



AWF Newsletter

MARCH 2010

MONTHLY MEETING

Thursday, March 11, 2010 — 7:30 pm
Manzano Mesa Center (map p2)

Movie Night!

Yellowstone: America's Sacred Wilderness



High in the American Rockies, Yellowstone Park is a place of extraordinary landscapes and geysers. Created by the largest volcanic explosions in the planet's history, it became the world's first national park. Throughout time, its two million acres have experienced constant change. Bison were nearly exterminated, then wolves and mountain lions faced diminishing numbers...but now they are back, restoring a vital diversity to the land.

With the return of wolves, Yellowstone has become a world-class wildlife sanctuary, the best place to see wolves and grizzly bears chasing elk. Yellowstone expert Paul Schullery describes the dramatic events that unfold each season.

Join us for this examination of the predator-prey relationships among Yellowstone's wildlife: the dichotomy of nature's beauty versus the animals' constant struggle to survive in this large and unique ecosystem.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

You may be aware of a very distressing report in the news recently. In Hawaii, Laura Vogel is missing. But you may not be aware that Laura has a connection with AWF. She participated in several of our projects while she taught biology in Rio Rancho, and she and her "Tree Huggers" student group were AWF members in 2008. We were shocked to learn of her disappearance and are keeping Laura and her family in our thoughts, anxiously awaiting results of the search. It is so difficult to believe this is happening.



Disappeared from
Ha'iku, Maui 2/21/10

Debbie Risberg sends notice of this internet site to follow the progress of the search effort:

www.findlauravogel.blogspot.com.

Laura is an amazing person. We hope for the best.

Glenda Muirhead

Jim Hubert's NOTABLE QUOTE of the month

"This should not be acceptable for any major transaction involving public trust lands, much less lands that for centuries have been used for traditional purposes such as hunting, trapping, and recreation."

— NM Governor Bill Richardson, regarding the ill-conceived Whites Peak proposed land trade arranged behind closed doors with little public input (late 2009)

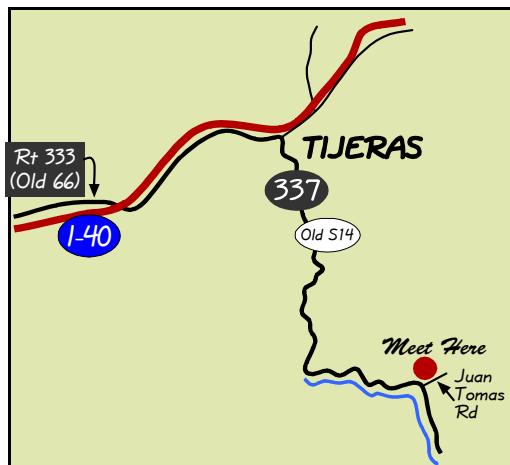
Volunteer Project #2

CEDRO CREEK in the East Mountains

SATURDAY, MARCH 20, 2010

Our second project of the 2010 season will be at Cedro Creek, a great place for an early spring event. Previous efforts of the Albuquerque Wildlife Federation and other groups have partially restored wetland sites along the creek that were damaged by past road construction. These are valuable habitat for deer, bear, birds and other species.

Volunteers have built rock structures in the creek bed, capturing and retaining water to seep into land adjoining the flow, promoting sediment deposition, encouraging wetland vegetation growth, and extending the period when water is available to the vegetation: portions of Cedro Creek are now perennial and wet meadows are recovering. Additionally, many trees and bushes have been planted over the years by AWF and others (including Cub Pack 185), and it is a pleasure to return to previous project sites to view the results.



WHERE TO MEET: We will return to the Boundary Reach, located about 5 miles south of Tijeras. Park on Juan Tomas at the intersection with Hwy 337 (Old South 14). Please be aware that we will need to cross the highway and climb down an uneven slope to access the creek.

START TIME: 9:00 am

Please arrive promptly to allow time for signing in and having some refreshments before we get an overview and guidance from our project leaders.

END TIME: 3:30 pm

THE PROJECT: We will build more rock structures and plant Gooding willows. Also, the Forest Service will provide a certified chainsaw operator to cut invasive elms and junipers, and we will pile the resulting slash. Tree planting and brush piling are appropriate tasks for kids.

FOOD: Volunteers, please bring your own lunch and water. AWF will have drinks and snacks for participants.

TO SIGN UP: Contact

Glenda Muirhead — 505-281-2925
or g.muirhead@usfamily.net

AWF OFFICERS AND BOARD

PRESIDENT — Glenda Muirhead
VICE PRESIDENT — Gene Tatum
SECRETARY — Patricia Hester
TREASURER — Dennis Muirhead

DIRECTORS

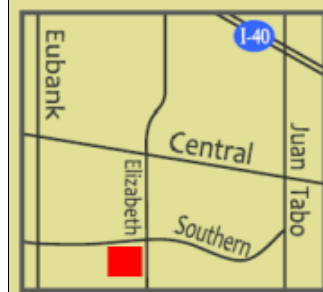
Stephen Bohannon	Linda Patterson
Larry Dwyer	Michael Scialdone
Brian Gleadle	Luke Shelby
Kurt Nolte	Bill Zeedyk

ALBUQUERQUE WILDLIFE FEDERATION

PO Box 1234 ■ Albuquerque, NM 87103
<http://abq.nmwildlife.org>

AWF MEETING LOCATION

Manzano Mesa Multigenerational Center
501 Elizabeth SE at Southern



Project Recap

ALDO LEOPOLD FOREST *Planting at the Bosque*
FEBRUARY 20, 2010

Photos by G Tatum and G Muirhead



We had a terrific turnout for our February planting project at the Bosque...36 volunteers signed in and got to work to put 100 cottonwood poles into the ground. Unfortunately, this number was more people than we could keep fully occupied, because the auger machine couldn't drill holes fast enough to keep ahead of the planters! Eventually, after several of the group pitched in with post-hole diggers and hand augers, and Open Space Forester Martin Martinez took a turn at the machine controls, all the cottonwoods found a good home nestled down into the water table.

Our thanks also to Open Space Education Coordinator Bill Pentler, who led some of us on a brief tour of the Forest, pointing out features of the Bosque and explaining historical management of the area.

LEOPOLD FOREST PLANTING
Participants

Ann Ahlander	Cliff Mendel
Abe Aufdermauer	Sharon Miles
Lyle Aufdermauer	Arlette Miller
Pam Bliss	Glenda Muirhead
Kate Brown	David Nye
Monica Canaris	Adrian Oglesby
Nancy Carrillo	Janet Rolsma
Roderick Flores	Toby Rosenblatt
Renee Horvath	Matt Rotunno
Don Hurst	Michael Scialdone
Doreen Jameson	Gene Tatum
Kate Kosman and Taylor & Cailin	Shannon Van de Riet
Alice Lloyd	Carl Weik
Crawford MacCallum	Marilyn Weik
Mike Madden	Haley White
Pat Madden	Daniel Ziegler
	Adam Zipkin

2010 PROJECT SCHEDULE

February 20	Tree Planting at Aldo Leopold Forest (<i>Albuquerque Bosque</i>)
March 20	Cedro Creek (<i>East Mountains</i>)
April 16-18	Cebolla Canyon I
May 14-16	Limestone Canyon (<i>San Mateo Mountains</i>)
June 18-20	Rio de las Vacas
July 16-18	Valle Vidal
August 20-22	Valles Caldera National Preserve
September 17-19	Cebolla Canyon II
October 16	Local Day Project and End of Season Celebration

To sign up for any of these projects, please contact Glenda Muirhead at 505-281-2925 or g.muirhead@usfamily.net by Monday prior to the project weekend.

Big Fines PROPOSED FOR Big Damage ON FEDERAL LANDS

The illegal destruction of thousands of acres of public lands in Colorado by off-road vehicles and fires caused by carelessness has prompted legislation that could result in much stronger penalties for those responsible.

Two Colorado legislators have introduced legislation in the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives designed to deter damage to public lands caused by illegal or reckless activities. Fines up to \$100,000 and up to 12 months in jail or both could be imposed. The legislation would establish that any reckless use of fire on public lands would be punishable by fines of no less than \$500.

With the increased use of public lands in the West have come instances of outrageous behavior responsible for causing hundreds of thousands of dollars of damage. However, the public agencies charged with repairing the damage often are hamstrung because current fines for the destruction are minuscule. For instance, federal law prevents the U.S. Bureau of Land Management from assessing a fine greater than \$1,000 — even if damage from the violations costs thousands more to repair.

Two instances were cited where off-road vehicles caused substantial destruction to public lands:

One was a mudfest sponsored by two local radio personalities where hundreds of people drove their vehicles in a sensitive wetland. Seven acres of wetland were destroyed and another 18 acres

were seriously damaged, including prime habitat for an endangered species of toad. The estimated cost to repair the damage ranged from \$66,000 to hundreds of thousands of dollars.

While much of this 2000 event took place on private land, the off-road vehicle users crossed a portion of the Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest. The two sponsors were ticketed \$50 apiece for not getting a special-use permit to host the gathering.

In another incident, also in 2000, two recreational off-road vehicles ignored closure signs while four-wheel driving on BLM land high above Silverton, Colo. They were stuck for five days on a 70 percent slope at 12,500 feet along the flanks of Houghton Mountain. The incident caused significant damage to the high alpine tundra — a delicate ecosystem that may take thousands of years to recover.

Despite that, the violators were fined only \$600 each, which was “hardly adequate” to restore the area or to deter others, said the bill’s sponsors.

The increased fines, along with authorization to apply the funds to restore damaged land under the REPAIR ACT, will allow the Interior and Agriculture departments to repair damaged wildlife habitat, replant wetland vegetation, revegetate scarred lands, and repair trails.

*From an article by Howard Pankratz
The Denver Post, February 9, 2010*

CARBON STORAGE POTENTIAL

from Revegetating Unneeded Forest Service Roads

An overlooked opportunity to sequester carbon on National Forests rests with its massive road system. Preliminary analysis by The Wilderness Society has indicated that returning unneeded Forest Service roads back to a natural state would be equivalent to revegetating an area larger than Rhode Island. We estimate that carbon storage from decommissioning and revegetating unneeded roads on our national forests is 39.5–48.5 million metric tons. To put this into perspective, the additional carbon stored by road reclamation would be equivalent to removing 7.2–8.8 million cars from use for one year. You can download the report at <http://wilderness.org/content/brief-carbon-and-roads>.

*Joshua Hicks, Program Associate
Recreation Planning Program
The Wilderness Society*

RENEWED MEMBERS

Larry Blair & Mathew Blair—*Sustaining*
Cecil D. Haas—*Patron*
Marilynn Szydlowski

NEW MEMBERS

Doreen and Sandra Jameson
Doug Loescher

*Thank
You!*

Some Results from the NM LEGISLATIVE SESSION

By Joel Gay, NM Wildlife Federation

2010
MARCH
AWF
NEWSLETTER

CONSERVATION FUND CREATED

Senate Bill 186 creates the **Natural Heritage Conservation Fund**, which eventually will be able to receive grants, donations and other sources of revenue such as conservation bond measures. As the fund grows, it can be used for watershed and habitat conservation projects. More important, it will attract matching funds from other sources to broaden its reach. New Mexico currently misses out on about \$20 million per year of federal matching funds for conservation projects due to lack of a non-federal match, according to a report several years ago by the Department of Game and Fish. SB 186 is a small but important first step in working to take advantage of conservation dollars and investing in our wildlife and natural resources.

SB 186 now goes to Gov. Bill Richardson, who has been a strong supporter of the idea and made it a highlight in his State of the State Address. He is expected to sign it into law.

DISCOUNTED LICENSES FOR MILITARY

House Bill 37 gives members of the U.S. armed forces a discount on deer and small game licenses, while **Senate Bill 193** offers free fishing licenses to disabled veterans and active-duty personnel who are participating in certain rehabilitation programs that involve fishing. Both go to Gov. Richardson for his signature. But the governor may want to take a closer look at **House Bill 116**, which offers free small game and fishing licenses to

New Mexico residents on active military duty and home on leave of 30 days or less. The bill was approved, but if signed into law would cause the Department of Game and Fish to lose more than \$400,000 in federal matching revenue. While the bill is certainly well-intentioned, the governor might want to send the idea back to the Legislature for further consideration to make sure federal matching funds are not lost as an unintended side-effect.

CONSOLIDATE LICENSES & STAMPS

House Joint Memorial 56 was approved. The bill requests the Department of Game and Fish to study the consolidation of hunting and fishing licenses and stamps. The measure notes that New Mexico has more than 30 classes of hunting and fishing licenses, not to mention various stamps and special use permits. The measure now goes to Richardson for approval.

DEPREDAATION LEGISLATION FAILED

House Bill 73 was tabled. This would have given New Mexico a long-overdue reform of the state depredation law. The bill was written by the Department of Game and Fish and was a high priority of Gov. Richardson. Sponsored by Rep. Mimi Stewart of Albuquerque, the bill would have ended the senseless slaughter of big game and provided depredation assistance to landowners. HB 73 passed its first committee, but then was sidetracked into the House Business and Industry Committee at the request of Rep. Debbie Rodella of Espanola. Although some committee members appeared sympathetic to the reform effort, the bill was tabled and thus killed for the year.

Sportsmen will continue working to reform the depredation statute, but an overhaul will have to wait until at least the 2011 legislative session.

OTHERS FAILED TO PASS

Several bills of interest didn't get far, including **House Bill 51**, which would have required anglers in the San Juan River quality waters to purchase an additional \$5 stamp (\$10 for nonresidents). The new stamp would raise about \$355,000 a year for habitat improvement projects, but some anglers were concerned that a plan had not been identified, and questioned whether the projects would actually work.

Also apparently stuck was Senate Memorial 16, which asked the game department and the State Game Commission to study methods and programs to increase the number of hunting licenses available for New Mexico residents.

Final Outcome for Selected Bills

courtesy of Brian Gleadle, NMDGF and AWF Board member

SB 186: NATURAL HERITAGE CONSERVATION ACT

- **PASSED** in the regular session
- Still awaiting Governor's signature as of March 1, 2010

FAILED TO PASS 2010 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

- HB 27: Recovery of Damages to Natural Resources
- HB 51: San Juan River Special Management Areas
- HB 61: Prohibit Wolf Reintroduction
- HB 73: Taking of Certain Animal Species ("Depredation")
- HB 213: Creation of Natural Resources & Environment Dept.
- HJM 31: Study Off-Highway Vehicle Use
- HJM 32: Enforce Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Act
- SM 16: Study Increasing Hunting Permits

SECOND EXTINCTION OF *Wolves* IN THE WILD?

From *WildEarth Guardians*

In 2009, 52 adult Mexican gray wolves existed in the wild and there were 31 wild-born pups that year. How can their population now be only 42? Without an updated scientific recovery plan, greater endangered species protections and retirement of federally issued livestock grazing permits, their future numbers look dire.

Wolves are important to our ecosystems and Southwest heritage. Left alone they form packs, have pups and successfully hunt native prey. There are only 42 wild Mexican Gray Wolves left in Arizona and New Mexico — an unbelievable 20% decline in less than a year. They are the most endangered mammal in North America.

WildEarth Guardians is working to facilitate healthy wolf populations throughout the American West, asking the U.S. Fish and Wildlife to develop a robust science-based recovery plan to replace an ineffectual one. We need fewer grazing permits and more wolves released into the wild.

COMMUNITY EVENTS



CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE OPEN SPACE DIVISION

Open Space Visitor Center | 505-897-8831 | www.cabq.gov/openspace

IN THE GALLERY: *Lost (and Found) in Open Space*

March 1st—April 28th

Over the years the Open Space Division has accumulated unique relics from the past as we clean, investigate and enjoy the land we help to maintain. Enjoy this creative and innovative show throughout March and April. Experience how trail maintenance can shape the artistic senses. Come participate in our continued partnership with the natural world and the city in which we live. Don't miss this opportunity to view the technologies of our past, both ancient and contemporary.

Opening Reception in the Open Space Art Gallery

Saturday, March 6

1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

BOSQUE WILD: *Guided Nature Walk*

Sunday, March 7th

7:30 am – 9:00 am

FREE

Join our naturalists for a walk into the riverside forest that so many of us pass on our way through the city. Come away with a new perspective on an interurban treasure. Space limited, age 7 and older. Registration strongly recommended.



Joshua Willis, Curio, wood, scrap metal, flora, 2010

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

An affiliate of New Mexico Wildlife Federation

I'd like to belong to AWF ONLY or I'd like to belong to AWF + NMWF: *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 \$ _____

Contribution \$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____