused of being, or we endorse moderation as a concept and begin to enforce it—starting with ourselves.

#### Losing Touch with America

Now I am beginning to understand why the Republican-led assault in Congress on 25 years of environmental legislation went as far as it did. The answer in a nutshell: we helped. Not by complacency, as has been suggested often, or by ineptitude, also suggested. No, environmentalists helped by losing touch with the hopes and concerns of middle America. We quit making our case to ordinary Americans and then resorted to threats and denunciations when the chickens came home to roost in the '94 elections.

Fortunately the irresistible force was met by an immovable object—public opinion—and the Republican war on the environment ground to a halt. The only genuine

accomplishment has been stalemate. As a result, many middle Americans became educated to the precarious nature of the laws that were designed to protect them. They responded and were largely, if not entirely, responsible for stopping the bad bills in Congress. We led, of course, but the people followed.

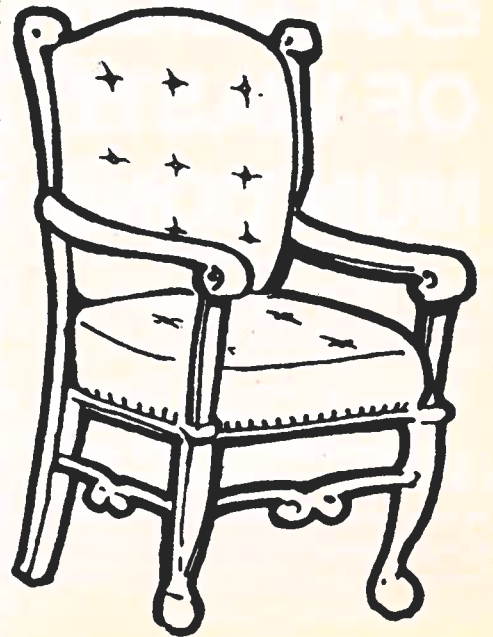
In the process, however, the environmental movement's disconnection from ordinary citizens was laid bare. We know people want clean air and clean water but we do not really know much more than that. Nor do some of us seem to care. The hoi polloi are useful when aroused, some seem to believe, but not much needed beyond that. We want their letters but we do not desire their opinions. Let them watch television.

It is this attitude that produces policies such as the commercial logging ban. I cannot believe that, if asked "Do you favor the elimination of commercial logging on federal lands even if it means the destruction of rural communities and the livelihoods of people who live there?" that the majority of Americans, or Sierra Clubbers for that matter, would respond "Yes! Of Course!"

Some, however, see it differently. The lesson they have learned from the year's Washington wars is this: we must fight fire with fire, extremism with more extremism until, like the two comic strip spooks ~~bell bent on destroying our water,~~ both sides perish in a blaze of sound and fury, achieving nothing.

## The Uneasy Chair

by  
Courtney White



#### Sierra Club Passes Torch to Youngest President

## ADAM WERBACH ELECTED SIERRA CLUB PRESIDENT

The Sierra Club, the nation's largest grassroots environmental organization, has elected 23-year-old Adam Werbach as its 46th President. Werbach is the youngest President elected in the Sierra Club's 104-year history.

"The Sierra Club is now in its second century of protecting America's environment, for our families and for our future. It's time my generation stepped up, acted on our environmental values, and joined forces with the Sierra Club to protect our air, water and wild places," said Werbach.

"Whether it's cleaning up a stream, recycling or lobbying Congress to keep our air and water healthy and safe, every American has the power and responsibility to protect our environment. And this year, the unprecedented number of Americans who are worried about the erosion of our nation's environmental protections, will use their power at the polls.

"The Sierra Club is committed to educating and turning out the millions of Americans who will make a candidate's record on the environment the deciding factor in their vote," explained Werbach.

"The environment is a special

concern of women worried about the health consequences of weakened environmental safeguards and for my generation of voters—18 to 30 year olds worried about the future," Werbach explained.

"The environment is the primary issue that prompts this generation, my generation, to take social and political action. Our job is to get the word out to them and to give them a place to act on their anxieties and convictions. My goal is to make that place the Sierra Club."

As a high school student, Werbach founded and served as the first director of the Club's national student program, Sierra Student Coalition, which has trained hundreds of student activists, registered hundreds of thousands of new voters and involved tens of thousands of students in every state with Sierra Club's conservation campaigns.

Werbach also served for two years as a member of the Sierra Club's Board of Directors and as a member of the Club's national membership committee and volunteer development committee. He was named an "Environmental Hero" during the Club's Centennial celebration in 1991.

Werbach is a graduate of Brown University with a B.A. in Political Science and Modern Culture and Media. He is also a graduate of Harvard-Westlake School in North Hollywood, CA and of the Mountain School of Milton Academy in Vershire, VT. He has toured the U.S., Europe and Asia as a vocalist and guitarist.

### Special Meeting of the New Mexico Wilderness Coalition

Mike Matz, executive director of the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance:

"Our struggle for Wilderness in Utah."

A workshop on tactics and organization.

Business meeting and special workshops.

August 24, 1996

New Mexico Tech, Socorro, New Mexico. 10 am.

For more information contact John Wright at 247-4353.

# Hazardous Material NEW MEXICO ONLY STATE TO PERMIT EXPLOSION OF WASTE MUNITIONS

by Marianne Thaeler

(Marianne represented the national Sierra Club on the Western Governors Association's Military Munitions Waste Working Group for development of on-site innovative technologies)

New Mexico has become the first and only state to issue hazardous materials RICRA Permits for open air detonation of bulk explosives and waste munitions. (Permits are for 10 years.) In 1995, two Permits were issued, one to US Army Fort Bliss for a site on McGregor Range in New Mexico, and one to White Sands Missile Range (WSMR) for a site located east of San Andres National Wildlife Refuge. In 1996, Permit Amendments were approved for larger quantities at the Ft. Bliss site. Presently an Application is pending for a Holloman AFB site northwest of Alamogordo, 300 yards from the Holloman-WSMR boundary. These Permits do not allow open burning of liquids. They are for bulk explosives, propellants, pyrotechnics, and damaged, defective or expired munitions. (Chemical weapons, gases, liquids, nuclear materials and TNT contaminated soils from old munitions plants are NOT part of these Permits.)

The traditional method for destroying bulk and out-of-date munitions stockpiles and munitions that have been removed as part of clean-ups, is to "thermally treat reactive wastes," that is, blow them up. They can be blown up in place or at sites called OB/OD Units, open burn/open detonation units. The eventual clean-up of these OB/OD units can be very costly. (New, clean technologies as an alternative to OB/OD have been developed at such places as Los Alamos National

Laboratory, but they have not yet been put in use.)

**What quantities are we talking about?** Initially the Fort Bliss Permit allowed 343 pounds net explosive weight (NEW) per quarter and 1,372 NEW per calendar year. But 6 months after the Permit was issued, Amendments were requested and recently approved to increase the amounts to 2,500 NEW per quarter and 10,000 NEW per calendar year, or an increase from 13,720 NEW during the permitted life of the OD unit to 100,000 NEW.

The WSMR unit allows detonation of up to 20,000 NEW per calendar year.

The Holloman AFB Permit application is for 240,000 NEW per calendar year.

**What are our concerns?**

**First, air and water pollution.** Water is a multi-faceted concern in the Tularosa Basin since test wells are bringing up brine from depleted water tables. State air quality monitoring stations do not exist on or near federal installations in the Tularosa Basin.

**Import of munitions for detonation in New Mexico.** Since the State line crosses Ft. Bliss and Ft. Bliss controls all access, and because Ft. Bliss representatives admitted at public hearings in Las Cruces that materials freely move across the border, the import of munitions does take place. But the boundaries of Ft. Bliss also abut WSMR, and WSMR abuts Holloman. All three of these areas have completely controlled

access.

**On-site monitoring for Permit compliance.** The New Mexico Environment Department can only make three announced site visits per year. Ft. Bliss, for example, has told ED staff that announced visits are required for "reasons of national security."

**Coordination with the State of Texas.** There appears at this time to be no formal communication between the New Mexico Environment Department and Texas environmental compliance offices, for air and water quality, especially as regards cumulative effects. And, there is no communication about the potential for interstate transport of military munitions waste.

**What does all this mean?** Permits do not appear to be meaningful for public environmental quality assurance and protection. Permits have been approved before with full knowledge that a decision will soon be made as to when and where military munitions would be considered hazardous waste requiring hazardous waste disposal. (EPA and the military are presently under Court Order to develop Rules as to when and where munitions are to be declared hazardous. EPA says from the storage site; Army says not until they reach the disposal site. A decision on this issue is expected before the end of this year.) No new clean technologies have been considered by the military, although they exist.

## OVERGRAZING -- THE DAMAGE DONE

by Gary Simpson, Grazing Chair

The reform of grazing practices in New Mexico has been in the news a lot lately. Radical ranchers have changed the focus of the debate from resource degradation to a false dichotomy between cultural and socio-economic upheaval versus an environmental ethic dominated by preservationists. Environmentalists must now respond and put the argument back in touch with reality. We must again focus on the resource degradation that affects all New Mexicans, not just those of us who use our public lands. And make no mistake; the argument is not about livestock grazing, but, overgrazing. Unfortunately, overgrazing has become the norm, rather than the exception. Now is a good time to review why many citizens feel it is high time to stop the practice of overgrazing.

### Habitat Destruction

The most biologically diverse habitats of the Southwest are its most productive habitats: the riparian areas of our streams, rivers and remaining wetlands. Unfortunately for wildlife, this is also the preferred habitat for cattle. Cattle are an exotic species that were originally adapted to the rivers and wetlands of Europe. Their proliferation in the American West has resulted in severe habitat degradation, especially in marginally productive areas such as the Southwest. Overgrazing by livestock in riparian areas has simplified that habitat, so much so that 13 species of plants and animals have been listed as threatened or endangered in the Southwest as the result of riparian overgrazing by domestic livestock. Birds such as the Southwest Willow Flycatcher,

Bell's Vireo and Yellow Bill Cuckoo as well as the Riparian Gartersnake, Gila Trout and the once ubiquitous Leopard Frog all owe their demise to livestock overgrazing.

### Restoration Easily Done

Habitat destruction by livestock comes as the result of cattle preferentially feeding on young saplings, such as willow shoots, and bunch grasses, reducing the ground cover so much that the ecosystem loses virtually all of its vertical habitat diversity. Look at almost any stream in New Mexico and you will see low ground cover and a preponderance of older, mature trees. There are not enough younger trees or tall enough grass to provide adequate cover or feed for many specialist species that inhabit those "middle" habitats that have been literally eaten away. Restoration of these habitats is usually easily accomplished by the removal of livestock or at least a strong reduction in livestock grazing, which allows grasses and young trees to flourish. Habitat destruction also occurs from the rapid sedimentation of stream beds, the result of erosional forces that occur whenever overgrazing removes grasses that hold soil in place. This process of soil removal, and the subsequent changes in stream morphology, coupled with a lack of adequate shading resulting in low survival of young trees, is the reason that so many species of native fish are endangered.

### Water Effects

Perhaps the most damning fact regarding overgrazing is the direct link between overgrazing and lowered water

quality and water quantity. Erosional forces unleashed by overgrazing result in stream degradation as the water becomes more turbid and laden with metals released by the erosion. Our streams are becoming so degraded that many of the streams that drain wilderness areas are in non-attainment status as determined by the State of New Mexico. Our aquifers are recharged largely by surface water that percolates into the ground. The longer that moisture can be retained on the surface, the more recharge occurs. Whenever overgrazing occurs, the grasses that hold soil and moisture are eaten away and replaced with forbs that do not efficiently hold moisture on the surface. As a result, moisture quickly evaporates or runs downstream, away from potential recharge sites. All these actions result in less water for the aquifer, which means less water for the people of the state to use productively, and this lowers our standard of living. Watershed restoration should be a high priority for our state, but no politician talks of conservation in this sense. It is our task, as the Sierra Club, to change that sad fact.

**What can we do?** The ranching industry is solidly tied in to the power structure that exists in this state. Only loud, persistent and powerful voices can be expected to overcome the status quo. Fortunately, we have reason and logic on our side. We must reach out to all New Mexicans, including environmental as well as economically based groups, to get our message across. It will be a difficult task but one that eventually must be won to restore New Mexico to ecological as well as economic health.

### Immediate Need

A more immediate need is to defeat Senator Domenici's Grazing Bill. Please write or call President Clinton and urge him to veto this giveaway bill, which hands over not only control of public lands but is also the first step to giving outright title of our public lands to the ranchers. Senator Domenici's bill should reach President Clinton's desk this summer. He must hear from us early and often if we can expect him to veto it.



Visit our homepage on the World Wide Web:

<http://www.nm.net/~sierra/>

You can contact other activists via E-mail by using our List Serve:

[sierra@technet.nm.org](mailto:sierra@technet.nm.org)

## Electronic Sierra Club: Sad News

by Blair Brown (bblairb@aol.com)

This month's column brings you sad news: On May 7, Bruce Batson, co-author of this column, died in a car accident.

Many of you knew Bruce only through this column, while others knew his creations, the Rio Grande Chapter Homepage (<http://www.nm.org/~sierra/>) and the Sierra List (by E-mail to [sierra@technet.nm.org](mailto:sierra@technet.nm.org)).

The origin of these creations began almost two years ago at a breakfast meeting at Shoney's. Embracing the belief that electronic communication was to be a major tool to spread the Club's message to a broad and potentially whole new audience, we started to set up the Rio Grande Chapter's section of the Electronic Sierra Club.

Bruce was the primary driving force behind the creation of the Rio Grande Chapter Homepage and was also the keeper of the Sierra List. It was his belief in the Worldwide Web as a communication medium and his commitment to making things happen that really gave the rest of us the motivation. He was the

one who learned to program HTML, who worked with the Technet folks to make the Homepage look great, and who coordinated with folks in other states to make our Page a part of the National Club Home Page. We just KNOW that none of this would have happened without him.

We have lost a good friend and a dedicated Sierran, and our hearts are sad.

As a memorial for Bruce, the rest of us are dedicating ourselves to furthering all the good work that he began:

-We are trying to increase the effectiveness and freshness of the Homepage by adding current information about local conservation campaigns, events, and outings.

-We are adding participants to the Sierra List. We pledge to use it to get the word out quickly when we need to respond to alerts and hopefully generate real dialogue about conservation campaigns.

Please join us in sending warm wishes to Ann and Bruce's family to help them through this difficult time. They have requested that memorials be given to the Sierra Club Rio Grande Chapter or the Albuquerque Group.

## Sustainable Albuquerque News -- Getting Involved

by Susan Gorman

This summer there are plenty of opportunities to do something to help make Albuquerque a great sustainable city. Here are a few ideas:

### Regional Transit Coming Soon?

Folks in the Albuquerque Area have an immediate opportunity to make a major positive move toward sustainability by developing and implementing a Regional Transit Service Plan. The Plan concept and information about the status of transit in the Albuquerque Area compared to other similar urban areas was presented to the public at a series of Open Houses held in locations throughout the Service area, which includes Bernalillo County and portions of Valencia, Sandoval, Santa Fe and Torrance Counties. Here's a summary of the presentations in case you didn't get a chance to attend.

**Background.** In Spring 1994, Bernalillo County, working with Albuquerque, Rio Rancho, the Middle Rio Grande Council of Governments (MRGCOG) and the State Highway and Transportation Department, initiated a study to determine the feasibility and need for a Regional Transit Authority (RTA) for the region. The study discovered what we already know... that the brown cloud is due to cars, that roads alone will not unsnarl worsening traffic congestion, and that we need alternatives to Single Occupancy Vehicle travel. The study recommended that a Regional Transit Authority should be formed to provide those alternatives.

**What's an RTA?** It is an entity which is specifically created to provide coordinated transit services for the entire region. The first step toward forming the RTA is to convince the State Legislature to pass enabling legislation. Then an Interim RTA is established and the RTA Board members finalize the Regional Transit Service Plan, figure out what it will cost, and where the funds will come from. Then there is a confirmation election which gives the voters the chance to vote for creating the permanent RTA.

Then the implementation of the Transit Service Plan would begin and soon we'd all be able to leave our cars at home and leave the driving to someone else or ride our bikes on safe and pleasant trails and routes! Neat, huh?

The Transit Service Plan would include short-term improvements like Dial-A-Ride, Neighborhood Circulator Vans, Park 'N' Ride Lots, Improved Bus Service and Bicycle Improvements. Long-term, we could anticipate more and bigger Park 'N' Ride lots, Trolley, Light Rail, Intermodal Stations, etc.

**Public Input is Essential!** If we want the transit system to be one we'll like, we need to get involved in the process early. Albuquerque's Transit and Parking Department, under the visionary leadership of Ann Watkins, along with the other partners, is embarking on a big campaign to give us ample opportunities to participate. Here is a list of some ways:

--If you missed the Open Houses, call 764-6100 and ask for a copy of the Report they handed out and a copy of the Feedback Form. Read the report and complete the form.

--Come to the Sierra Club General Meeting on September 16. The program will feature a presentation and discussion of the Regional Transit Service Plan.

--Volunteer to be a member of the Citizens' Advisory Committee. If you're interested, write to Ann Watkins, Transit and Parking Department, and let her know.

--Ride the bus or a bike or both. The best way to understand what works and what doesn't about the present system is to try it. I have been traveling around Albuquerque via a combination of bus, walking, biking and bumming rides for two and a half years and IT CAN BE DONE and it's not that hard to do! Call me if you want help planning your trip.

### What's the Cost of Growth?

The 1996 Legislature passed a Memorial which directed the Local Government Division of the Department of Finance & Administration to study the costs and benefits of growth in New Mexico. The Local Government Division invited 2 dozen folks from organizations

like the New Mexico Homebuilders Association, the New Mexico Industrial and Office Parks Association, the New Mexico Department of Agriculture, the State Land Office, the New Mexico Municipal League, several architects and urban planners, a population analyst, and me (representing the Sierra Club).

We worked through a well-planned facilitated discussion and at the end of the day, everyone felt that we had shared ideas and insights, aired concerns and issues, and begun to build a solid base to enable the Local Government Division to carry out the evaluation. Check out this column in the next issue to learn more!

### Sustainable South Valley

Members of the Atlixco Coalition, Joanna Hendricks, Rosalie Olivas and Orlando Olivas, joined the Sustainable Albuquerque Team on May 9. They reported on the Coalition's success in organizing a diverse group of organizations and individuals in the South Valley to work together to "enhance and regenerate a self-sustaining agrarian community-based lifestyle." They are committed to educate, demonstrate, organize and facilitate to support preservation and improvement of such a lifestyle.

Most recently, they are focusing on opposing the application by MCT Industries to the Bernalillo County Commission for a zoning change to convert a 20 acre parcel from A-1 (Agriculture) to M-1 (Manufacturing). Atlixco joined many other community organizations to oppose the change, citing many violations of the Comprehensive Plan and the Southwest Area Plan, but the County Commission approved the change anyway.

We discussed the situation and suggested ways they can continue to oppose the change. We were really impressed that they had done good, solid research and were determined to continue the campaign. The Atlixco Coalition is certainly an impressive organization, and we hope to continue to work together.

### More on Mesa Del Sol

Dave Bouquin and I met with Harry Relken and Tim Callahan of the State Land Office, and we asked lots of tough questions about their plans to develop the 13,000 acre site. We discussed the philosophy of the project and the commitment of the Land Office to enable new and innovative ideas to be tried at Mesa Del Sol. We asked about specific environmental considerations like open space, trails, wildlife conservation, transit, energy and water conservation. They explained the steps needed to make the project happen and how the Sierra Club can help.

What we heard sounds really encouraging, and we are excited that Mesa Del Sol could be a powerful demonstration of New Urbanism in the West. Harry agreed to answer more questions, and we agreed to publish his answers in the next *Sierran*. Meanwhile, we will continue to gather information, do more research, seek expert opinions, and discuss the plans with other Sierrans to determine if we should recommend that the Albuquerque Group endorse Mesa Del Sol.

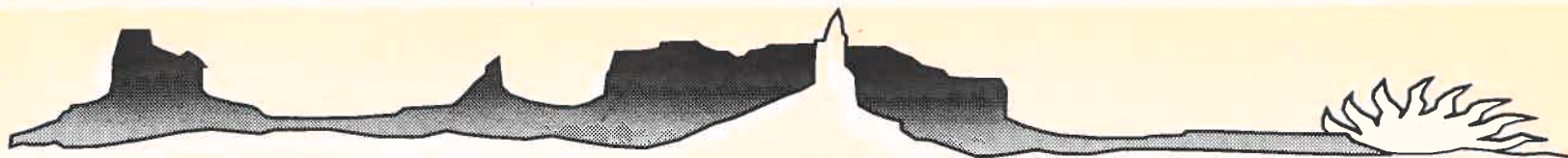
### The Sustainable ABQ Team is moving!

The Sustainable ABQ Team is having regular meetings on the second Thursday of each month. The next meeting will be on July 11 at 7:00 PM, at the Sierra Club Office. We will watch several videos on Sustainability and Livable Cities. Does anyone have a small TV/VCR that we can use for the meeting?

At the June meeting we agreed on the working definition of sustainability and the Principles, Mission, Goals and upcoming actions of the Team. We plan to present these in the form of a Position Statement to the Group Conservation Committee and the ExCom for approval.

We could sure use some help with all of this, and we invite your participation! We especially need Westside, North Valley and Rio Rancho Sierrans to help us since there is so much to lose if the current development trends in these areas continue.

Contact Susan Gorman, 2226B Wyoming NE, #272, Albuquerque, NM 87112, phone 505-265-3231, FAX: 505-256-0373, EMail: [bblairb@aol.com](mailto:bblairb@aol.com)



## July 15, 1996 General Meeting

7:30 PM, UNM Law School Room 2401

### Mapping Southwestern Wildlands

The Forest Conservation Council is coordinating the Southwestern Wildlands Initiative to develop map-based wildlands recovery strategies for each of the Southwest's 16 distinct bioregions. A broad-based alliance of over 25 scientific, community, and environmental organizations in Arizona, Utah, Colorado, and New Mexico is involved in this initiative. Come and listen to John Talberth, Director of the FCC, to learn more about this exciting effort and how you can participate.

General Meetings are held on the third Monday of every month at 7:30 PM at the UNM Law School, Room 2401, on the corner of Mountain Rd. and Stanford NE.

Bring your own cups for refreshments during the break.

### NEW MEMBERS

A new member gathering is being planned for Saturday, August 17, 1996. Look for the invitation in your mailbox the week of August 1st. The gathering will be held at a Sierra Club member's home so be sure to RSVP!

### CAN YOU HELP?

The Albuquerque Group Office has an immediate opening for several office volunteers. Can you spare one hour a week or more? Duties include: mail sorting, answering phone calls and messages, and sending membership packets out per request. This is a great way to get to know your Group Executive Committee and local issues. Please call Leslie Lazaga at 296-0944 if you'd like to help!

### GET INVOLVED!

A volunteer coordinator for the Albuquerque Group phone tree is needed. The phone tree is established and team coordinated. Coordinators and members have been active in calling, writing, E:Mailing, and faxing President Clinton and our state's legislators in Washington D.C. and Santa Fe about issues concerning our environment. You can make a difference by getting involved!! Please call Jack Humphrey and Kathy Love at 243-5319, or E:Mail to [humphrey@unm.edu](mailto:humphrey@unm.edu), to volunteer.

The position of program coordinator for our monthly General Meetings will be open beginning December 1996. If you need meeting ideas or contacts, the Albuquerque Group ExCom is very helpful. Duties include: scheduling guest speakers, making arrangements for audio/visual equipment, if necessary, at the Law School, submitting descriptions of meeting for the *Rio Grande Sierran* and our local newspapers, introductions and announcements at the meetings, bringing refreshments to the meetings (your costs are reimbursed), and closing down the room at the end of the meeting. Total monthly time involved, including the meeting, is three to four hours. Please call Leslie Lazaga at 265-5506.

## CALENDAR

Unless otherwise noted, meetings take place at the Club office, 207 San Pedro NE

July 3	<b>Mexican Wolf Coalition, 7:30 PM</b>
July 3	Deadline for agenda items for Group ExCom. Call Susan Gorman at 265-3231
July 8	<b>Group ExCom, 7:00 PM</b>
July 11	<b>Sustainable Albuquerque Meeting, 7:00 PM.</b> Featuring videos about Saving Place and Livable Cities. Everyone is welcome! Call Susan Gorman, 265-3231
July 15	<b>General Meeting, UNM Law School, Rm 2401, 7:30 PM</b>
July 17	Deadline for agenda items for Conservation Committee. Call Richard Barish, 247-8079
July 22	<b>Conservation Committee Meeting, 7:00 PM</b>
August 7	<b>Mexican Wolf Coalition, 7:30 PM</b>
August 7	Deadline for agenda items for Group ExCom. Call Susan Gorman at 265-3231
August 8	<b>Sustainable Albuquerque Meeting, 7:00 PM.</b> Call Susan Gorman, 265-3231
August 12	<b>Group ExCom, 7:00 PM</b>
August 15	Deadline for articles for Sept/Oct <i>Rio Grande Sierran</i>
August 21	Deadline for agenda items for Conservation Committee. Call Richard Barish, 247-8079
August 26	<b>Conservation Committee Meeting, 7:00 PM</b>
Sept 14-15	<b>Chapter ExCom Retreat--Kingston, NM</b>

**There will be no August General meeting. An environmental group picnic is being planned for August or September. Call for information.**

### Wet Pavement? Out of Control Sprinklers?

Call the Wasted Water Hotline 768-3640

### Make Better Business Decisions... COMPTON RESEARCH SERVICES



- ◆ Company Intelligence
- ◆ Market Research
- ◆ Legal Research

899-2975  
Fax: 898-9570

## Group Directory

1996 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
207 San Pedro NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87108  
Office Telephone: 265-5506  
Fax: 256-0373

Group Chair	Susan Gorman	265-3231
Vice Chair	Nick Persampieri	281-7845
Secretary	Blair Brown	265-3231
Treasurer	Kathy Love	243-5319
	Richard Barish	247-8079
	Ron Grotbeck	296-0944
	Julie Hicks	345-7832
	Jack Humphrey	243-5319
	Barbara Leonard	862-7915

The Albuquerque Group of the Sierra Club depends entirely on the efforts of volunteers. To help, call any of us!

### ADMINISTRATION

Office Organizer	OPEN	
Books/Calendars	Larry Compton	899-0679
Information Technology	Blair Brown	265-3231
	<a href="mailto:bblairb@aol.com">bblairb@aol.com</a>	
Media Coordinator	Julie Hicks	345-7832
Membership	Barbara Stone	265-5304
Newsletter	OPEN	
Outings	Stan Kauchak	839-4301
Phone Tree	Jean Valentine	869-2090
	Co-Chair--OPEN	
Political Chair	Ron Grotbeck	296-0944
Programs	Leslie Lazaga	296-0944

### CONSERVATION

Conservation Chair	Richard Barish	247-8079
<b>Campaign Team Leaders</b>		
East Mountain	Nick Persampieri	281-7845
Petroglyph National Monument	Ike Eastvold	255-7679
Sustainable Albuquerque	Susan Gorman	265-3231
War on the Environment	Richard Barish	247-8079
Western New Mexico	Barbara Leonard	862-7915
Wilderness	Jack Humphrey/ Kathy Love	243-5319
	John Wright	247-4353
Wildlife	Martin Heinrich	345-7832

**Outings may be cancelled or changed due to weather or other reasons, please call leader before outing. You must bring appropriate shoes, clothes, pack, rain gear, and water.**

**Thur-Sun July 4-7 (give or take a day)**  
 Moderate-Strenuous  
 Miles: 8-9 Car: 450  
**Uncompahgre Peak Climb/Carcamp**  
 Over the 4th come with us to climb the 6th highest peak (14,309 feet) in Colorado. This will be a 3-day/2-night trip. We will carcamp at Nellie's Creek campground and day hike to the top. Because extreme conditions must be expected, participants must contact leader to ensure that they have the proper equipment for the climb.  
 Leader: Tom Leck 256-7217

**Western New Mexico Outing**  
**Fri July 19-Sat July 20**  
 Two-day Campout  
 Ojo Redondo Campground, Zuni Mountains  
 Cibola National Forest near Gallup and Grants  
 Please Call for directions and fire conditions.  
 Leaders: Barbara Brandt 488-5233; Barbara Leonard 862-7915

**Cohousing is Sustainable Housing**

by Ian Ford

Would you like to save money, build community, get out of the rent cycle, and live in a sustainable way? Then cohousing may be for you. There are many people in Albuquerque who share these interests. They have started meeting regularly to share their visions and coordinate the foundation of cohousing projects in Albuquerque and the surrounding areas.

One of the projects has already started. We call it Truffula House. It is a mini-cohousing project of three units, and we are eager to expand. Each of the original two-bedroom units cost about \$33,000. There will be a common living room, common garden and greenhouse, but each unit still has a private bath and kitchen.

Next to our new property is a huge vacant building, which we are annexing to form a much larger cohousing community. This property includes over an acre of land located about a 10-minute walk from UNM. Plans allow for about 12 apartments, offices, a student housing co-op, a greenhouse, art gallery, and theater. Residents will also have access to a large common kitchen and dining room. Plans for renovation include passive solar heating, water-saving features, and periphery parking, leaving room for a safe yard away from the roads.

This kind of housing is an essential ingredient for sustainable urban areas. A major benefit is that it re-uses vacant structures (infill development) and increases density and variety of uses, which all cut down on the need for transportation. This is good for air quality, keeps the city smaller, and saves lives. For example, a resident of Truffula House could operate a business in an office in the same building, walk to buy groceries, and visit friends, all without needing a car.

Cohousing of this sort is also important for revitalizing the social health of a city, and providing security for children. Because the neighbors know each other, they watch out for each other. Unlike apartment houses, cohousing residents own their space and don't move as often. Residents build a community through the self-governing process and at common activities such as meals.

What's most amazing is that cohousing can cost a lot less than conventional housing, because it wastes less. Not every family needs a washing machine and a private driveway. Units in Truffula House, for example, will provide what people really want--their own quiet private space, like-minded neighbors, security, a garden, and a good location--for only \$30-50,000, rather than the \$80-120,000 you would pay for a single-family house.

The Albuquerque Cohousing Group meets monthly. There are subgroups for urban, suburban, and rural locations. The next meeting is on July 12. Call Diana Good at 265-5521 for details. For more information on Truffula House, call Ian Ford at 884-7168.

**Sat Jul 20 Moderate-Strenuous**  
 Miles: 5-6 Car: 150  
**Lake Peak Day Hike**  
 We'll make a loop hike starting up Santa Fe Ski Area and returning by way of Raven's Ridge. This is a short but spectacular hike with great views. Be prepared for cool and/or wet weather. some rock scrambling near the peak. The climb up will be strenuous as we must gain 2200 feet of elevation, but we will do it at a slow pace. Contact Tom for details.  
 Leader: Tom Pentencin 255-1497

**Sun-Sat Aug 4-10 Strenuous**  
 Miles: 46 Car: 450  
**Continental Divide Backpack**  
 We'll go from Cumbres Pass 46 miles to Elwood Pass along the Continental Divide Trail. Enjoy the beauty of this wild and scenic area over this 6 1/2 day hike. Come see the elephant! Limit: 10 experienced backpackers only. Contact the leader for more information.  
 Leader: John Thomas 298-5234

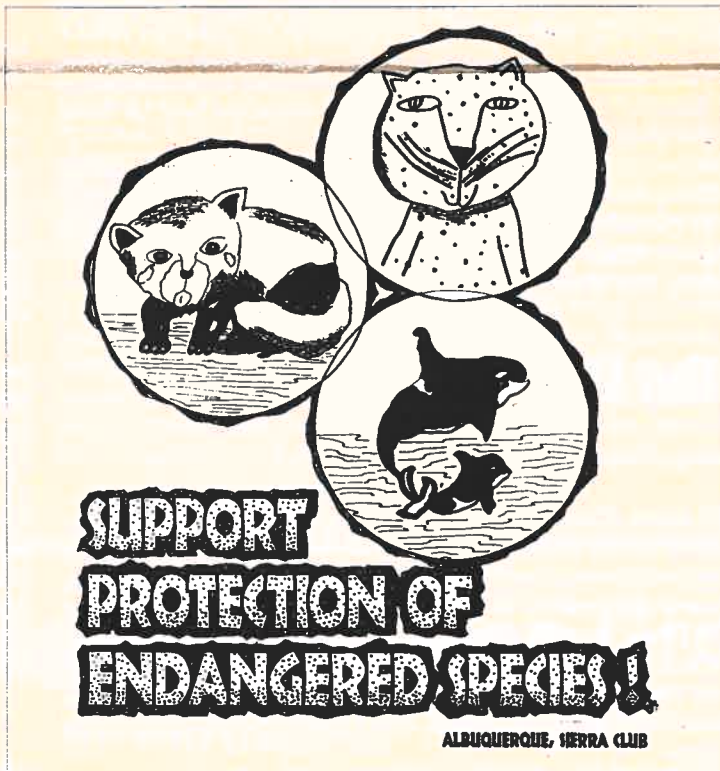
**Sat-Sun Aug 10-11 Moderate**  
 Miles: ? Car: ?  
**Mystery Carcamp**  
 Due to the recent forest closings caused by fire hazards, expect the unexpected. Contact Tom for details on this mystery carcamp.  
 Leader: Tom Leck 256-7217

**Sun Aug 11 Leisure**  
 Miles: 3 Car: 3  
**Rinconada Canyon w/ Volcanoes Option Hike, Petroglyph National Monument**  
 We will hike up Rinconada Canyon to view thousands of petroglyphs. Hikers can return to their cars, or take the option of continuing to the volcanoes. Bring sack

lunch for the volcano option. Meet at 8:00 AM. Bring camera, binoculars and sturdy shoes. RSVP.  
 Leader: Ike Eastvold 255-7679

**Sun Aug 18 Leisure**  
 Miles: 3 Car: 3  
**Geological Windows Hike Petroglyph National Monument**  
 The petroglyphs were first created about 1000 BC. The age of petroglyphs can be estimated from the darkness of the patina; comparison of style, content, and execution to the rock art of other areas; comparison of pottery design to petroglyph design; and the superimposition of one petroglyph on top of another. This area of the park is secluded in a near wilderness-like setting. Meet at 8:00 AM. Bring camera, binoculars and sturdy shoes. RSVP.  
 Leader: Ike Eastvold 255-7679

**Sat Aug 24 Easy**  
 Car: 200  
**Rio Grande Regrowth Service Project**  
 Under the direction of the BLM, we will mount an effort to restore native habitat along the Rio Grande. This part of a summer-long experiment is to control Tamarisk (Salt Cedar) using non-herbicide methods. The BLM has promised to treat all participants with dessert and a storyteller during lunch. We will meet in Albuquerque at 7:30 AM in order to meet the BLM at Orilla Verde Recreation Area near Taos at 9:30 AM. Bring working clothes, gloves, hat, sunscreen, lunch, and plenty to drink. You are also encouraged to bring clothes that can be worn for cooling off in the river. Contact Barbara for details.  
 Leader: Barbara 265-5304



**SUPPORT ENDANGERED SPECIES AND CHILDREN'S ART!**

This year the Albuquerque Sierra Club decided to let kids get involved in protecting Endangered Species. A T-shirt design competition was held for Albuquerque Fourth Graders. They were encouraged to submit drawings on a chosen Endangered Species along with a small paragraph on why this animal is special to the child. The drawings and responses were wonderful and choosing a winner was a huge challenge! In the end we chose three! The above design is in bright colors with the names of winners on the back. The T-shirt is 100% pre-shrunk unbleached cotton. The shirts make perfect gifts...kids love them! Please fill out this form and send to the address below. Support the Sierra Club! Quantities are limited.

Price per shirt: \$14.00 (Includes shipping costs)

Three shirts or more: \$12.50 each (Includes shipping costs)

Name and shipping address:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Quantity: \_\_\_\_\_

Sizes: \_\_\_\_\_

Total amount enclosed (check or money order please): \_\_\_\_\_

Send to: Albuquerque Sierra Club, c/o Julie Hicks, 207 San Pedro Dr NE, Albuquerque, NM 87108 (any questions please call 505-345-7832).

## NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

by Wesley Leonard

From time to time, I hear comments that the Group leadership is out of touch with the membership, or that the Group is elitist and lacking in diversity. At other times people say they would like to be more involved, but don't know what to do.

In reality, the Group is simply a reflection of the membership, and especially those members who step forward and assume responsibility for some aspect of the Group's activities. There is no monolithic, top-down organizational structure, and, in my twenty-five-year association with the Group, I've yet to receive a single directive or order from Club headquarters.

The bottom line is that if you feel the Group needs to be doing something different, then please step forward and assume responsibility for making that change happen. The activities that the Group is presently involved in reflect the interest of local members who feel that an activity or issue is important enough to merit their time and efforts as a volunteer.

A good example of this is the Inner City Outings (ICO) program. A few years back, the ICO was struggling to survive. Now, there are probably twenty plus members who work with the ICO on a regular basis to the point where they operate semi-independently with their own Executive Committee. The success of the ICO is a reflection of an activity that a critical mass of members thought was important enough to get involved in.

We, in the leadership, want to know what the members want. But, when only some twenty to thirty members (out of a total of six hundred) even take the time to vote in the Group elections, it's difficult to be sensitive to every member's concerns.

In an effort to determine the wishes and interest of the members, we are planning to survey a representative sample of the Group. The survey, which will be done this summer by Group interns Ron Sissel and Chris Gibson, will be both by phone and mail. Please take the few minutes needed to respond so that we will know what you would be willing to work on as a volunteer and what your interest are. We also plan to give members a chance to voice their opinions on the types of outings they want to see the Group offer. And, finally, the June 26 General Meeting was an informal get-together where input was provided to Group leaders. We hope you attended and provided input.

At anytime, we can always use at least one hundred more volunteers than we now have. If you want to get more involved, you don't have to wait for the survey. Give me, or any other ExCom member, a call now and let us know what you would be willing to do. For example, we currently need a Chapter Representative, a Membership Chair, an Assistant Newsletter Editor, and a Hospitality Representative. And, of course, we always need more outing leaders. If you would like to volunteer for any of these positions, please let us know.

We have a great and diverse membership in the El Paso Regional Group. The Group will become truly effective, however, only when more of the members commit their time and energies to the cause of preserving and protecting our fragile planet.

I hope to hear from you soon.

## From the Outings Chair

by Kathy Sunday, Outings Coordinator

Hello, again, from the outings department! First, the bad news--because of extremely dry conditions in most of our favorite hiking areas, some upcoming outings may not be able to take place as scheduled. Fires, forest closures and other effects of our current drought have put a damper on some of our plans. Leaders, please call the Forest Service before your hikes to check on conditions. Last weekend, dry lightning ignited some 54 fires in the Gila. Fire conditions are extreme at the moment. We all need to use good judgment in planning our hikes. Don't risk the people or the forest by taking chances.

Next, consider the following basic outings rules. These simple guidelines apply whether you're a leader, a frequent participant or a novice. They're designed to make outings more pleasant and safe for everyone:

1. All leaders and assistants must be members of the Sierra Club in good standing. If your membership has lapsed, you cannot lead a hike. Leaders also need to be active in the Club: attend meetings, participate in Club activities and get to know the members.

2. Leaders need to have successfully completed a Red Cross first aid course (or equivalent). Concern for safety, and training for what to do in an emergency, are some of the most important requirements for a leader. If you are an outings leader and do not have a current first aid card, please contact me.

3. Remember the 3-hike rule. We always encourage new people to join us on hikes. However, after going on 3 hikes, we ask those who would like to keep hiking with us to become members. Some of our hikes are quite popular, and members always get first priority for sign-up.

4. Pets are allowed only on outings that are pre-advertised as pets-permitted outings.

5. No firearms or radios are permitted on trips.

6. Trips start and end at the trailhead. We often arrange a meeting place from which participants may elect to "caravan" to the trailhead. We certainly encourage carpooling, but we cannot arrange carpools. Don't forget that if you are riding with someone, you need to pay your fair share of the gas costs.

I'll address some other policies and guidelines in future issues, as well as get into more fun topics. In the meantime, be careful out there!

## GROUP DIRECTORY

<b>Chairman</b>	Wesley Leonard	747-6649	
<b>Vice Chair/Program</b>	Gary Williams	562-3540	
<b>Secretary</b>	Mike Seidensticker	544-5741	76251.2520@compuserve.com
<b>Treasurer</b>	Kathy Sunday	584-9301	sunday@pogo.den.mmc.com
<b>Member/Publicity</b>	Ted Mertig	852-3011	tmertig@aol.com
<b>Member/Admin.</b>	Bill Phillips	772-6503	
<b>Member</b>	Richard Rheder	544-5659	af303@rgfn.epcc.edu
<b>Member</b>	Trish Puente	833-7585	
<b>Franklin Mtns</b>	John Sproul	545-5157	ae494@rgfn.epcc.edu
<b>Hospitality</b>	Barbara Mertig	852-3011	tmertig@aol.com
<b>Inner City Outings</b>	Richard Rheder	544-5659	af303@rgfn.epcc.edu
<b>Interns</b>	Ron Sissel	533-7723	rksissel@utep.edu
	Chris Gibson	591-4100	
<b>LORAX</b>	Betsy Julian	544-5741	76251.2520@compuserve.com
<b>Membership</b>	Bill Phillips	772-8508	
<b>Outings</b>	Kathy Sunday	584-9301	sunday@pogo.den.mmc.com
<b>Phone Tree</b>	Mike Seidensticker	544-5741	76251.2520@compuserve.com
<b>Political Action</b>	Jim Bell	581-8864	
<b>Population</b>	Ed Van Thuyne	544-5659	af303@rgfn.epcc.edu
<b>Public Lands</b>	Wesley Leonard	747-6649	
	Ted Mertig	852-3011	tmertig@aol.com
<b>Wildlands Project</b>	Joe Rodriguez	833-9655	
<b>Chapter ExCom</b>	Ted Mertig	852-3011	tmertig@aol.com
	Mike Seidensticker	544-5741	76251.2520@compuserve.com

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

**Membership:**  
SIERRA CLUB  
800 S. Piedras  
El Paso, TX 79983

**LORAX information:**  
Betsy Julian  
615 E. Baltimore  
El Paso, TX 79902

## Conservation Committee

The Conservation Committee meets the 2nd Wednesday of each month at the Environmental Center, 800 S. Piedras at 7 pm. For more information, call Ted Mertig (852-3011) or Wesley Leonard (747-6649).

## Labor Day Backpack Choice

The El Paso Sierra Club is requesting your input regarding an outing for Labor Day Weekend, 1996. We are considering two backpack trips, one to the northern Gila Wilderness, and the other to the Latir Peak Wilderness in northern New Mexico.

The proposed Gila backpack would start at Double Springs, follow trail 53 to the Meadows for the first night, climb out of the canyon of the Middle Fork on trail 28, follow trail 156 to Prior Cabin and drop past Garcia Spring to the Middle Fork for the second night, and hike out trail 101 back to Double Springs. Total trail mileage is 18-19 miles.

The Latir Peak Wilderness in far northern New Mexico near Questa is less of a known quantity. A backpack to this area would most likely climb to high alpine lakes. From a high base camp, dayhikes to surrounding peaks such as Latir Peak (12,723 feet) could be made. This would be an exploratory trip to an area that the club has never visited before.

Please call Wesley Leonard at 747-6649 (W) and vote for one trip or the other no later than July 10, 1996.

## UPCOMING OUTINGS

### July 3-7--Truchas Peaks Climb/Backpack

Place: Pecos Wilderness, New Mexico

Class: Strenuous +

Limit: 10, Reservations and Leader Approval Required

Leader: Wesley Leonard 747-6649 (W)

Although most hikers will depart El Paso Wednesday for the long drive to northern New Mexico, the outing will officially start Thursday morning at the Santa Barbara Campground trailhead.

The first day will consist of a 13 mile hike with 3000 feet of elevation gain to a campsite in the shadow of the Truchas Peaks. On Friday, we will climb the 13,000+ foot Truchas Peaks and then return to our first campsite. Saturday will feature a scenic hike along the Santa Barbara Divide to the headwaters of the East fork of the Santa Barbara River. On Sunday, we'll be up early for another 13 mile hike back to the trailhead and the long drive to El Paso. This will be an adventure outing for experienced backpackers prepared for challenging conditions and steep, off-trail climbs. Call early for more information.

### July 6 -- Southern Franklin Mountains Geology Hike

Place: Franklin Mountains State Park

Class: Moderately Strenuous

Limit: 12, Reservations and Leader Approval Required

Leader: Betsy Julian 544-5741 (H)

The "thousand steps trail" climbs steeply up the west side of the Franklins to near the base of Ranger Peak where we will turn south along the

ridgeline, walk down past Comanche Peak, then along a dirt road to the base of the mountain and back to the vehicles. This hike covers about a five mile loop which climbs 1200 feet in the first mile (hence the need for "a thousand steps"). We will stop frequently to observe and discuss geologic features such as fossils, the Crazy Cat landslide, a cave which formed and collapsed about 350 million years ago, and the faults which created the Franklin Mountains. It will be hot, so we will start early. Call leader for more information.

#### July 13 -- Hueco Tanks Dayhike

Place: Hueco Tanks State Park

Class: Easy

Limit: 12, Reservations and Leader Approval Required

Leader: Joe Leach 584-2969 (H)

Call leader for more information.

#### July 13-14 -- West Fork of the Gila, Family Backpack

Place: Gila Wilderness, New Mexico

Class: Easy - Moderate

Limit: 12, Reservations and Leader Approval Required

Leader: John Walton 833-8448 (H)

Call leader for more information.

#### July 19 - 21 -- Mimbres Lake Backpack

Place: Aldo Leopold Wilderness, New Mexico

Class: Easy

Limit: 12, Reservations and Leader Approval Required

Leader: Alice Anderson, (505) 523-5179

We will leave town Friday evening and camp along McKnight Road so as to get an early start Saturday morning. The hike begins near the ruins of McKnight Cabin and follows a scenic ridge about 4 miles to the lake, a lovely jewel set among conifers. At an elevation of 9600 feet, this is a cool, comfortable place to spend a summer evening. There may be mosquitoes at the lake.

#### July 20-21 -- Cloudcroft Carcamp and Bike Tour

Place: Cloudcroft, New Mexico

Class: Easy - Moderate

Limit: 12, Reservations and Leader Approval Required

Leader: Chuck Turner 585-0251

Trip may be rescheduled. Call leader for more information.

#### July 28 -- Singles Moonlight Dayhike to Comanche Peak

Place: Comanche Peak, Franklin Mountains

Class: Easy

Limit: 25, Reservation and Leader Approval Required

Co-leaders: Steve Englander & Joe Rodriguez 833-9224

We will meet at 8:00 p.m., at the trailhead, on Sunday evening. From there we will start our moonlight hike up to Comanche Peak. The moon will be 95% full that evening and should provide us with adequate lighting to see our way up to the Peak, but still bring a flashlight just to be safe. The trail is actually a dirt road that gradually winds up to the top of the peak. Bring good footwear, water and a flashlight. We should be back to our cars between 9:30 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. Please call leader early for details and reservations.

#### August 2-4 -- Willow Creek Car Camp

Place: Gila Wilderness, New Mexico

Class: Moderate

Limit: 10, Reservations and Leader Approval Required

Leader: Dale Harris 544-7149 (H)

We will depart El Paso Friday afternoon about 2 p.m. for our drive to

the campground. Saturday we will take a brisk walk to Iron Creek Lake and on to Iron Creek, hopefully for a short dip in the water. Lunch will be on the trail while we play. Dinner Saturday night will be spent naked in the cool pines. Sunday morning we will backtrack to Sandy Point for a short hike and have lunch along the trail. After lunch we will be returning to El Paso. Call early for reservations.

## OUTINGS REPORTS

#### Rio Bosque Park Dayhike - March 30, 1996 (John Sproul)

Where within the City of El Paso can you hike and feel completely removed from the urban environment? Certainly in the Franklin Mountains. Where else? The folks who made this relaxed morning walk can tell you. Rio Bosque Park is a 275-acre parcel of open space near the river that few people know. Getting acquainted with it on this outing were John and Sue DiCara, Doug Durnford, Irene and Keith Klappmeyer, Maria Nava, Cyrus Reed, Rafaela Schuller, and leader, John Sproul. We were joined at the start by Kim Fritz of the US Bureau of Reclamation and Darron Powell of the Rio Grande Compact Commission, who gave us an excellent briefing on the wetland-creation project being considered for Rio Bosque. Thank you, Kim and Darron, for spending part of your Saturday with us.

#### Pine Tree Loop Dayhike - May 4, 1996 (Alice Anderson)

The planned backpack to Indian Hollow was converted to a dayhike because there was no water at the campsite in Indian Hollow--unprecedented for early May. Eugene Langener, Paul Bronson, and Alice Anderson started up the Pine Tree Loop in the northern Organ Mts and then took the fire trail (built to help fight the 1994 wildfire) to its end. We found a splendid viewpoint for a snack and a rest, from which we could look down into Indian Hollow, across to Sugarloaf and up at the Needles. We then descended the fire trail and completed the Pine Tree Loop. The entire area is very dry and the Pine Tree Loop is badly eroded from hikers taking shortcuts and cattle trespassing to drink at a shallow pool on Sotol Creek. A little flock of pine siskins enlivened our lunch.

#### Mt. Cristo Rey - May 5, 1996 (Ann Falknor)

Fourteen hikers set out early for a morning hike to the top of Cristo Rey. The air was cool, the company interesting, not a bandit in sight. If you snooze(d), you lose(d).

#### Singles Day Hike in the Franklin Mtns. - May 12, 1996 (Joe Rodriguez)

We met early Sunday morning and began our trek up to South Franklin Peak on this beautiful Mother's Day. It began to warm up rather quickly but, as we approached the first ridge, a cool breeze refreshed our spirits as well as our body temperature. We stopped to take a view of El Paso's Westside from Gunsight Notch and thereafter we continued our trek to the summit. At last we arrived at South Franklin Peak, where a view of the entire City awaited us. As we visited and chatted, everyone was quite happy to be part of our first Sierra Club Singles Hike. The Sierra Club would like to continue leading more singles hikes, so please read your Lorax for upcoming events. I would like to congratulate the following individuals for their participation: Liz Ayoub, Todd Daugherty, Steve Englander, Monty Holt, Willie Gutierrez, Janine Irving, Eugene Langer, Wesley Leonard, Alma Lozano, Claudia McIntosh, Carol Morrison, Lydia Padilla, Mary Patal, Rafael Porres, Mark Post, Heidi Reynoso, Lucy Torres, Sally Savage. Thank you, Leader Joe A. Rodriguez.

## News from the forming Los Alamos Group

### STATUS

The Los Alamos Group, now tentatively being called the Pajarito Group, is slowly organizing. A meeting held with members of the Santa Fe Group on May 29th tentatively identified the Pajarito Group membership territory to be the Los Alamos/White Rock zipcode 87544. The Pajarito Group will take the lead on conservation issues in the Jemez Mountains and Bandelier National Monument, with the Group working closely with Courtney White and the Conservation Committee of the Santa Fe Group. The Outings Committee of the Pajarito Group, once organized, will also work closely with Norma MacCallan and the Outings Committee of the Santa Fe Group.

On June 2, 1996, the Executive Committee of the Rio Grande Chapter gave approval for the Los Alamos members to pursue further organization. The Pajarito Group is to report to the Chapter ExCom at the Chapter Retreat, September 14-15, with its Bylaws and a list of Officers. Further organization will then be determined by the ExCom.

### MEMBERSHIP

Currently there are 315 Sierra Club Members in Los Alamos County, an increase of over 50% since March 1996!

Members who wish to remain affiliated with the Santa Fe Group need to contact Courtney White (Membership Chair, Santa Fe Group) or Michael Smith (662-2380), otherwise they will be officially counted, based on zipcode, as part of the Pajarito Group.

### BYLAWS

The Sierra Club Model Bylaws have tentatively been accepted. They call for elections to be held in the fourth quarter of the year. Interested members can get a copy of the Bylaws by contacting Michael Smith 662-2380.

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

A Nominating Committee to identify and designate the 7 members of an interim Executive Committee has been formed. The members of the Committee are:

Abe Jacobson 672-9579      Chick Keller 662-7915  
Janet Gerwin 662-9568      Michael Smith 662-2380

Individuals who are interested in being members of the interim ExCom should contact one of the members of the Nominating Committee. ExCom members will be in place by August 1, 1996 and will hold office until January 1997. Elections will be held in the Fall of 1996 to determine the new Group ExCom.

### PERMANENT COMMITTEES

Committees have been identified. Several have Chairs. All the committees need volunteers!!

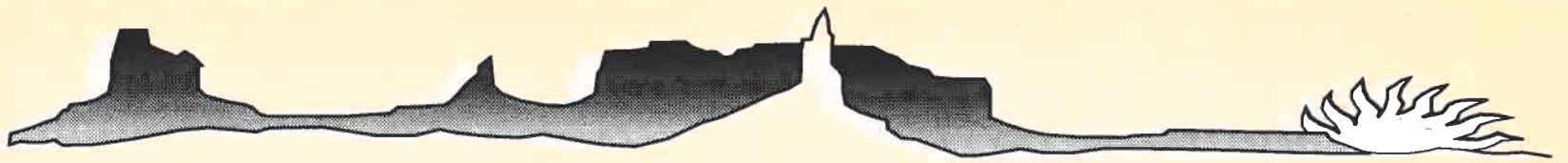
Publicity, Chair: Janet Gerwin 662-9568  
Conservation, Chair: Fairley Barnes 662-6294  
Environmental Education, Chair: Janet Gerwin 662-9568

Chairs are needed for the following committees: Membership, Outings, Political, Newsletter, Phone Tree.

### FUTURE MEETINGS

Business: Wednesday, July 24, 1996 7:00 PM at Mesa Public Library  
General: Wednesday, August 7, 1996 7:00 PM at Mesa Public Library  
Warren Lieb will present a slide show and talk titled Peru: Jungle, Trek, and Machu Piccu.

For further information about the Pajarito Group, please contact Michael Smith 662-2380.



**Santa Fe Group News**

**SANTA FE GROUP ANNUAL SUMMER FLING**

**MID-SUMMER POTLUCK IS BEST PARTY IN TOWN !!**

Sunday, July 14, 5:30 PM

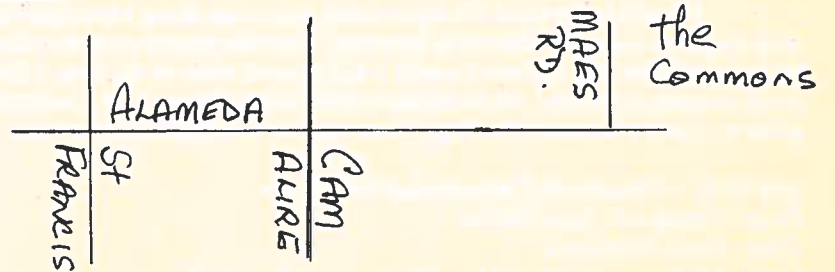
Our Annual Summer Pot-Luck will be held again this year at **The Commons, 2300 West Alameda**. Ken Hughes is our host for this fun event. It's the best time for relaxed socialization with your fellow Sierrans. Put this on your calendar and invite some friends. The food is always excellent and the company, well, superlative — what else can we say!

Speakers will be **Ted Mertig** from the **El Paso Sierra Club** and two youthful participants in El Paso's highly successful Inner City Outings Program. This community outreach program, funded by the National Sierra Club, provides wilderness adventures for people who wouldn't otherwise have them — including low income youth of diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds, physically disabled, hearing or visually impaired, and youth who have gotten in trouble with the law or have serious emotional problems. Participants develop interpersonal skills and self-esteem through active involvement with nature and caring volunteers.



Everyone please bring a potluck dish for eight people: casseroles, cooked veggies and meat dishes, salads, breads, deserts and munchies. If cooking isn't your thing, please bring beer, wine, soft drinks or juice. The kitchen at the Commons has a large refrigerator, stove, oven and counterspace for last-minute preparations.

Call Ken (474-0550) or Norma (471-0005) for more information or suggestions on what to bring. But, most important of all, bring yourself and friends if you have them!



**Santa Fe Group of the Sierra Club**  
**621 Old Santa Fe Trail · Suite 10 · Plaza Desira · Santa Fe · New Mexico · 87501**  
**505 · 983-2703**

◆ ◆ SANTA FE GROUP OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS ◆ ◆

Chair — Don Goldman*	473-2821	Political Committee — Ned Sudborough	820-1270
Vice-Chair — Jerry Bober*	827-2385	Phone Tree — Norma McCallan*	471-0005
Secretary/Treas — Lionel Soracco*	983-6715	Fundraising — Education }	open
Answering Machine — L. Soracco*	983-6715	Office — Welcomer }	positions
Chapter Representative —		Martha Anne Freeman *	438-0697
Barbara Johnson*	466-4935	John Buchser *	820-0201
(alt.) Norma McCallan*	471-0005		
Conservation — Courtney White*	982-5502	* Member of the SF Group Executive Committee	
Membership — Open		Terms expire	
Newsletter Editor — Kay Carlson	982-3926	12/96: Bober/Freeman/Johnson/Wardwell	
Publicity — Kay Carlson	982-3926	12/97: Buchser/Goldman/McCallan/Soracco/White	
Outings — Norbert Sperlich	983-1962		
— Norma McCallan*	471-0005		

♥ **HELP WANTED** ♥  
**MEMBERSHIP CHAIR**

*Like working with people? Nice people? People who care about the environment? People who may be new in town and could use a friend? Like socializing? Have time for a few phone calls a month? Like parties?*  
 If you answered yes to any of the above, have we got something for you. This is the easiest and most pleasant way to get involved in our group. The benefits and rewards are many. Call Norma McCallan for more information (471-0005).

**COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

- July**  
 23 — Conservation Committee (Courtney White, 982-5502)  
**August**  
 6 — Executive Committee (Don Goldman, 473-2821)  
 27 — Conservation Committee (Courtney White, 982-5502)  
**September**  
 3 — Executive Committee (Don Goldman, 473-2821)

*The Executive and Conservation Committee meetings are held at our new office at 621 Old Santa Fe Trail, Suite 10 (Plaza Desira)*

**CONSERVATION COMMITTEE REPORT**

It has been decided not to change the Group's current position (Alternative 1A) on the Ski Basin expansion question. A BLM Wilderness Workshop has been planned for October 5, with Bill Richardson as the featured speaker. A subcommittee to organize the workshop has been formed. If you are interested in this or any other type of Conservation efforts, please call Courtney White (982-5502).

**WILDERNESS TRAINING**

A basic wilderness class is being offered to Sierra members and guests on **Saturday and Sunday, July 20 and 21**. This is for *everyone* interested in going out and hiking, from the person who's never been there to the experienced hiker. It will be conducted by **Steve Andrus**, a member of Taos Search and Rescue and a Wilderness First Responder, and **John Duncan**, a member of Taos Search and Rescue and a Wilderness EMT.

Saturday will be classroom work for 5-6 hours, and Sunday will be spent on the trail for 5-6 hours. You'll learn what to bring: gear and clothing, map and compass, essentials, medical equipment. Learn about how to deal with hypothermia, hyperthermia, high altitude sickness, sprains, breaks, lightning. Hands-on in-the-field training for medical, map and compass use, understanding of Search and Rescue, what to do if someone gets lost in your party.

Sounds like something we all can use! Call Steve (758-5610) and sign up before he fills up. \$60 for Saturday alone and a special offer of \$90 for both days.



**VOLUNTEER LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS !!**  
**HELP** with trail clean-up and maintenance in the Pecos Wilderness. Call Brian Kyle for work dates (988-6996 Pecos Ranger District). Kyle is a volunteer with the Forest Service.

## SANTA FE GROUP OUTINGS

## Sat Sun July Hikes leave from 621 Old Santa Fe Trail

- 6 Arnold and Caroline Keskulla (982-9570) Easy Hike up Aspen Vista Rd to large rock outcropping. Lve 8:30 AM.
- 6 Jeff Jones (466-2389) Very Strenuous Hike Santa Fe Baldy — Lake Katherine — Spirit Lake Loop, 15 miles, great elevation change. Leave 7:15 AM. Call leader!
- 7 Norbert Sperlich (983-1962) Moderate/Strenuous Hike East Fork of the Jemez. Bring sneakers and swimsuit.
- 13 George Grossman (982-1024) La Manga Timber Sale Field Trip Explore this remote area, north of Vallecitos & La Madera, with George and a forest expert. Easy-level hiking. Leave 7:30 AM. Plan on an all-day trip due to the driving time. May stop for supper on return.
- 13 Lionel Soracco (983-6715) Moderate/Strenuous Bicycle Trip Jemez above Cochiti, near Dixon Ranch. 8 AM.
- 14 Jeff Regenold (661-6707-h; 662-9412-w) Easy Hike to lovely Cañada de Bonita, near Los Alamos. Explore area closed to grazing for 50 years and in excellent condition. Grazing Issues Field Trip #1. Call for meeting place.
- 14 Robert McKee (672-3426) Moderate Hike up Raven's Ridge to the false peak of Lake Peak, about 2,000' elevation change. Lve 8 AM. Call leader after 6:30 PM.

## Friday, July 19 to Tuesday, July 30

Norma McCallan (471-0005) 10-day Backpack on CO Continental Divide Trail Jones Pass south to Independence Pass, 97.6 miles. Experienced backpackers only. Drive Fri PM, return Tues PM. **PLAN B IF SNOW PERSISTS: 5-day backpack on CO C.D. Trail** Spring Creek Pass to Stony Pass. 34½ miles on C.D. and 12-13 out on jeep road. Leave Fri PM. Optional dayhikes in the area after the backpack. Call leader!!

## Saturday and Sunday, July 20 and 21

Wilderness Training See article, opposite page.

- 20 Caroline Glick (984-3184) Steve Janus (988-4137) Orienteering Field Trip Vicinity of Atalaya Peak. Bring compass, pencil/pen, and *Map of the Mountains of Santa Fe* (Drake Mountain Maps) Lve 8:30 AM. Call leaders.

## July (continued)

- 20 John Jasper (466-8572-h; 986-4613-w) Easy Hike Tesuque-Ski Basin-Back Loop. Leave 9:30 AM.
- 21 Jeff Regenold (661-6707-h; 662-9412-w) Moderate Hike to Peralta Creek, a lovely spot, unfortunately also a heavily grazed riparian area. Grazing Issues Field Trip #2. Call for meeting place.
- 27 Work Day at Orilla Verde Reservation Area (near Pilar) to remove tamarisks. BLM will supply tools. Bring gloves and lunch. Meet Orilla Verde at 9 AM, or check Sierra Club office parking lot at 8 AM for carpooling. Roberta Salazar, BLM Taos (758-4726); Dennis Peterson (586-0318, Questa)
- 27 John Buchser (820-0201) Strenuous Hike & Trail Maintenance in Santa Barbara Canyon. Bring work gloves; tools provided. Leave 8 AM.
- 28 Art Judd (982-3212) Moderate Hike in the high country. Leave 8 AM. Call for details.



**Outings Notes** — Unless otherwise noted, all outings leave from the Sierra office, 621 Old Santa Fe Trail, "Plaza Desira," just south of Old SF Trail Bookstore & Coffee House. Carpooling will be arranged. Each hiker should come prepared to pay 5¢ a mile to the driver of the car in which s/he rides. Bring a lunch, water, sturdy hiking 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 right to alter destination of hike or cancel trip due to weather, unfavorable conditions, or insufficient numbers of participants. Unaccompanied minors must have written permission from parents or guardians to participate; permission forms are available at the Sierra Club office. Dogs not permitted on hikes unless noted otherwise. Telephone leader for details of the individual hike.

## Sat Sun August Hikes leave from 621 Old Santa Fe Trail

- 3 Arnold and Caroline Keskulla (982-9570) Easy Hike Ski Basin-Winsor Trail-Borrogo Trail. Leave 9 AM.
- 4 Stephen Janus (988-4137) Very Strenuous Hike Mary's Lake, Santa Fe Baldy, Lake Kathryn. Off-trail hiking, steep slopes. Bring swim trunks. Call leader. 7:30 AM.
- 10 Lionel Soracco (983-6715) Moderate/Strenuous Hike starting at Santa Barbara Campground. Leave 7:30 AM. Call leader for reservation.
- 11 **ISSUE HIKE** in Jemez/Los Alamos Area **Moderate** Bill Armstrong from USFS Española Ranger District will discuss fire risk, forest health & management issues. For time and meeting place, call Bill (home 471-6219) (work 753-7331) or Martha Anne Freeman (438-0697).
- Friday to Sunday, August 16-18 Norma McCallan (471-0005) 3-Day Exploratory Backpack Colorado Sangre de Cristo Mtns, Rito Alto Creek Trail. Considerable elevation gain. Call for info/reserv. Leave PM Thurs 8-15.
- 17 Lee Sullivan (662-6185) Moderate Hike Peralta Ridge (Jemez) 7 mi. RT, 800' elevation gain, some off-trail hiking. Leave 8:30 from Los Alamos, parking lot behind fire station on W Jemez Rd, west of Diamond Dr, or carpool from Santa Fe at 7:30 from Sierra Club office.
- 18 Art Judd (982-3212) Moderate in high country. 8 AM.
- 24 Norrine Sanders (984-0386) Moderate Hike Ski Basin to La Vega and Lookout Rock. About 8 mi. RT, 1700' elevation gain. Leave 8 AM.
- 24 Work Day at Orilla Verde Recreation Area (near Pilar) to remove Tamarisks. See July 27 for details.
- 25 Elizabeth Altman (471-8490) Easy Hike to Cañada Bonita (near LA ski area) Leave 9 AM. Call leader.
- 25 John Jasper (work 986-4613; home 466-8572) Strenuous Hike (beautiful views) Gold Hill, north of Taos Ski Valley. 10 mi. RT, 3400' elevation gain. Call leader.
- 31 Caroline Glick (984-3184) Strenuous Hike to Trampas Lakes/Hidden Lake. 13.5 mi. RT, 2700' elevation gain. Dogs allowed. Call leader.

## Sat Sun September Hikes leave from 621 Old Santa Fe Trail

## Friday to Monday, August 30 to September 2

Norma McCallan (471-0005) Exploratory Car Camp with Moderate Day Hikes on some of the trails near the Delores River in SW CO. Leave Thurs PM. Dogs allowed. Call leader.

Friday, September 6 Work Day at Orilla Verde Recreation Area (near Pilar) to remove tamarisks. See July 27 for details.

- 7 Courtney White (982-5502) Archaeological Field Trip & Moderate Hike "Tsiping," Classic Period Anasazi Ruin in the Jemez, near Pedernal. One of the largest ruins in No NM; BLM permit limits group to 20. Dogs allowed. Call leader.
- 8 Art Judd (982-3212) Moderate Hike high country. 8 AM.
- 8 Steven Janus (988-4137) Moderate (some steep slopes) Mountain Bike "Shirley Maclaime's Road" near Atalaya. Lve 8:30 AM Sierra office. See damage and revegetation.
- 14 Caroline Keskulla (982-9570) Easy Hike Tesuque Creek 9 AM.
- 14 Lionel Soracco (983-6715) Strenuous Hike Pecos Baldy Lake, via Panchuela Campground. Leave 7:30 AM.
- 15 Jeff Regenold (h 661-6707; w 662-9412) **ISSUE HIKE** Boca del Oso Wilderness Study Area **Easy/Moderate** north of San Ysidro. Call for time and meeting place.
- 15 Bob McKee (672-3426) Moderate Hike Guaje Ridge Trail, 9 mi. RT, 2500' elevation gain. Meet at pkg lot by Ashley Pond in LA at 9 AM. Meet 8 AM at Sierra office to carpool from SF.
- 21 Norrine Sanders (984-0386) Strenuous Hike Rancho Viejo Loop, near Ski Basin. Leave 8 AM.
- 21 **ISSUE TRIP** Bill Armstrong, Española FS Ranger Distr. Drive forest Road west from State Police HQ in Española, to a high saddle at 10,000' near Chicoma Peak. Easy/Moderate, much off-trail. See good & bad examples of forest health & forest mgmt practices, including fire suppression. Call Martha Anne Freeman (438-0697) more info/time/place to meet.
- 22 Norbert Sperlich (983-1962) Moderate/Strenuous Hike Pedernal. Off-trail, rock scramble, 9 mi. RT, 1900' elevation gain. 7 AM.
- Friday, September 27 Work Day at Orilla Verde Recreation Area (near Pilar) to remove tamarisks. See July 27.
- 28 Caroline Glick (984-3184) Strenuous Hike Johnson Lake in Pecos Wilderness. Dogs allowed. Call for time.
- 28 John Buchser (820-0201) Atalaya Trail Maintenance Work Moderate/Strenuous Bring lunch and work gloves; FS provides tools. Meet St. John's parking lot 9 AM.
- 29 Elizabeth Altman (471-8490) Moderate Hike to La Vega 9AM.

**GROUP DIRECTORY  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

P.O. Box 3705 UPB  
Las Cruces, New Mexico 88011

Jim Winder, Chair Newsletter Editor	267-4227 jrwinder@aol.com
Cheryll Blevins, Vice Chair	526-6220(W) 524-4861(H) spotblev@aol.com
Margaret Katze, Secretary	521-1475(H)
Lesla Wilson, Treasurer	647-4298 nmclimber@aol.com
"Dutch" Salmon, Rural Forum, Political	388-3763(H) 388-5705(Fax)
Kiki Suggs, Mexican Wolf	523-5635(H) 526-5442(W) coues@aol.com
Wayne Suggs, Outings	523-5635(H) 526-5442(W) coues@aol.com
Marianne Thaeler, Military Affairs	522-34221 marianne.thaeler@sierraclub.org
Margot Wilson, Warm Springs Section, Chapter Delegate	744-5860(H) 894-7152(W) margot.wilson@sierraclub.org

**CATRON COAL MINE**

The Salt River Project (SRP) a proposed coal mine located near Quemado, N.M. in Catron County, plans to extract over 81 million tons of coal over the next 38 years. The BLM approved SRP's permit to mine federal coal in 1990 based on a preliminary mine plan which estimated the total volume of coal to be extracted at 52 million tons. However, after the permit was approved, the volume of coal to be extracted increased by 29 million tons to 81 million. The coal would supply the Coronado Generating Station in St. John's, AZ which currently burns coal produced at the McKinley Mine on the Navajo Reservation.

The proposed mine will use 25% of the groundwater in the surrounding valleys. It would destroy at least 252 Native American religious sites which are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, including the White Rock shrine sacred to the Acoma, and the Zuni Salt Trails used by seven tribes for pilgrimages to the Zuni Salt Lake. SRP has proposed building overpasses above the trails and relocating historic grave sites to the bottom of an open pit mine for "preservation."

The Southwest Center for Biological Diversity has submitted petitions to the N.M. Mining and Minerals Division, the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, and the U.S. Department of the Interior to declare the proposed Fence Lake Mine area unsuitable for surface coal mining. (See story on page 13.)

**A NEW WEST?**

Predictions in the West of disaster following the decline of extractive industries "have been unfounded," says University of Montana economist Tom Powers in an op-ed in the *Journal of Commerce*. Powers argues that "protected landscapes directly support local economic vitality" as people move to places in the West they see as desirable locations to live, and industry follows. "Government has totally missed this dramatic shift in economic activity," Powers argues. "By heavily subsidizing such activities as the clear-cutting of timber, intensive grazing on public lands, and the construction of massive hydroelectric dams, the federal Government is actually harming local economies."

**PESTICIDE USE INCREASES**

Use of pesticides reached record highs in 1994 and 1995, reversing a downward trend, according to a U.S. EPA report made public recently by the Natural Resources Defense Council. "Reaching this new record should be a warning that we're doing something wrong, not a license to allow even more poisons in our food and in the environment," said NRDC's Robert Kennedy Jr.

The report, which was scheduled to be issued by EPA in six weeks, indicates that 1.25 billion pounds of herbicides, insecticides, and fungicides were used in 1995 and 1.23 billion in 1994. This figure represents an increase of 100 million pounds from 1993 levels. Current pesticide use figures are double the amount used when Rachel Carson wrote *Silent Spring* in 1962. Nevertheless, some in Congress are pushing to consider two bills to loosen pesticide regulations. The bills would preempt states from taking stronger measures than the feds, including expanded right-to-know and reporting rules.

**A View From the Warm Springs Section**

We are all fond of cow bashing. If a person spends any time at all on public land--the National Forest or BLM--in southern New Mexico, it becomes increasingly clear that, unlike many people suppose, these lands are not set aside for their wildness or beauty. They aren't places for city weary people to restore their sense of perspective or gain a feeling of belonging in nature. They are places set aside to raise cows. Even in designated wilderness areas, the creature you are most likely to see is not a deer or an elk or a bear or a coyote. It's a domestic cow.

In fact, it can be argued that the reason you won't see these other creatures is the presence of the cow. Every mouthful of forage that a cow takes is one that a deer or an elk won't get. If a bear ever kills a calf, it is removed. If a coyote is ever even seen by a rancher, it is trapped, shot or poisoned. I don't mean to indict all ranchers, but I am relating what I have learned from the places on public land that I have seen. What I've seen included eroded hillsides, denuded stream banks, stinking mud holes where there ought to be clear spring water, stunted or non-existent cottonwoods, whole meadows pocked with cow dung and lots and lots of plain, bare, hard-baked dirt.

It is depressing to be in the woods for rejuvenation and appreciation of nature only to find oneself confronting these land and habitat destroyers at every turn. I've spent lots of time wondering what I could do to change this. I've written letters to public agencies and congressmen. I've sent money to environmental organizations. I've signed petitions. But one only has to read the writings of conservationists like Aldo Leopold or Edward Abbey to realize that this abuse of the land by the people who run cattle has been going on for decades. Despite the protests, it still continues.

Finally, it dawned on me that there was something I hadn't tried. Something that, unlike my other actions, makes the cattle industry quake in fear. Something that doesn't depend on getting a bureaucrat or elected official to act. Something I could do to take control. I gave up eating beef.

No longer would I support the industry which more than any other is responsible for the destruction of the places I love. While it is impossible to tell where a cow spent its life by the time it reaches the grocery store on little styrofoam squares, it turns out that the raising of cows everywhere is generally wasteful and destructive. If we collectively could reduce our beef consumption by only 3%, we could eliminate the need to have any cows on public land.

I have been beef-free for several years and I won't deny that, on some occasions, the sound and smell of a sizzling steak has been tantalizing. The eating of beef has ingrained itself in our culture. When people go out to a "nice" restaurant, it is often a steakhouse. But I only have to envision the last cow I saw lying in its own feces, swarming with flies, mindlessly moving its jaws to and fro with a bit of drool hanging down from one side and my appetite for beef diminishes. I picture the now-trampled landscape and my resolve is renewed. For the most part, going beefless has been very easy. I didn't get sick or lose muscle tone or vigor. I am healthy after all, probably healthier.

I don't want to appear to be preaching to you. I have been confronted by very angry people telling me I'd sure better not be telling them what they were and were not to eat. I have to agree. We are lucky enough to live in a country rich enough that we can choose our diet. But I also think of the subsidies given to cattle producers using my tax dollars, the advertisements to eat beef, a hamburger place in every neighborhood, and the adoration of the cowboy by the media. It really makes me wonder just who is telling whom what to eat. Are you being manipulated by the beef industry? Might you consider taking a stand against this exploitation? Why don't you give up beef?

**There are no scheduled meetings in July and August.  
There are no outings currently planned because of the  
fire danger.**

**Yes, I want to join! I want to help safeguard our children's precious natural heritage. My payment is enclosed.**

My Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Check enclosed Phone (Optional) ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Please charge my  Mastercard  Visa

Cardholder Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_

Contributions, gifts or dues to the Sierra Club are not tax deductible, they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to *Sierra* magazine and \$1.00 for your chapter newsletter.

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES		
	INDIVIDUAL	JOINT
REGULAR	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35	<input type="checkbox"/> \$43
SUPPORTING	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50	<input type="checkbox"/> \$58
CONTRIBUTING	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100	<input type="checkbox"/> \$108
LIFE	<input type="checkbox"/> \$750	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000
SENIOR	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15	<input type="checkbox"/> \$23
STUDENT	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15	<input type="checkbox"/> \$23
LIMITED INCOME	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15	<input type="checkbox"/> \$23



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

F94Q W-1700 .1

W99901

ONE EARTH, ONE CHANCE®

Texas, land of oil and gas, is the site of a 40-megawatt wind farm in the Guadalupe Mountains south of the New Mexico state line. The electricity from the farm is sold to the city of Austin at under 4 cents/kilowatt hour. Meanwhile, towns in New Mexico are paying over 15 cents/kwh, with no relief in sight. How can we begin to harvest our wind and solar electric resources to get cheaper and cleaner electricity? Answers to that and many other questions vexing clean energy advocates have become clearer, with publication of *How the West Can Win - A Blueprint for a Clean & Affordable Energy Future*, by the Land and Water Fund of the Rockies.

New Mexico currently is living in a coal economy. Nearly 90% of all electricity generated in the state comes from coal, with its attendant high environmental costs. Yet, according to the Land and Water Fund's report, New Mexico could generate as much as 36% of its electricity needs by 2015 from renewable sources of energy and energy efficiency.

The long-hope-for transition to clean fuels is by

no means a sure thing. Utilities here and in other Mountain West states plan to keep a virtual monopoly on fossil fuels, meaning the deterioration of air over national parks and urban areas is likely to get significantly worse. Using natural gas for 10-15 years as a bridge and stepping up the use of clean fuels would lower utility bills, reduce key pollutants by up to 40% and diversify the region's energy mix.

Development of clean energy resources can happen if the state:

--encourages the use of energy-efficient equipment--better lighting, temperature control and motor drive technologies--that can meet 40% of new demand for power;

--uses more natural gas as a bridge fuel to renewables;

--actively works solar and wind electricity into the mix; and

--repowers or retires the state's dirtiest power plants.

What would be the environmental and economic benefits of such a "soft path" scenario? There would be a significant reduction in utility air emissions from what

they otherwise would be in 2015. Developing the state's abundant solar and wind resources would generate over 1000 direct jobs, thousands of indirect jobs and hundreds of millions of dollars in utility cost and customer bill reductions over the long run. An electric industry could see to the needs of the poor while managing its long-term risks.

A rapidly changing electric utility industry poised on restructuring, whereby customers could select who provides them with which type of electricity, has worked against pursuing a clean energy future. The LAW Fund's Blueprint posits multiple challenges to multiple players to make the transition happen. Utility regulators and legislators can act to encourage utilities to make a transition to clean energy; failing that, they can break up utilities into separate generation and transmission/distribution entities, each competing for customers with a clean energy component mandated in the mix.

Utilities need to go beyond lip service to the environment and join consortia to build or buy power plants to begin to

really harvest New Mexico's huge solar and wind potential. They could also develop effective programs to market clean power through such schemes as "green pricing," whereby those who want renewables in their power mix would agree to pay a little more. When power plants are slated to retire, the blueprint posits a challenge to repower them with solar. And utilities could implement energy efficiency and distributed generation to avoid controversial power line siting disputes, such as OLE.

Now, more than ever, the blueprint shows us that indeed there are two energy paths which we can walk. Let no one doubt that the "hard" path will be championed and sought after by very powerful forces. This spring the Navajo Nation went on record in support of investigating not just more coal plants for its region, but nuclear power plants and waste disposal. And nascent efforts to tie utility policies to energy efficiency and renewable efforts are being drowned out in the rush to merge and restructure.

The stakes are high: to fight for the "soft" path, the Rio Grande Chapter's

## Blueprint for a Clean Energy Future

by Ken Hughes,  
Chapter Energy Chair

Executive Committee has voted to join a New Mexico Clean Energy Alliance. Other likely members include energy efficiency service companies, consumer groups, municipalities, progressive utilities, and other environmental groups. More will be stated about the alliance in the coming months as it takes shape to push for a clean energy future for this land of (still) blue sky.

## Fence Lake Mine Would Damage Zuni Sacred Sites as well as Environment

by Barbara Leonard

The Salt River Project (SRP), a corporation owned by the State of Arizona, has applied for Federal and State permits to conduct surface coal mining operations in New Mexico and Arizona for 50 years. The mine and its site facilities would be located in Catron and Cibola Counties, on 18,119 acres of land about 14 miles north of Quemado. A railroad corridor is also proposed to be established to ship coal between the mine and Coronado Generating Station near St. Johns, Arizona. The SRP hopes to mine 81.3 million tons of coal at the mine out of private as well as State and Federally leased land.

A final supplement to the environmental impact statement (EIS) was distributed in April, prepared by the Office of Surface Mining ([OSM] part of the Department of the Interior), in cooperation with the Bureau of Land Management, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the New Mexico Mining and Minerals Division (MMD). The EIS supported approval. Following publication of the EIS, final hearings were held by MMD to determine whether the State would grant the permits for construction and operation of the mine.

### Aquifer Contamination

I represented the Sierra Club at the hearing in Grants on May 31. My concerns were that, of over 500 Native American archaeological and cultural sites documented in the area, only 25% were approved for preservation. Another problem is probable contamination of groundwater in the area, as well as draining of 25% of the water from local aquifers. I was concerned about contamination of the Zuni Salt Lake in Arizona, which is just 9 miles from the mine area boundary.

The Zuni people were also concerned about the danger to the Salt Lake and other sites from the Fence Lake Mine. They turned out in such numbers that they overflowed the small meeting room. There were Zuni tribal officials, a contingent of elderly Zuni, and members from Acoma and Laguna Pueblos who came to support the Zunis.

I was impressed with the articulate and eloquent statements made by the local Zuni speakers, as well as those from Acoma and Laguna Pueblos. Speakers included the Governor and Lt. Governor of the Zuni Pueblo, the head of the tribal council, a former Zuni governor, and many tribal members of all ages.

The speakers said that the Zuni Salt Lake is their most

sacred site. Mining would contaminate the water of the nearby lake, which has been used for centuries both ceremonially and domestically by the Hopi, Acoma, Laguna and Zuni. All have special ceremonial trails that lead to the lake. The Lake contains a deity, the Salt Woman, who looks after the welfare of the Zuni people. If she is not protected, dire consequences could result. The mine is therefore a threat to the survival of the Zunis and other Native Americans. The speakers said that Native Americans have been asked to give up so much, and this is another sacrifice that they are now being asked to make. So often their concerns have not been heard. Speaker after speaker said they hoped that they would be heard this time.

### Intangible Values

The Native American speakers said that the EIS did not address their concerns. The SRP is a part of the Arizona government. The Pueblo of Zuni is a government, too, and it has jurisdiction over Zuni Salt Lake. The actual area of the mine would be on Zuni aboriginal lands, and contains many sacred sites. The Zunis had requested that a comprehensive study be done based on non-use values and cultural impacts. This was

not done. The speakers said that while the OSM and the SRP are concerned with scientific data and economics, they do not take into consideration important, but intangible, values, like the importance of protecting Salt Woman. One speaker said he wondered how much weight Native American values would be given by a society whose values are based on materialism, because cultural values cannot be measured in economic terms.

The Native Americans were supported in their opposition to the mine by representatives from Forest Guardians, the Green Party, the Southwest Center for Biological Diversity, the Sierra Club, and others. No one spoke in favor of the mine.

Other issues addressed included whether New Mexico should allow destruction of its land to provide cheap electricity for Phoenix, the need for Phoenix and other areas to address their energy problems through conservation and sustainable energy (solar and wind), the lessons learned from uranium mining at Laguna and Ambrosia Lake, the "boom and bust" effects of uranium mining on Grants, and the long-term effects of strip mining in Appalachia. Finally, the legality of the permits already granted

for the mine was questioned because the permit applications had changed during the process and the amount of coal to be mined was increased by 29 million tons from the amount discussed in the EIS. In addition, the EIS for the Coronado Generating Plant was completed in the 1970s and is out of date.

### Real Issue

When I prepared my statement, I commented on the EIS. But at the hearing, I learned that the real issues could not be compressed into economic and scientific data. The real issue is recognition of the importance of cultural and spiritual values and our connection with the Earth. I agree with the Native American speakers that these values must be given full weight when measured against the "benefits" of unchecked economic development and the wasteful use of natural resources. When addressing environmental concerns, we need to be promoting energy conservation and the use of renewable energy (abundant in New Mexico and Arizona), and we need to make sure that local communities are given a strong voice in decisions which will impact resources, natural or cultural.

We hope MMD will disapprove the permits for the proposed Fence Lake Mine.

## Chapter Outings Notes from Norma

by  
Norma  
McCallan



### Silvery Minnow in Danger

(con't from page 1)

estimated 10-15,000 dead minnows were found in one dried up pool alone. The deaths of the minnows constitute an illegal "take" under the Endangered Species Act.

The District knew that fish in the affected stretch of the river were going to perish. The State Game and Fish Department was made aware, presumably by the District, that it should raise the bag limit on fish because diversions were going to dewater the river. Further, as a member of the Silvery Minnow recovery team, the District had to have been aware that most of the minnow population was in the affected stretch of the river. Nonetheless, the District made no attempt to prevent the deaths and did not even give notice to the Fish & Wildlife Service so that the Service could attempt to save the minnows. The District's diversions also appear to have been excessive for the needs of farmers.

Subsequently, the Fish & Wildlife Service reports that the District promised that water would be left in the river, but then failed to deliver on its promise. The District also reportedly refused to release the full amount of water donated early on by Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge for the minnow.

#### Losses Halted

At this time, losses of Silvery Minnows due to dewatering have been halted. The Bureau of Reclamation arranged for the use of 19,077 acre-feet of unused 1995 San Juan-Chama water, which will keep the river wet down to Brown Arroyo at the south end of Socorro for the better part of the summer. The Fish & Wildlife Service and others moved thousands of Silvery Minnows stranded in isolated pools. Finally, the City of Albuquerque donated some of its unused

**Saturday July 13--LA MANGA TIMBER SALE FIELD TRIP** - George Grossman 982-1024 (SF). This proposed sale would destroy what many consider the most significant stand of old growth in northern NM. Explore this remote area, north of Madera, with George and a forest expert. Easy hiking. Leave 7:30 am, from the Santa Fe Sierra Club office, 621 Old Santa Fe Trail. Due to driving time, this will be an all-day trip; we may stop for supper on the way home. Norma offers sleeping space for those coming from the south; call George for a meeting place on the way if coming from the north.

**Saturday August 11--FIRES AND FOREST HEALTH - JEMEZ MOUNTAINS/LOS ALAMOS AREA FIELD TRIP** - Bill Armstrong, Espanola Ranger District, will discuss fire risk, forest health, and management issues. Moderate hiking. For time/meeting place, call Martha Anne Freeman 438-0697(SF).

**Sunday Sept 15--BOCA DEL OSA WILDERNESS STUDY AREA FIELD TRIP** - Jeff Regenold 661-6707(H), 662-9412(W)(Los Alamos). Explore this little known and starkly beautiful WSA north of San Ysidro. Easy/moderate hiking. Call for information.

**FIRE ON THE TRAIL** - The weekend of April 26-28, Bob McKee led a 3-day backpack into Bandelier National Monument. I was one of 8 participants. Coincidentally, this was the start of the Dome Fire which burned some 16,000 acres, 4779 of which were in Bandelier. Starting as a small 125 acre fire northwest of the park, expected to be contained in a short time, the fire blew up the 2nd day, and was not considered controlled till May 20. It cost \$4,393,000+ to suppress. The Park was officially closed

at 11 am on the 3rd day, and 2 Bandelier firefighters walked in 8 miles to bring out our group, and 2 others who were in the backcountry. Watching the huge billowing clouds of smoke burst up several miles away from where we were taking a break at a ridge top on the far side of Alamo Canyon. The fire blowing up was one of the most awesome sights I have ever seen. I never want to be that close to a forest fire again, but I'm glad for the experience. Almost the whole length of Capulin Canyon, where we spent our one night, ultimately burned, as did our route from Upper Alamo to Capulin. This season of drought, high winds, and a tinder dry landscape has serious conservation/management

implications beyond the potential threat to hikers or homes close to the woods. There is much being written about the effects of years of fire suppression in our forests, less about the long-term logging practices which have taken out the giant, thick-barked widely-spaced trees, highly impervious to fire, and let grow thickets of spindly "dog hair" trees which serve as easy kindling and ladders for the fire to gain the crowns, and race along the top of the forest. And expect to see more "Salvage Logging" sales after the burn. Two useful publications on wildfires are the just-released *Dome Fire Burned Area Emergency Plan*, from Bandelier National Monument and "The Fires Next Time" in the March 6, 1995 *High Country News*.



Bandelier firefighters catch up with the two backpacking groups at Hondo Canyon, show us on their map where the fire has spread, and why they need to escort us out. (Photo courtesy of Ned Sudborough)

## National Outings Invite Participants

### Whitewater Raft and Backpack Trip to Clavey River in Sierra

Here is a unique opportunity to combine backpacking, car-camping, and adventurous river rafting with training for effective advocacy in a Wild and Scenic River campaign. This week-long outing, July 14 - 20, 1996, explores the Clavey River, just west of Yosemite National Park.

The varied modes: a leisurely backpack to the river's source high in the Emigrant Wilderness. In the middle ranges, a dayhike to bask in the sun on polished granite around natural pools. As a grand finale, a catered overnight raft trip on the Wild and Scenic Tuolumne River. The 18-mile route features 14 rapids rated Class IV or higher.

The Clavey, one of four remaining undammed rivers in the Sierra Nevada, is remarkable in maintaining a full assemblage of native fish, including wild trout. From snowy headwaters, the Clavey makes its 7000 foot descent past ancient forests of mixed conifers, finally roaring through narrow canyons to join the Tuolumne. The Clavey's watershed includes nearly all the Sierra ecological zones and is home to 13 species eligible for federal endangered species listing.

In 1995 activists thwarted an attempt to construct a five-dam hydroelectric project which would have drowned or severely reduced flow on 19 miles of the fast flowing river. Now the aim is to gain permanent protection from future projects by Wild and Scenic designation. Trip members will meet with local activists and experts in the Clavey campaign, learning to play a key role in this and in other crucial river protection campaigns.

### Mt. Zirkel--Walk the Wilderness for Enjoyment and Education

What happens when a wilderness area is threatened by air pollution from afar? Find out this August 17 - 14 on a unique Sierra Club national

outing in Colorado's Mt. Zirkel Wilderness. Combine the zest of wilderness hiking with learning how to preserve the purity of the air.

This exciting outing is designed to show how even an area protected from development by our country's strongest laws can still be gravely at risk. Air pollution from a coal fired power plant, that does not have to meet the current Clean Air Act, degrades visibility and threatens the vulnerable wilderness ecosystem.

The eight-day outing starts in Steamboat Springs, Colorado. Guided by experienced trip leaders Joan Hoffmann and John Spezia, participants will tour the Hayden Power Plant and field data collection stations and will enjoy a five-day moderate wilderness backpack. Camps will sample delicate alpine lakes, with wildflower displays and scenic vistas, before the final night at a remote lodge.

#### Costs, Etc.

Cost of the Mt. Zirkel outing, Trip #96-103, "Preserving Our Legacy, Mt. Zirkel Wilderness Area, Colorado," is \$395. Several limited scholarships may be available if cost is a decisive factor. For more details, call leader Joan Hoffmann at (970) 879-2021.

Cost of the unforgettable 7-day Clavey River outing, "A Classic California Wild and Scenic Campaign, Clavey River," Trip #96-102A, is \$465. For details, call leader Becky Lynch at (707) 763-7504.

Or call the Outing Department's 24-hour voice mail at (415) 977-5630 for a trip brochure and application form. To apply, send completed application form with \$50 deposit to Sierra Club Outing Dept., Dept. #05618, San Francisco CA 94139. Or, you may call (415) 977-5588 (8:30 am to 5 pm PDT) to place a credit card deposit. You may FAX a credit card deposit to (415) 977-5795.

Christine Adams, Albuquerque  
 Carol Ambrose, Los Alamos  
 Courtney Anderson, Albuquerque  
 P. Aragon, Albuquerque  
 Paula Aranguren, Albuquerque  
 E. Armstrong-Hamm, Albuquerque  
 Stuart & Diane Baker, Los Alamos  
 J. Barber, Albuquerque  
 James Barker, Medanales  
 Carla Barlow, Albuquerque  
 Dr. Laura Barnes, Holloman Air  
 Force Base  
 Jamie Barr, Albuquerque  
 David Bedford, Albuquerque  
 Steve Best, El Paso  
 Joy Bixler, El Paso  
 Charles Bolig, Los Alamos  
 David Borgmann, Albuquerque  
 Connie Bosworth, El Paso  
 Stephany & Alfons Bouchier, Los  
 Alamos  
 Chris Boyd, Albuquerque

Jeremy Bracken, Albuquerque  
 Anne Brady, Albuquerque  
 Jack Brush, Truth or  
 Consequences  
 Liz Bryant, El Paso  
 Mary Burke, Albuquerque  
 L. Burningham, Belen  
 Cathy Byron, Albuquerque  
 Joanne Caffrey, Albuquerque  
 Elizabeth Calhoon, Albuquerque  
 Grayce Campbell, Los Alamos  
 Carlson, Albuquerque  
 Case, Albuquerque  
 Judith Chaddick, Fairview  
 Ned & Concepcion Cherry, Albq.  
 Theresa Clewlow, Cerrillos  
 Tim Conway, Albuquerque  
 Curt Cooper, Albuquerque  
 Richard Cornell, El Paso  
 Dan Cosper, Albuquerque  
 Lee Courtneage, Albuquerque  
 Peter Crum, Mimbres

Desiree Cyr, Santa Fe  
 Winston & Jean Dabney, Los  
 Alamos  
 L. Davis, El Paso  
 Michele Davis, El Paso  
 Nick De Candia, Albuquerque  
 Marie & Martin De La Torre, Albq.  
 Kim Denton-Hill, Albuquerque  
 Claudia Depalma, Albuquerque  
 Dante Digregorio, Albuquerque  
 William Dixon, Albuquerque  
 Anne Donohoe, Los Alamos  
 J. Dornbusch-Benc, Albuquerque  
 Doshier, Albuquerque  
 Howard Duffey, Albuquerque  
 Delbert Dyche, Los Alamos  
 Gregory Ellis, Albuquerque  
 Paul Erickson, Albuquerque  
 B. J. Fairbanks, Albuquerque  
 John Farmer, Tijeras  
 Catherine Federici, Los Alamos  
 Robin Ferguson, Albuquerque  
 Susan Fields, Aztec  
 Phyllis Fish, T Or C  
 R. C. Fletcher, Albuquerque  
 John Foley, Los Alamos  
 James Follingstad, Santa Fe  
 Arianna Frakes, Jemez Pueblo  
 Carol Frantz, Rio Rancho  
 Gerald & Patricia Fritz, Albq.  
 Fm Gallegos, Albuquerque  
 Sarah Garde, Albuquerque  
 Chadwick Garoni, Carlsbad  
 Toni Gary, Clovis  
 Miss Christine Geiselhart, Santa Fe  
 James & Patricia George, Albq.  
 Florence Gilbard, Albuquerque  
 Monte Gilbert, El Paso  
 Sandra Girard, Albuquerque  
 Pam Goad Blatsvich, Carlsbad  
 Evelyn & Eugene Gomez, Albq.  
 Vanessa Gonzales Ardon, Albq.  
 Julie Good, Silver City  
 Liz Gould, La Plata  
 Eileen Graham, Albuquerque  
 Mary Gramer, Albuquerque  
 Eric Grose, Albuquerque  
 Phyllis Grover, Santa Fe  
 Angela Grubbs, Santa Fe  
 Wendi Grusy, Albuquerque  
 Clea Gutterson, Albuquerque  
 T. A. Hadersbeck, El Paso  
 Leonard Hall, Roswell  
 Scott Hallenbeck, Albuquerque  
 Christina Hammond, Albuquerque  
 Laura Hanson, Albuquerque  
 Bonnie Hardesty, Albuquerque  
 Roxanne Haynes, Albuquerque  
 Larry Hickerson, Albuquerque  
 Susan Hill, Silver City  
 Miriam Hill, Santa Fe  
 Carol & Alan Hill, Albuquerque  
 Margaret Hinds, Albuquerque  
 Charles Hines, Carlsbad  
 Michael Hiskey, Los Alamos  
 Tim Hodson & Debbie Kunz, Albq.  
 Patrick Hoffman, Albuquerque  
 Nancy Hoffman, Albuquerque  
 Donna Holland, Taos  
 Jeff Hood, Santa Fe  
 James & Janet Hoppe, Albq.  
 G. Hotchkiss, Tesuque  
 Raymond Housh, Albuquerque  
 Michael Hudock, Albuquerque  
 Mike Huff, Albuquerque  
 Mary Hurst, Albuquerque  
 Claude Jack, Santa Fe  
 Steven Jarrett, Albuquerque  
 Marie Jennings, Albuquerque  
 Mathew & Andrea Johansen, Los  
 Alamos  
 Jace Johnson, Albuquerque  
 Elizabeth Johnston, Los Alamos  
 Susan Jones, Santa Fe  
 A. Jones, Cannon AFB  
 Barbara Jordan, Albuquerque  
 Naomi Julian, Albuquerque  
 Paula Kahn, Albuquerque  
 Bob & Marianne Kapoun, Santa Fe  
 Sam Karns, Albuquerque  
 Camilla Kattell, Albuquerque  
 Marcae Keefe, Albuquerque  
 Joy Kinross-Wright, Santa Fe  
 Stephen Kleban, Albuquerque  
 Donald Kreitzer, Las Cruces  
 Kathy Kron, Albuquerque  
 Max Lannin, Albuquerque  
 Harold & Alma Lavender, Albq.  
 Margaret Leib, Albuquerque  
 Robert Levy, Albuquerque  
 Sandy Lewis, Las Cruces  
 L. Liu, Los Alamos  
 Joyce Long, Albuquerque  
 Judy Lopez, Albuquerque  
 Darryl Maclas, Albuquerque  
 Martha MacMillan, Los Alamos  
 David & Shawna Madsen, Albq.  
 Connie Maffei, Albuquerque

Andrea Marak, Albuquerque  
 Sotero Martinez, Las Cruces  
 David Martinez, Albuquerque  
 Larry & Donna Maxey, Albq.  
 M. McCandless, Albuquerque  
 Margo McCormick, Albuquerque  
 Betty McDonald, Albuquerque  
 Rev. Carole McGowan, Albq.  
 Dee McMasters, Alto  
 Shirley McNall, Aztec  
 Graeme Means, Albuquerque  
 Edward Melton, Albuquerque  
 Merrie Merriam, Corrales  
 Marian Merritt, Santa Fe  
 Marion Meuller, Los Alamos  
 Joseph Meyer, El Paso  
 Marilyn Migliarini, Los Lunas  
 Marta Miskolczy, Santa Fe  
 Lola Moonfrog, Santa Fe  
 Debby Morrell, Albuquerque  
 Rita Morris, Albuquerque  
 Gail Mortimer, El Paso  
 Shigetaro Murata, El Paso  
 Kai Nagel, Santa Fe  
 Randy Narges, Albuquerque  
 Dan Neagley, Albuquerque  
 Richard Nenoff, Albuquerque  
 Arthur & Mary Nichols, Los Alamos  
 David Norvell, Albuquerque  
 Virginia Olsen, Tijeras  
 Peter Pacheco, Albuquerque  
 Lane Pack, T or C  
 Beryl Parke, Albuquerque  
 Stephen & Linda Parratto, Albq.  
 Doris Patton, Cochiti Lake  
 Rinmor Peloso, Albuquerque  
 Rose Penuela, Albuquerque  
 Marian Peters, Los Alamos  
 Donna Peterson, Los Alamos  
 Ronald Pfaff, Los Alamos  
 Robert Phillips, Albuquerque  
 Nancy Piper, El Paso  
 Michelle Poling, Los Alamos  
 R. Porter, El Paso  
 James & Cathryn Poukey, Albq.  
 Gloria Price, Los Lunas  
 Milton & Dixie Propp, Albuquerque  
 Reinhardt Quelle, Los Alamos  
 Gerald Quintana, Taos  
 Linda Radune, Albuquerque  
 Raissy, Albuquerque  
 Isaac Randall, Farmington  
 Olga Rauenzahn-Grov, Los Alamos  
 Eric Rave, Albuquerque  
 E. Catherine Rayne, Santa Fe  
 Heidi Reinoso, El Paso  
 Kate Reynolds, Albuquerque  
 Danna Rhodes, Albuquerque  
 Cheryl Richards, Albuquerque  
 Ardene Rickman, Hanover  
 Judy Robson, Albuquerque  
 Patricia Rogers, Taos  
 Orlando Romero, Albuquerque  
 Cindy Roper, Alamogordo  
 Barbara Ross, Gallup  
 Christine Rossi, Albuquerque  
 Ruehle, Albuquerque  
 Virginia Ruiz, Albuquerque  
 Santy Sacco, Albuquerque  
 Joe Sackett, Albuquerque  
 Cynthia Salgado, El Paso  
 Elizabeth Samuels, Santa Fe  
 Tom Sanders, Albuquerque  
 John Sarracino, Los Alamos  
 Deborah Sarver, Albuquerque  
 Angela Sauk, Shiprock  
 Anthony Scannapieco, Los Alamos  
 Rebecca Schelker, Albuquerque  
 J. Schmierer & E. Nichols, Los  
 Alamos  
 Professor George Schueler, Albq.  
 Dan Scurlock, Albuquerque  
 Leslie Seckler, Albuquerque  
 Michael Seeliger, Albuquerque  
 Daniel Shevitz, Los Alamos  
 Melanie Shirk, Los Alamos  
 Benjamin & Tamara Silva, Albq.  
 Maggie Simms, Albq.  
 Kristin Simon, Albq.  
 Mr & Mrs Edmund Sinden, Albq.  
 Sidney Singer, Los Alamos  
 Genevieve Sisemore,  
 Albq.  
 Edward & Shirley  
 Slenczka, Albq.  
 Gerald Small, Albq.  
 Steven Smith, Albq.  
 Constance Springer, El  
 Paso  
 Ruth Squires, Los Lunas  
 Barbara Stanislawski,  
 Santa Fe  
 Kathryn Steffan, Reserve  
 David & Jean Steinhaus,  
 Albq.  
 Stern, Albuquerque  
 Ralph Stevens, Los  
 Alamos

## Welcome New Members!

We wish to extend a big hello and thank you to these 302 new members who have joined us from April 1 to May 31 of this year.



Robert Stine, Los Alamos  
 Al Stotts, Albuquerque  
 Chantal Strauss, Santa Fe  
 Brinda J. Swann, Gallup  
 Richard Talley, Los Lunas  
 Tennyson, Albuquerque  
 Christine Theisen, Clovis  
 David Thiker, Las Cruces  
 Robert Thomsen, Los Alamos  
 Randy & Joy Thornhill, Albq.  
 Toeppen, Albuquerque  
 Lois Toevs, Los Alamos  
 Patrick Torres, Albuquerque  
 Donnie Torres, Los Alamos  
 Colette Trapp, Aztec  
 Tony Tucker, Santa Fe  
 Jayme Tull & Jack Butler, Santa Fe  
 Linda Turner, Santa Fe  
 Jennifer Turner, Albuquerque  
 Ray Turnley, Albuquerque  
 Dennis & Margery Valliant, Albq.  
 Sylvia Venice, Santa Fe  
 Ernie & Jan Villescas, Albq.  
 William Voight, Espanola  
 Wendy Volkmann, Santa Fe  
 Jerry Wackerle, Los Alamos  
 Scott Walker, Albuquerque  
 Jon Wallace, Los Alamos  
 Liz Walsh, El Paso  
 Patricia Ward, El Paso  
 Susan Wayne, Albuquerque  
 Miss Kelly Wayne, Santa Fe  
 Lisa Weatherman, Albuquerque  
 Anne Weisskopf, Albuquerque  
 Mark & Linda Wells, Los Alamos  
 Christian Westphal, Cloudcroft  
 Paul & Rosemary Whalen, Los  
 Alamos  
 Willie Wheeler, Albuquerque  
 Newton White, Tesuque  
 Tory White, Tome  
 Jennifer White, Los Alamos  
 Chris Whiting, Albuquerque  
 John Whitley, T Or C  
 Bernard & Patricia Wilde, Los  
 Alamos  
 Raleigh Williams, Albuquerque  
 Sandra & Arvis Williams, Albq.  
 Dorothy Wilson, Los Alamos  
 David Witte, Albuquerque  
 Sheryl Wolf, Albuquerque  
 Pat Wood, Santa Fe  
 Ken Wright, Albuquerque  
 Jill Yeagley, Albuquerque  
 Scott Yoshino, Albuquerque  
 Rev Gordon Young, El Paso

## Primary Election Results

(con't from page 2)

environmental leader on the Judiciary Committee.

**Henry "Kiki" Saavedra** (District 10—Albuquerque). *Unopposed* in the Primary and the General.

**Raymond Sanchez** (District 15—Albuquerque). *Unopposed* in the Primary. Rep. Sanchez faces Alexander Leith in November. As Speaker of the House, Rep. Sanchez oversees committee assignments and the process of whether legislation ever gets voted on by the full House.

**Mimi Stewart** (District 22—Albuquerque [275-2355]). *Unopposed* in the Primary. Rep. Stewart faces a very tough opponent (Jack McMains) in November. As a freshman legislator, Rep Stewart "rose to the occasion" quickly to become a strong and consistent environmental advocate on the House Energy and Natural Resources and Judiciary Committees.

**Danice Picraux** (District 25—Albuquerque [268-7126]). *Unopposed* in the Primary. Rep. Picraux faces Troy Prichard in the General Election. She continues to be a strong environmental voice on the Energy and Natural Resources and Appropriations Committees.

**Max Coll** (District 47—Santa Fe [982-4349]). *Unopposed* in the Primary. Rep. Coll faces Gregg Bemis, Jr., in November. This is a heavily Democratic district. Rep. Coll is the "granddaddy" of environmental stewardship in the House. Without him, particularly as Chair of the very powerful Appropriations Committee, our victories during the past decade would have been few and far between.

**James Roger Madalena** (District 65—Jemez Pueblo). *Unopposed* in the Primary. Rep. Madalena faces Robert Walker in November. Rep. Madalena chairs the Energy and Natural Resources Committee and has been a strong environmental advocate for many years.

### U.S. Congress

**Shirley Baca** (522-7335) is running for U.S. Representative (2nd Congressional District) against incumbent Joe Skeen in the General Election. Baca was an environmental champion during her tenure as State Representative while Skeen has been an environmental "zero" for years in Washington.

### Please Help Pro-Environment Candidates

Like it or not (and basically, I don't!), "politics" is where environmental decisions are made. Even if the whole "game" turns you off, realize that there are good people running who want to safeguard our environment. Show up at one of their mailing parties, walk your neighborhoods with their literature, attend one of their fundraising events. And if that's not your bag, simply get out your checkbook and make a contribution, however, large or small. You can, of course, contribute to candidates not in your own district, as well. Keep in mind that, if these candidates lose, our environment may lose come the legislative session next January.

(Craig has taken over Political Chair duties from Ron Grotbeck, who is still working on political issues for the Albuquerque Group.)

**THUNDERBIRD LODGE**  
**205 MECHEM DR.**  
**RUIDOSO, NEW MEXICO**

**A RUSTIC MOUNTAIN LODGE**  
 CLOSE TO  
**SKIING AT SKI APACHE**  
**HIKING IN THE WHITE MTN. & CAPITAN**  
**WILDERNESSES**  
**ROAD & MOUNTAIN BIKING**  
**FISHING**  
**& JUST HANGIN' OUT**  
**1-800-416-3908**

Mention this ad for a \$5/night discount

## Activist Profile

# John Wright



John wears two hats as a conservation activist. In addition to serving on the Executive Committee of the Rio Grande Chapter, he is also the Coordinator of the New Mexico Wilderness Coalition. The two roles are united by John's love for wilderness and his desire to see wild land protected for all citizens, city and rural dwellers alike.

John's immediate goal is to get a state BLM wilderness bill passed through Congress and enacted into law. An inventory of roadless land in New Mexico has been completed by the Coalition and will be made public in a new edition of a book entitled *Wildlands*. The next step will be an educational wilderness workshop on Oct. 5, featuring Rep. Bill Richardson. Then, the elections willing, a bill may be introduced in the next Congressional season.

John's wilderness focus came as a result of time spent in the mountains of northern New Mexico working alongside rural residents in various jobs. Not only did he develop a deep love for wild land while working in the forests, he also gained an understanding of how much rural people also want to see this land protected. "These cultures appreciate wilderness and wilderness values," he said, "but their views have been completely misrepresented by industry."

Building a multi-cultural case for wilderness, especially in New Mexico, is pivotal to the success of a BLM bill, John believes. That is why he has chosen an overlooked quote from Aldo Leopold, the father of

American ecology, as the title of this fall's educational workshop--Wilderness: the Foundation of Culture. "We've got to get people talking about wilderness in a broader context," says John, "and give them a chance to be heard."

The Sierra Club, because it is democratic and grassroots-oriented, John believes, is the proper vehicle for accomplishing this goal. It has the ability to reach out to disparate groups and pull them together and unite them in a common purpose. He has urged the Club to move in this direction, and will continue to do so in the future.

John, who has lived in Albuquerque region for fourteen years, originally came to New Mexico to study photography and journalism at UNM. After an attempt to make a living in the outdoors, including work as a guide, John turned to teaching and now works in a Special Education program in a public high school in the South Valley.

He is encouraged by the environmental curriculum he sees developing in the public school system. "There is a big need to reach kids," he says, "especially in the South Valley where they have been cut off from their land and their heritage. These kids should be the benefactors of the natural resources of their state."

As the father of a toddler, John is acutely aware of legacies. His desire to protect the wild country of New Mexico is not just a philosophical exercise. It has a highly pragmatic aspect as well--to leave a bountiful treasure for his daughter. As John puts it: "I hope she will inherit a good world."

### News from the Front

## The War on the Environment

by Richard Barish

**Republicans back down (mostly) on riders.** As reported in the last issue, radical Republicans in Congress have been mounting a stealth attack on our environmental laws by means of riders on spending bills. In negotiations with President Clinton, most of the riders, including the worst, were either removed outright, or discretion was given to President Clinton to suspend operation of the riders. President Clinton has exercised that discretion, and as a result, the moratorium on new endangered species listings has been lifted, logging levels in the Tongas have not increased, and so forth. However, a few riders were retained in the compromise bill. The riders that were enacted into law bar energy efficiency standards for home appliances, block the EPA from regulating radon in drinking water, bar technical assistance to the U.N. Convention on Biodiversity, and suspend environmental laws for the construction of a telescope on Mt. Graham in Arizona, home of an endangered red squirrel.

In this election year, Republicans appear to be backing off at least a little bit in their aggressive attacks on our environmental laws. There are few riders attached to this year's appropriations bills. However, there are some, including a rider that would freeze CAFE automobile fuel efficiency standards for a second year. The budget bills also continue to cut funding for the environment and natural resources.

**Domenici's grazing bill reaches the House.** For several weeks, there have been reports that Sen. Domenici's atrocious grazing bill, S. 1459, would be voted on by the House of Representatives. This bill would, among other things, give ranchers a property right in grazing cattle that could not be taken away without compensation regardless of the harm that may be occurring to the land, severely limit public participation in grazing decision, and limit appeals. Dissension between moderate and conservative factions of House Republicans over the bill has reportedly delayed the vote. However, a vote could occur at any time. Call your representative and express your opposition to the bill.

**Arctic drilling.** Both the House and Senate Budget Resolutions assume revenues from drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. It is expected that actual authority to drill will be contained in the Budget Reconciliation Bill. Call President Clinton and urge him to again stand firm on Arctic drilling.

**National Wildlife Refuges under attack.** The House has passed H.R. 1675, which expands military activities in National Wildlife Refuges and could result in the downgrading of the primary purpose of refuges, conservation, and the opening all refuges to fishing and hunting. The House has also passed H.R. 2009, which prevents the government from acquiring new land for wildlife refuges.

**The onslaught continues.** Although Republicans are trying to look more pro-environment in this election year and reportedly are even prepared to allow a vote on one good bill, H.R. 3609, the **Safe Water Drinking Act**, numerous anti-environmental bills are still in the pipeline and others continue to be introduced:

> S. 391, Sen. Craig's so-called **Forest Health Bill** would make the Salvage Logging Rider permanent. The bill would suspend environmental laws and eliminate appeals for timber sales under the guise of forest health.

> H.R. 2827/S. 1420, **Dolphin-unsafe tuna.** These bills would allow companies to use the dolphin-safe label on tuna even though the tuna was caught by methods that will not protect dolphins. This will be a tough fight, since President Clinton supports this bill. Ask Sens. Bingaman and Domenici to support the Boxer/Biden compromise, S. 1460, and to sign onto the Boxer/Biden/Smith Dear Colleague letter concerning this issue.

> You thought Animas-La Plata was going to be the last fight over an obscenely expensive, environmentally destructive, pork barrel western water project catering to agricultural special interests? Alas, not so. **The Water Resources Development Act of 1996** would authorize the Auburn Dam on the American River in California and would exempt the project from environmental laws and legal challenges to boot. The EPA has stated that the project would have unacceptable, unmitigatable effects on unique natural resources.

> S. 1271, the **Nuclear Waste Protection Act of 1996**, would weaken environmental standards for the storage of nuclear waste and require unnecessary interim storage of nuclear waste at the Nevada Test Site, which means that nuclear waste would be on highways around the country on the way to Nevada.

Call the author (505-247-8079) for updates, or check the Sierra Club and NRDC home pages: <http://www.sierraclub.org> and <http://www.nrdc.org>.

### Contact your Representatives

Call the Capitol Switchboard and ask for your Congressman or Senators:

(202) 224-3121

Call President Clinton at

(202) 456-1111

Call Newt Gingrich at (202) 225-0600

Write your representatives at these addresses:

Rep. Bill Richardson (D-NM)

Rep. Steve Schiff (R-NM)

Rep. Joe Skeen (R-NM)

Rep. Ron Coleman (D-TX)

U.S. House of Representatives

Washington, D.C. 20515

Write the President at

The White House

1600 Pennsylvania Ave.

Washington, D.C. 20500

Sen. Jeff Bingaman (D-NM)

Sen. Pete Domenici (R-NM)

Sen. Phil Gramm (R-TX)

Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX)

U.S. Senate

Washington, D.C. 20510

Fax to these numbers:

Sen. Bingaman (202) 224-2852

Sen. Domenici (202) 224-7371

Rep. Richardson (505) 988-7296 (ask them to forward to Washington)

On the Internet:

Jeff Bingaman:

[Senator\\_Bingaman@bingaman.senate.gov](mailto:Senator_Bingaman@bingaman.senate.gov)

Newt Gingrich:

[georgia6@hr.house.gov](mailto:georgia6@hr.house.gov)

The White House:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov>

## 1996-1997 Nominating Committee

In accordance with the Standing Election Rules of the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club, Chair Van Perkins has appointed the following persons to serve on the Nominating Committee for 1996-97:

**Craig O'Hare**, Chair, 1061 Willow Way, Santa Fe, NM 87501-9156. Phone: (505) 474-3842.

**Susan Gorman**, 2226B Wyoming NE #272, Albuquerque, NM 87112. Phone: (505) 265-3231. E-mail: [bblairb@aol.com](mailto:bblairb@aol.com)

**Wesley Leonard**, P.O. Box 221211, El Paso, TX 79913-4211. Phone: (915) 747-6649 (W).

**Margot Wilson**, P.O. Box 926, Elephant Butte, NM 87935. Phone: (505) 744-5860. E-mail: [margot.wilson@sierraclub.org](mailto:margot.wilson@sierraclub.org)

Chapter members wishing to suggest names for consideration to be candidates for the Executive Committee should submit them to one of these Nominating Committee members in the coming months. See the next issue of the *Sierran* for the formal call for nominees.