



AWF Newsletter

JULY 2009



PHOTO BY DENNIS MUIRHEAD

NO MEETING IN JULY

Join us at *Valle Vidal* July 17-19

...for a restoration project on the east side, at Ring Place Meadow. This is the site of the Rally to preserve the Valle Vidal in 2005, and is a location of on-going effort for Albuquerque Wildlife Federation. We haven't been back to Ring Place for a few years, so it will be interesting to observe the changes and the needs here. Plan to join us! (See p 3)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Recently, Howard Bradley, an AWF member in Bloomfield, brought to my attention the GAIN program of the NM Department of Game and Fish. (GAIN stands for Gaining Access Into Nature, and it was signed into law in 2005.) My cursory knowledge of GAIN led me to the belief that it is a good thing, opening up previously restricted areas in the state to citizens interested in exploring some wild places. And for many people it likely is.

From the NMDGF website:

People who enjoy wildlife-associated recreation other than hunting and fishing will have more opportunities in New Mexico...GAIN will offer outstanding wildlife viewing and other activities on State Game Commission-owned Wildlife Management Areas [WMAs], lands that normally are open mainly for hunting and fishing. ...

GAIN activities include wildlife viewing, photography, hiking, bicycling, skiing, snowshoeing and horseback riding. GAIN also offers special opportunities for guided tours with wildlife biologists and other

Jim Hubert's **NOTABLE QUOTE** *of the month*

"It is inconceivable to me that an ethical relation to land can exist without love, respect, and admiration for land, and a high regard for its value. By value, I of course mean something far broader than mere economic value; I mean value in the philosophical sense."

— Aldo Leopold, from "The Land Ethic" in *A Sand County Almanac*, 1948

experts, as well as a few rare opportunities for people to witness and assist biologists as they trap big-horn sheep, deer, turkey and antelope....

Sounds good. But of course this all comes at a price: participating in GAIN activities requires purchase of an access permit plus a \$4 Habitat Management and Access Validation (HMAV). Cost for an annual GAIN permit is \$15, while a 5-day, temporary permit is \$4. Including the HMAV and \$1 vendor fee, the annual permit costs \$20 and the temporary permit \$9. Online permit purchase requires another fee of \$4.95. "Special opportunity" activities will cost more. Funds collected will be used for maintenance, clean-up, and improvements on the WMAs.

OK, so you're a sportsman with a current New Mexico hunting or fishing license with an HMAV, which allows you to hunt or fish on WMAs during the appropriate legal season. Can you look at birds and photograph them? Can you hike, aside from your hunting treks? Maybe hop on your mountain bike to move to another fishing spot?

The Game & Fish website's on GAIN says: "No. Hunting licenses are for hunting; fishing licenses are for fishing; and GAIN permits are for GAIN activities permitted on each WMA. You must purchase a GAIN permit to hike, bicycle etc."

(Continued on page 2)

Here's where Howard, our Bloomfield member, gets irked. He asks "why hunters and fishermen already carrying a valid license with Habitat Stamp would be required to buy the GAIN permit when the WMA is open to the public... Hunting and fishing licenses are not only for those activities,



Heartbar WMA
Photo: NMDGF

but have been for conservation in general for many years. And hunters and fishermen should get a break. Others wishing to use the WMA could buy hunting or fishing licenses, or perhaps just the Habitat Stamp. But please don't disrespect hunters and fishermen with another fee, when we have always been the ones paying...for conservation along the way."

I can understand Howard's complaint about piling on fees. And how does one determine where hunting ends and wildlife viewing begins? What do *you* think? You've got an opportunity to speak up. The Game & Fish Department is accepting public comments and proposing changes to GAIN, and next week will hold meetings in the Farmington, Cimarron, and Silver City areas (see notice at right).

If this is an issue that touches you, either personally or peripherally, why not offer your comments to the Department and the Game Commission? You may visit <http://www.wildlife.state.nm.us/commission/documents/ProposedRegulationChanges.htm>.

This will bring you to a page of PROPOSALS UNDER CONSIDERATION, one of which is NMAC 19.34.3: Draft Gaining Access Into Nature (GAIN) Rule. You can click on a link to e-mail comments, or mail your comments to:

New Mexico Game and Fish
Attn: Public Comments
PO Box 25112
Santa Fe, NM 87505

Glenda Muirhead

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PUBLIC MEETINGS WILL ADDRESS PROPOSED G.A.I.N. RULE CHANGES

June 26, 2009

The Department of Game and Fish will conduct public meetings around the state in July (see below) to present proposed changes and hear public concerns about the Gaining Access Into Nature (GAIN) program, which provides public access to State Game Commission-controlled properties for wildlife-associated recreation.

Proposals include changing rules to better define access opportunities and fee requirements for specific wildlife management areas. The Commission will consider proposals and public comments at a future meeting.

GAIN was approved by the state Legislature and signed into law by Gov. Bill Richardson in 2005. The law opened for the first time thousands of acres of Commission-controlled wildlife management areas for limited public recreation other than hunting and fishing. The wildlife areas were purchased specifically for wildlife using funds provided through excise taxes on hunting and fishing gear, and are managed with restrictions that exceed those for other "public" lands.

...Licensed hunters and anglers do not need GAIN permits while pursuing those activities in season, but need GAIN permits for other activities.

MEETING SCHEDULE

- **Farmington area:** 6 to 8 p.m. July 6, Bloomfield Multi-cultural Center, 333 S. First St., Bloomfield.
- **Cimarron:** 6 to 8 p.m. July 8, City Council Conference Room, Cimarron.
- **Silver City area:** 6 to 8 p.m. July 9, National Guard Armory, 11990 U.S. 180 E., Santa Clara.

For more information about the meetings or GAIN, please call (505) 476-8000 or visit www.wildlife.state.nm.us.

2009 AWF PROJECTS	
February 21	Los Padillas Wildlife Sanctuary at Los Padillas Elem. School (ABQ South Valley)
March 21	Cedro Creek (East Mountains)
April 17-19	Cebolla Canyon I
May 15-17	Limestone Canyon
June 19-21	Rio de las Vacas
July 17-19	Valle Vidal
August 14-16	Valles Caldera National Preserve
September 18-20	Aldo Leopold Centennial Celebration at Steward Meadows—Carson NF
October 16-18	Cebolla Canyon II
November 7	Albuquerque Trails

TEAM UP FOR WILDLIFE PROJECT

VALLE VIDAL — JULY 17-18-19, 2009

Continuing AWF's long-standing tradition, we will travel this month to the spectacular Valle Vidal in the Carson National Forest in northern New Mexico for a weekend at Ring Place Meadow, scene of many AWF projects in years past.

PROJECT TASKS will include building rock structures in the incised channel that runs through the meadow and repairing some enclosure fencing. We may also car-pool to Lookout Canyon, at the eastern edge along Forest Road 1950, to remediate previously-built rockwork that has been "tweaked" beyond its intended purpose by well-meaning hands.

CAMPSITE: We will camp on site in an undeveloped open space bordered by trees. We will set up canopies for "camp central" and there will be **portable toilets**. This camping setup will be shared with folks from New Mexico Wilderness Alliance, who have arranged alternate activities for their volunteers for the weekend.

FOOD: Plan on having breakfast provided by AWF/ NMWA on Saturday morning, with plenty of coffee for all. That evening we'll have a potluck meal, so please bring a dish to supplement grilled burgers and sausage. Sunday morning, if there are leftovers from Saturday, we'll put them on the table...plus coffee for sure.

WHAT TO BRING:

Gear for camping (tent / trailer / vehicle)
 Warm bedding and clothing
 Rain gear (it may rain)
 Sturdy work boots and work gloves
 Hat, sunscreen, bug repellent
 Backpack or daypack for your stuff
 Clothing and footwear changes (it may rain)
Food for yourself for Friday dinner, a Saturday bag lunch, and your meals for Sunday
Water adequate for your needs
 Your own place setting—plate, flatware, coffee cup
 Camp chair

TO REGISTER FOR THIS PROJECT PLEASE CONTACT:

Gene Tatum — gtatum3@msn.com OR Michael Scialdone — rioscial@gmail.com

Once you have registered, you will receive follow-up messages and reminders during the week leading up to the project weekend.

**PLEASE SIGN UP
BY JULY 13**



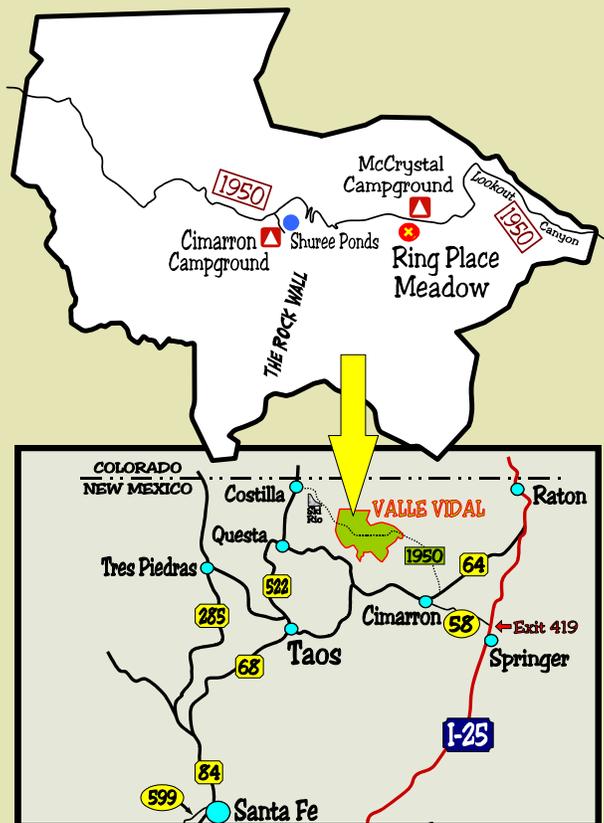
PHOTO BY GEORGE LONG, USFS

DIRECTIONS:

To get to the Valle Vidal, from the EAST, take I-25 to exit 419, head west on Hwy 58 to Cimarron. Follow Hwy 64 NE out of Cimarron for 5 miles, then take Forest Road 1950 for 26 miles, through Cerrososo Canyon across the private Vermejo Park Ranch, to the Forest boundary and then head toward **McCrystal Campground** and watch for AWF signs pointing to the campsite.

Or from the WEST, head north through Taos and Questa on NM Hwy 522 to Costilla, one mile south of the Colorado border. Go east through Amalia about 17 miles to the west boundary of the Valle Vidal, where the road becomes Forest Road 1950. Follow the signs toward **McCrystal Campground** and watch for AWF signs pointing to the campsite.

Driving Time: 4½ hours N of ABQ;
2 hours NE of Taos



PROJECT RECAP: RIO DE LAS VACAS — *Year Two*

Despite the on-again, off-again rain showers on Saturday, the crew that assembled June 19-21 for our second year at Rio de las Vacas—our largest group ever—persevered and planted hundreds of willow cuttings, repaired human-cut holes in fencing enclosures, and built or augmented rock structures to divert water flow or reduce erosion.

This lovely locale in the Santa Fe National Forest southeast of Cuba, NM, had obviously benefited from moisture during the year between our visits: grasses were tall and lush, especially evident around the medialuna rock structure built in 2008 (*thanks to Peter Callen for the before and after photos, below middle*), to spread out the water flow for increased infiltration into the meadow.

Coordinating close to 60 people was a challenge for task leaders Bill Zeedyk and Gene Tatum, and for camp managers Michael Scialdone and Patricia Hester. Nevertheless, project work was completed, and meals were enjoyed, with the help of many willing hands. So what if those hands were often muddy? ...there was plenty of hot coffee in the mornings and no one went hungry, and many of the willow planters hope to revisit their work to evaluate the success of their efforts. Thanks to everyone for a great weekend.

(In case you're speculating about physical niceties...the camp area was made more comfortable by deployment of four canopies and the rental of two portable toilets. We do, after all, try to make things civilized for our friends.)



PHOTOS BY PAT HESTER

Bill Zeedyk and Stephen Bohannon discuss the finer points of rock placement to prevent further erosion.



Job well done by willow planter Nathan Canaris.



PHOTOS BY PETER CALLEN

Medialuna Structure—Built 2008



Results After One Year

RIO DE LAS VACAS PROJECT PARTICIPANTS

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Toby Rosenblatt | Peter Callen |
| Marilynn Szydowski | Shannon Van de Riet |
| Michael Scialdone | Robin Brontsema |
| John Canaris | Stephen Bohannon |
| Nathan Canaris | Sara Quartochi |
| Monica Canaris | Shaun Stanwood |
| Gene Tatum | Susan Mendel & James |
| Glenda Muirhead | Cooley and children |
| Jim Wilson | Tanya Critchfield |
| Patricia Hester | Toby Jorin |
| Bill Zeedyk | Alice Lloyd |
| Mary Maulsby | Martha White |
| Adam Zipkin | Haley White |
| Bob Nordstrum | Jim Gill |
| Jack Crane | Darlin Gill |
| Darlene Crane | |
| Jen Plaut | <i>From NM Trout:</i> |
| LeRoy Danielson | Doug Loescher |
| Cliff Mendel | Francis Peter |
| Joyce Mendel | Mark Kalin |
| Kate Brown | Catherine Richard |
| Lyle Aufdemauer | and children |
| Abe Aufdemauer | Joe Vargo |
| Kevin Stillman | Ron Loehman |
| Marcie & Vincent | |
| Amendolagine | Nina Wells, NMED |
| and children | Daisy Morgan, USFS |

Apologies for any omissions or misspellings



PHOTOS BY PAT HESTER



Our littlest helper carries willow branches from the cutter over to the trimmers.

ENFORCEMENT TO *Increase* FOR OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLES STATEWIDE

June 17, 2009

NM Department of Game and Fish

New Mexico law enforcement agencies will conduct roadblocks, saturation patrols and safety blitzes statewide in an effort to educate the public and check for compliance with the requirements and safety provisions of the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Act.

An Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) is defined as any motorized vehicle designed specifically for off-highway travel, including all-terrain vehicles (ATVs, often called four-wheelers), snowmobiles, dirt bikes and go-carts.

State residents are required to register all Off-Highway Motor Vehicles through the Motor Vehicle Division if the vehicles will be operated on public lands. Nonresidents can purchase temporary permits from the Department of Game and Fish.

The law prohibits any riders under age 6 from operating an ATV on public land. The law also includes specific regulations for riders younger than age 18.

Department of Game and Fish officers will be assisted by officers with the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, New Mexico State Police and county sheriff's departments during the statewide OHV education and compliance efforts.

Reaction from Emily Romero, Coordinator for the New Mexico Public Lands Action Network (NMPLAN):

"We are pleased to see the Department of Game and Fish moving decisively to enforce and promote the improved Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Act. More public education and enforcement are very timely as we move into warmer summer months. This is a step in the right direction to protect our precious public lands from insensitive and reckless ORV (off-road vehicle) riders."

VALLES CALDERA MANAGEMENT *Change* EYED

New Mexico's U.S. senators have asked the National Park Service to study the idea of assuming management of Valles Caldera National Preserve. An NPS preserve is managed like a national park, but allows for hunting. The trust that governs the Valles Caldera expires in 2020. It was set up as an experiment, with the mandate to become financially self-sufficient by 2015. The preserve has an operating budget of more than \$4 million a year, but to date revenues have been well under \$1 million a year. "Anyone who has seen the Valles Caldera knows it is a special place," said Bingaman, who chairs the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. "Management by the National Park Service could be one of many options we evaluate to ensure the preserve's remarkable resources are protected." The senators asked the park service to complete its study within a few months.



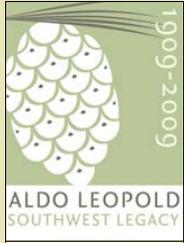
Photo: VallesCaldera.gov

GAME COMMISSION *Meeting* JULY 2

The State Game Commission met at Heron Lake State Park near Chama on Thursday to consider a wide range of topics, including a measure to improve the way it handles issues of importance to New Mexico sportsmen. In the past, the commission has occasionally voted on measures without giving the public adequate opportunity to consider and comment on the issue. The commission considered a proposal that ensures an adequate public comment period before a vote. "That's one of the bigger complaints we get," said Game and Fish Director Tod Stevenson, and the idea of improving the public comment process came from both the department and the commission. "We're trying to build a system that's pretty transparent," and the proposed rule change would help, he said.

Commissioners also planned to review the Department of Game and Fish public outreach program on the San Juan River fishery, and consider new regulations for deer hunting, including changing the draw application deadline to February and eliminating the requirement for a deer permit. The Habitat Stamp projects for 2010 were up for approval as well.

Source: July 2009 — NM Wildlife Federation — Sportsman's News Roundup E-Newsletter



ALDO LEOPOLD CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

www.leopoldcelebration.org

Aldo Leopold Legacy Film Festival Competition

Sponsored by Bernalillo County Open Space

Submissions due by **August 1**

Filmmakers have an opportunity to join the celebration of all that Aldo Leopold has done for New Mexico through submitting a film to the Aldo Leopold Legacy Film Festival. The contest is open to filmmakers of all ages and can include documentaries, works of fiction, animation, or any other type of film that explores the theme of preserving natural resources for generations to come. There are two categories to enter: 1) films of 15 – 20 minutes, and 2) films of 5 minutes or less. **Submissions are due by August 1** and must be submitted to:

Bernalillo County Parks and Recreation
ATTN: Colleen Langan
111 Union Square St SE, Suite 200
Albuquerque, NM 87102

Entries should be on DVD or Blu-Ray disc and will not be returned. Please include name, age, contact information, and school (if applicable). Screening of the winning films will be on September 11 at the Hubbell House, followed by an all-day screening of top films on September 12.

More information: contact Celia Merrill at (505)268-5337, execdirector@goldenapplenm.org

NEW MEMBERS

Kathryn Turnipseed & Tamara Saimons

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Bob Nordstrum

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

ALBUQUERQUE WILDLIFE FEDERATION, PO BOX 1234, ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87103

An affiliate of New Mexico Wildlife Federation

Please choose between **AWF MEMBERSHIP ONLY** or **AWF + NMWF MEMBERSHIP**. **AWF MEMBERSHIP ONLY** does **not** include membership in NMWF. **AWF + NMWF MEMBERSHIP** includes **one** voting membership in NMWF. For Family Membership, if a second person* desires NMWF voting rights, an additional \$10 payment is required.

➔ **PLEASE ✓ ONE :** **AWF MEMBERSHIP ONLY** **AWF + NMWF MEMBERSHIP** ↴

Designate NMWF member(s*) _____

name(s) _____

address _____

city, state, zip _____

phone _____ email _____

Gift membership from: _____

✓ MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

- Student [under 18].....\$10 ◀ [AWF Membership Only]
- Individual.....\$25
- Family\$35
- Sustaining.....\$50-\$99
- Patron.....\$100
- Lifetime.....\$500 ◀ [One-time Payment]

Dues \$ _____
 *Second NMWF Member \$10 _____
 Contribution \$ _____
TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____