



Important Announcements

MEETING:

There will be no monthly meeting in July. Please join us again on August 11, when Board Member Dennis Muirhead, an avid bow hunter, gives a talk about making arrows.

PROJECT:

Due to extreme drought conditions and an active fire on the Valles Caldera, the AWF project scheduled there for July 15-17 has been canceled. We hope to reschedule in August. Please be fire safe!

Jim Hubert's *Notable Quote of the Month*

"In all things of nature, there is something of the marvelous."

— Aristotle, Greek Philosopher,
384 BC-322 BC



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Pat and I send our greetings from the Egin Bench in southeastern Idaho. We will spend the entire month hanging out, working on the farm house and yard. We enjoy the quiet and peace. Our labor here is another type of restoration/preservation --- a family farm.

In June, I wrote about the BLM's "Restore New Mexico" program. It was not my intent to be judgmental or derogatory of the BLM efforts. I did, however, want to state my opinion that "Restore" is treating a symptom, while the cause--poor livestock grazing management resulting in overgrazing--continues.

I recently had a conversation with a respected stream restoration specialist, who pointed out that preventing cattle grazing in the riparian areas would allow nature to perform the restoration and AWF's work might not be needed. From my experience and perspective, restoration is performed and then the cattle are free to begin undoing our efforts. I have observed that riparian area degradation is a function of poor management --- not totally, but a very high percentage by cattle. Little is being done by federal public land managers to stop the over grazing.

But efforts by organizations like AWF must continue. The work is needed just like "Restore" to remediate the abuse to public lands resulting from livestock grazing.

Wild fires, which many attribute in part to overgrazing, have certainly affected our project schedule this season. Considering the conditions, we were fortunate to work at Bear Trap Spring and the Rio de las Vacas this year. Hopefully conditions will improve soon. If so, do plan to join AWF on a restoration project. The work locations are special, the camaraderie is reassuring, the work is gratifying, and we demonstrate responsibility and ownership of our Public Lands.

Gene Tatum

Project Recap

Rio de las Vacas in June

AWF's June project went quite smoothly...well, with one little last-minute hitch. We moved the campsite from alongside the river to the Santa Fe National Forest group campground at Clear Creek because of fire restrictions. Only there could we use propane stoves to make morning coffee and cook the famous bison burgers for our Saturday evening meal.

Project tasks proceeded nicely, with several of the group digging up and transplanting sedges, others repairing fencing enclosures, and the rest concentrating on cutting and planting willows to complement rock or wooden structures previously placed in the river to capture sediment and divert stream flow.

Bill Zeedyk declared the work sufficiently completed by 3:30 pm, and the productive crew carpooled back to camp to prepare for a wonderful potluck dinner. Needless to say, there was no campfire that night...but the weather was lovely and warm so a fire was not missed.

July Project Canceled

The AWF project season has hit some bumps this year...but it's not from lack of purpose! Situations have necessitated changes in plans and cancellations of outings, so we're down a couple of projects at this point in our season.

The Valles Caldera project scheduled for July 15-17 has been canceled because of the active fire still burning on the Preserve. We plan to replace the August project (also on the Preserve) with the tasks planned for July, so we can build on preparations and work done by Jack Crane, of Los Amigos de Valles Caldera, and Van Clothier, of Stream Dynamics.

This plan for August, of course, is contingent upon conditions and fire control status as the weekend of the 19th-21st approaches. We'll keep you posted via email, the August AWF Newsletter, and the AWF website: abq.nmwildlife.org.

Says Jack Crane, a neighbor of Valles Caldera: *"I don't doubt that there will be plenty of opportunities for using our expertise and spending time on the Preserve for many years to come, but it will certainly be a different view."*

RIO DE LAS VACAS PARTICIPANTS

Betsy Adamson
Van Clothier
James Cooley & Susan Mendel
Aidan, Rory, & Taran Cooley
Patricia Hester
Laurie Marnell
Cliff & Joyce Mendel
Sharon Miles
Glenda Muirhead
Bob Nordstrum
Toby Rosenblatt
Michael Scialdone
Jackie Shane
Marilynn Szydowski
Gene Tatum
Hamish Thomson
Bob Tilley
Nina Wells, NMED
Bill Zeedyk



NEWS FROM NMWF

New Mexico Wildlife Federation conservation project on Rio Grande makes progress

An effort by NMWF and two federal agencies that will **provide better public access to the Rio Grande near Santa Fe and clean up a long-neglected area along the river** has taken a major step forward. Santa Fe National Forest and the Bureau of Land Management are seeking comments on the merits of proposed improvements at Buckman and Diablo Canyon, a historic site about 12 miles northwest of Santa Fe, that will transform the area into a haven for anglers and other recreational users.

New Mexico Wildlife Federation proposed the project in 2006 and has been working with the U.S. Forest Service and the BLM to plan the effort, now known as the Buckman Restoration and Recreation Enhancement Project. NMWF has been leading this effort since its inception and will take a lead role in implementing the plan once it is approved, said NMWF Conservation Director Alan Hamilton.

The area, located at the end of Buckman Road, is the site of Santa Fe's new water diversion project. A century ago Buckman was a town where the "Chile Line" railroad stopped and a bridge over the Rio Grande brought timber from the Pajarito Plateau. Buckman is the only area in Santa Fe County on the Rio Grande that is easily accessible to the public. **It has tremendous recreational and educational value** but unfortunately it is now being used primarily for parties and illegal shooting. The reclamation project will clean up 34 acres along the river that are marred by litter and trash, replace nonnative plants such as salt cedar with cottonwood and other native species, install vehicle barriers to protect riparian habitat and provide picnic shelters and a launch ramp for canoes and kayaks. The plan also will make recreational and restoration improvements in nearby Diablo Canyon, a haven for rock climbers.

Bighorn sheep herd shows signs of stress

The last time the Game Commission met in Clayton was in May 2006, when Leo Sims was chairman. At that meeting the commission approved the **transplant of Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep to the Dry Cimarron area, but never notified the public** that the sheep were bound for state lands on or adjacent to a ranch owned by Sims' aunt and uncle. According to the minutes of that meeting, Commissioner Tom Arvas made the motion to establish the Dry Cimarron transplant program, "the boundaries of which will be defined by the Department working with the Commission Chairman [Sims], local citizens, landowners, and sportsmen." The commission approved the program without objection.

Sims has since taken control of the ranch. Last year he got the State Land Office under then-Commissioner Pat Lyons to give him a 50-year lease on the 1,000 acres of state land he leases adjacent to his deeded land. The new lease **specifically blocks public access to his leased state trust lands**, some of which have a state highway running through them. He apparently also has put out feeders, attracting much of the bighorn herd, according to Department of Game and Fish reports. Department staff surveyed the herd last November and found that four of the five groups of bighorns they found were at or near feeders. They also estimated that 41 percent of the previous year's animals had died, possibly from disease. Feeders are known to be vectors for disease and increased predation.

2011 Leopold Education Project National Conference Travels West Albuquerque, NM – July 28-30

By Janine Kohn, National LEP Coordinator

This year's theme is **Aldo Leopold's Land Ethic-Then and Now: Discovering the Past, Creating Our Future**. Gather with experienced professionals from around the country as we discover how various organizations, agencies, land owners, educators and youth are creating their own sense of "land ethics" and sharing it with others in their communities across the United States. Investigate Leopold's roots as a forester, visit his first homestead where he managed the land, and learn about the changes which have occurred since the time Leopold worked and lived in the Southwest. Discover new program ideas, techniques and resources that will enhance your education programs through a wide array of exceptional seminars, field trips, and speakers. This is simply a spectacular line-up and an event you don't want to miss!

LEOPOLD EDUCATION PROJECT 2011 National Conference Agenda at a Glance

Thursday – July 28th Pre-Conference Sessions

7:00 am

Meet at Marriott lobby to attend Field Trip to Tres Piedras. Enjoy a beautiful ride to Mia Casita (Leopold's home) and listen to insightful "Special Guests" as they share stories of Leopold and his time in the Southwest. Learn what the US Forest Service is currently doing at the site and take home valuable information to share with others. Enjoy a visit and side trip to beautiful Taos on the way home! Lunch included.

9:00 am

Enjoy one-day LEP training for educators at Rio Grande Nature Center. Come learn from the best facilitators in the country and discover how tips and tricks on the brand-new award winning LEP curriculum: "Exploring the Out-doors with Aldo Leopold." Participants of this workshop will receive curriculum materials, lunch and additional take home resources!

Land Ethic Leaders workshop hosted by the Aldo Leopold Foundation. (This workshop training begins Wednesday and continues throughout Thursday.) Come learn to lead activities based on observing the natural world, participating in service, and reflecting individually and as a group. Explore, renew, and deepen your own connection to the land and receive a copy of Green Fire public screening kit to share with your community.

Poolside Reception at the Marriott and welcome by the US Forest Service

Friday – July, 29th

Welcome

Keynote Speaker: William deBuys
Famous author and conservationist

Morning & Afternoon Concurrent Sessions Presented by Professionals from Around the US Focusing on:

- Natural Resources & Management/ Habitat
- Environmental Education
- Community Outreach

Special Showing of **Green Fire** Film

Friday Evening

LEP Banquet Hosted by Greater American Ribs and Pheasants Forever

Saturday – July 30th

Welcome

Keynote Speaker: David Parsons
Renowned USFWS Wildlife Biologist and leader of the Mexican Gray Wolf Recovery Program

Special Hands-On Mini-Workshops

Awards Luncheon

Concurrent Sessions

Saturday Evening

Special Evening Southwest Dinner and Twilight Program at a private horse ranch

Agenda subject to change

For additional information, visit www.lep.org

AWF 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: _____

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 \$ _____