



MONTHLY MEETING

Thursday, October 14, 2010 — 7:30 pm
Manzano Mesa Center (map p5)



Should Valles Caldera Become a National Park?

Guest Speaker: Jack Crane, Area Resident and Volunteer

Formerly the Baca Ranch, the Valles Caldera National Preserve was established by the Valles Caldera Preservation Act of 2000. It is managed as a unit in the National Forest System by a Board of Trustees appointed by the President of the United States. For about two years, area newspapers and web sites have published articles about the Preserve, its management, and its programs. Jack Crane, area resident and active Preserve volunteer, feels these media reports have been almost totally negative, presenting deficiencies and very little of the accomplishments. They have advocated transferring the Preserve to the National Park Service.

Valles Caldera National Preserve Management Act (Senate Bill 3452), sponsored by Senator Jeff Bingaman, passed the Energy and Natural Resources Committee chaired by the Senator by voice vote after little discussion. The proposed legislation was heard in the Committee after two public "listening sessions" chaired by the Los Alamos County Council in White Rock and Los Alamos. No public hearings were held in Santa Fe or Albuquerque, nor in the Jemez River Canyon communities. It is now included as part of a public lands omnibus bill planned for vote by the full Senate later this year.

In this program, Jack will attempt to bring out a more complete picture of Preserve accomplishments and legislative activities through his presentation and group discussion.

Jack Crane is a retired Forest Service Civil Engineer. He owns property adjacent to the Preserve and worked on the Baca Ranch prior to its becoming public land. Jack has provided volunteer service since the Preserve was established in 2000. He and his wife Darlene are founding members of Los Amigos de Valles Caldera, where Jack has been on the Board of Directors since October 2009. Los Amigos is a non-profit corporation whose purpose is to support the Valles Caldera National Preserve for present and future generations. Jack and Darlene presently reside in their home on Sulphur Creek which flows from the southwest portion of the Preserve.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The staff of New Mexico Wildlife Federation are justifiably frustrated and disappointed with the current status of the A-PLUS program, for antelope license allocation. Having been invited by the Department of Game & Fish to participate in reworking the system, they now find that their input has been ignored and promises have been broken. Read about the present proposal on page 4. (AWF's Larry Dwyer was on the "taskforce" too, and is equally frustrated with this outcome.)

Score two for the courts. The Bureau of Land Management may once again be held accountable for managing public lands in the public's best interests. There's an interesting *NY Times* editorial, also on page 4, which describes a couple of judicial decisions that impact the BLM and its leaseholders.

AWF is truly honored to receive the NM Riparian Council's Habitat Enhancement Award for 2010 (page 5). AWF is nothing without its volunteers. This is your award.

Glenda Muirhead

Jim Hubert's

Notable Quote of the Month

"In terms of biodiversity, wetlands are disproportionately important in relation to their size, sustaining ecosystems over a scale that ranges far beyond the wetlands themselves."

— Matt Jenkins,
The Nature Conservancy, 2008

Volunteer Project #9

CEDRO CREEK in the East Mountains SATURDAY PROJECT: OCTOBER 16, 2010

Our final project of the 2010 season will be at Cedro Creek in the Manzano Mountains east of Albuquerque. We had planned a project here for March but had to cancel when fresh snowfall made the roads and creek area too hazardous.

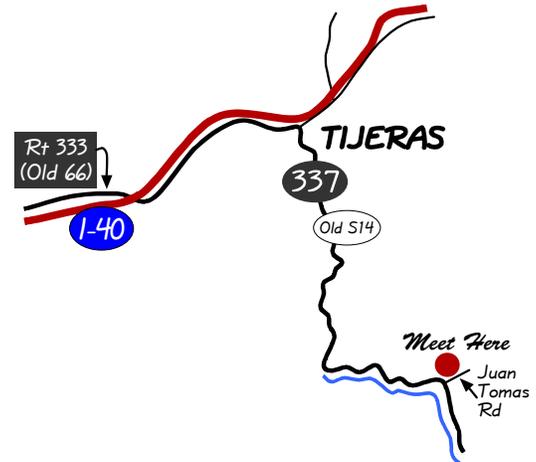
Previous efforts of the Albuquerque Wildlife Federation and other groups have partially restored wetland sites along the creek that were damaged by past road construction. These are valuable habitat for deer, bear, birds and other species.

WHERE: We will work downstream of last year's site, at the Black Willow Reach. Park on Juan Tomas Road where it meets with Hwy 337 (Old South 14) about 5 miles south of Tijeras. 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 END TIME: 3:00 pm

Please arrive promptly to allow time to sign in and have refreshments before we get an overview and guidance from our project leaders, Bill Zeedyk (AWF) and Beverly deGruyter (USFS).

THE PROJECT: We will be creating one-rock dams, baffles, weirs, and head-cut control structures with rocks to enhance riparian/wetland habitat. We will have a few riparian plants to get into the ground as well. The Forest Service will provide shovels, pry bars, buckets, loppers, and tree spades. We may also cut invasive elms and pile brush.



GEAR: Please bring the usual field gear such as gloves, hats, long sleeves, long pants, sturdy boots, and sunscreen.

TOOLS: You may want to bring pruning saws if you'd like to help with that task.

FOOD: Volunteers, please bring your own lunch and water. AWF will provide snacks, plus ice water and drink mixes (please provide your own refillable water bottle).

TO SIGN UP: Contact Glenda Muirhead
505-281-2925 or g.muirhead@usfamily.net

Come to the PARTY!

We are celebrating the end of another great project season! With our Cedro Creek project on Saturday, October 16, we conclude AWF's 2010 season of habitat restoration and we are truly gratified by the tremendous efforts put forth by our wonderful volunteers this year. To say "thank you" and to engage as many people as possible, we're having a **POTLUCK PICNIC** following the Cedro Creek outing.

Whether or not you are able to participate in the project during the day, try to join us for the festivities at Pine Flat Picnic Ground. Please bring along a dish to share: main dish, salad, vegetable side, dessert, etc. We'll provide AWF's portable gas stove with a small grill and burner in case you'd like to cook up a burger or hot dog.

We'll plan on starting our picnic about 3:30 pm and finishing up around 5:30 pm.

(Pine Flat Picnic Ground is just another 2 miles south on Hwy 337.)

Project Recap in Photos

CEBOLLA CANYON II in September

During a tour arranged by Dale Hall (*far left*), Manager of the Habitat Stamp Program for the NMDGF, Bill Zeedyk demonstrates the scope of the “ecosystem restoration” he envisions for Cebolla Canyon, to be aided by an EPA/NMED grant for major reconstruction of the area in 2011.



For those who planted bul-rushes at “Lake Cebolla” last year at AWF’s fall outing, here’s evidence of the successful start of revegetating the sediment plug that will stabilize the downstream boundary of this water catchment.

No doubt Toby Rosenblatt, holding the picket, hopes Bob Tilley’s aim is good as he wields a sledge hammer to complete the leading edge of this wicker baffle.



Glenda Muirhead weaves the final branches of chamisa and other assorted scrub into this baffle that will help redirect water flowing in the creek.

At the lower boundary of this fall’s project area are the final two constructions installed by our very hard-working crew: a wicker baffle in the center, and a large rock structure just downstream which required a team of scavengers to collect and deliver materials from up above.



Fortunately for Shelley Roberts, there’s water in the creek so she can clean off the sticky mud following an intensive rock placement session on Sunday morning.



- | CEBOLLA CANYON II
Participants |
|--------------------------------------------|
| Gail Baker |
| John & Ian Canaris (<i>not pictured</i>) |
| Phil Carter |
| Barb Diver |
| Rich Diver |
| Kristina Fisher |
| Jodey Kougioulis |
| Laurie Marnell |
| Dewey Moore & Shelley Roberts |
| Dennis & Glenda Muirhead |
| Toby Rosenblatt |
| Michael Scialdone |
| Gene Tatum |
| Hamish Thomson |
| Bob Tilley |
| Steve Vrooman |
| Greg Weier |
| Jim Wilson |
| Bill Zeedyk |

ANTELOPE PROPOSAL NOW EVEN WORSE FOR SPORTSMEN

After the postponement of the State Game Commission's September meeting by a month, **many sportsmen hoped the Department of Game and Fish leadership would use the extra time to make positive changes** to its proposals for allocating antelope licenses. The department's largely privatized system of license distribution has resulted in half or more of pronghorn licenses going to nonresidents each year. Thousands of New Mexico sportsmen have asked for improvements that treat New Mexico resident hunters as well as those of other western states.

Unfortunately, the department has decided to present just one option to the commission for a final vote and it made several negative changes to that option. At heart, the problem is that **the department's leadership has refused to heed the cry from sportsmen for a fairer system and failed to acknowledge public ownership of wildlife.**

The proposal is scheduled to be voted on Thursday, Oct. 28, at the Inn of the Mountain Gods, south of Ruidoso. The proposal is posted on the department's website. Of the details that are available, the "new" A-PLUS offers almost no improvement over the status quo — and in fact takes several steps backward.

The proposal also could create nightmares for hunters over public access roads. Option 1 says draw hunt licenses are good only on "accessible public land." That may not sound like a big problem, but it is language that changes the state's trespass rules for antelope only and will put the burden of proof on sportsmen to prove they reached a parcel of public land by public road. Imagine you have been using a road for years to access a big parcel of public land, and suddenly a landowner whose land the road passes through says he

thinks it is a private road and that you no longer have permission to use it. If the conservation officer sides with the landowner's interpretation, you could be cited and branded a poacher for using a public road. In order to clear your name you would have to go to court and prove the road was indeed a public road. Cases like this typically land on the side of the public, but can take thousands of dollars and years to adjudicate.

Option 3A would put all antelope licenses in the Big Game Draw and allow hunters to negotiate with landowners for access to their property. Option 3A would also allow landowners to determine hunting levels on their own land with minimal interference. Department officials this summer said the straight draw option would remain on the table until the Game Commission votes. But apparently the department leadership has decided against that and pulled Option 3A off the table. **It is disappointing that the directorate continues to ignore the principles of the North American Model of Wildlife Management that wildlife belong to the public and that while landowners have a right to control access to their land, no one has an expectation or right to control access to hunting licenses.**

The commission nixed the department's 2008 A-PLUS proposal and it should do the same on Oct. 28. Commissioners should instruct the department directorate to scrap the costly, inequitable and unfair system of transferable authorizations and instead distribute antelope licenses through the Big Game Draw. That system works in other western states; the commission should demand no less for New Mexico, or else get the department leadership to explain why it is working so hard to maintain the current system.

— From *New Mexico Wildlife Federation*

THE PUBLIC TRUST

NEW YORK TIMES EDITORIAL

Published October 3, 2010

The Interior Department's Bureau of Land Management oversees about 250 million acres of public land in the West. Much is leased out, some to energy and mining companies, but mostly to ranchers for grazing cattle and sheep. The bureau is supposed to find a balance between the public interest and the interest of the leaseholders—upholding the public interest whenever conflicts arise.

In the 1990's, the bureau took this responsibility seriously, requiring ranchers to observe sensible grazing practices that protected the environment. Then came the George W. Bush administration,

which eased the regulations to please the ranchers, many of whom had begun to think of the land they were only renting as their own.

Two recent court decisions have now reasserted the public interest. A panel of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled last month that the Bush regulations violated environmental laws by limiting public participation in bureau decisions and weakened the ability of federal and state agencies to prevent harmful grazing practices and manage rangelands in an environmentally sound way.

Two weeks later in Idaho, United States District Court Judge Candy Dale ruled that the bureau must end its policy of withholding the names and addresses of people with grazing permits on 160 million

acres of its land. This is one way, she wrote, of "understanding the scope of the grazing and rangeland program," its environmental impact and its costs. The Forest Service does not withhold the names of the ranchers who lease its lands, and neither should the Bureau of Land Management. These lands do, after all, belong to the public.

Some holders of the bureau's grazing leases have been excellent stewards of the land. Some have not. The government's job is to make sure that all of them are, by ensuring transparency in its leasing operations, upholding environmental laws and reminding leaseholders that they hold their leases in trust for the rest of us.

—Thank you to Carol Johnson for forwarding this article.

AWF HONORED WITH HABITAT AWARD

The New Mexico Riparian Council (NMRC) was proud to award the much-deserved Habitat Enhancement Award for 2010 at the Watershed Forum to the Albuquerque Wildlife Federation because of AWF's outstanding work on conservation projects over the years.

We felt that the AWF was deserving of this honor for many reasons. AWF has provided outstanding service to wetland riparian area protection, restoration, and education in New Mexico for more than 28 years. During the past 5 years, the average of 9 volunteer riparian area service projects each year has resulted in much-improved habitat. During the past 5 years, at least 420 persons have participated in wetland or riparian projects on one or more occasions not including sponsoring agency personnel and youth participants. As an all-volunteer organization with no paid staff or office facilities, your work is very highly commendable.

Wetland and riparian projects have included the construction of in-stream structures for stream bed stabilization, revegetation with plantings of willows, cottonwoods, fruiting shrubs, and herbaceous plants, installation of induced meandering structures, protection of springs and spring seeps, fencing including the removal/recycling of unneeded and dilapidated fences, and habitat restoration treatments for threatened species such as the Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout, Bog Birch, and Zuni Bluehead Sucker. At each project, some time is dedicated to conservation education and worker safety training.

The NMRC greatly appreciates the work that AWF has done, and we are honored to bestow on you this much-deserved award!

Debbie Risberg
Past President
New Mexico Riparian Council

RENEWED MEMBERS

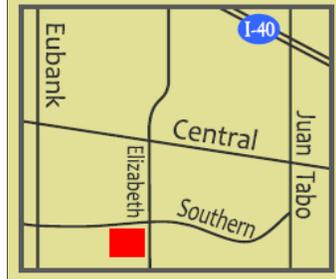
Dewey Moore and Shelley Roberts

Patrons

Thank You!

AWF MEETING LOCATION

Manzano Mesa Multigenerational Center
501 Elizabeth SE at Southern



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>

Membership Application

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 \$ _____