



ANNUAL MEETING

Thursday, January 12, 2012 – 7:30 pm
Manzano Mesa Center (map p5)

Rio Grande Silvery Minnow Restoration in NM and TX Guest Speaker: Jason Remshardt, USFWS



Jason Remshardt, on the right, at the latest fish release in Big Bend of Texas for Rio Grande silvery minnow

Throughout much of its historic range, the decline of the Rio Grande silvery minnow is primarily due to destruction and modification of its habitat resulting from diminished water flows. Water quality degradation and competition and predation by introduced non-native species are other contributory factors. In New Mexico, silvery minnow populations are known to occur in the Bosque del Apache and Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuges.

Our guest speaker, Jason Remshardt, will detail the efforts of the New Mexico Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office (NMFWCO) to conduct research, monitoring, and resource inventory activities on a variety of projects related to the Rio Grande silvery minnow in the Rio Grande of New Mexico and Big Bend, Texas. Among these projects are population monitoring, salvage, propagation, and stocking.

Jason is a Fish Biologist with the US Fish and Wildlife Service in Albuquerque. He has over 20 years of experience working with a variety of fish and wildlife management in the midwest and southwest US. He is currently involved primarily with native fish conservation in the Rio Grande of New Mexico and Texas. His projects have included population monitoring, fish tagging, stocking, and habitat use evaluation for Rio Grande silvery minnow. The NMFWCO is based in Albuquerque and is located at 3800 Commons Avenue NE.

DEPARTING MESSAGE FROM OUTGOING PRESIDENT GENE TATUM

I have enjoyed being on the AWF Board for the past seven years, and being President for five of those years. I have been thanked many times for my leadership, but it has been a group effort of the Board and others. The Board has been a great group. They have helped AWF regroup and rediscover its mission. However, there are many long-time members that have set the stage for today's AWF.

Bill Zeedyk first introduced me to AWF. Bill's continued commitment to wildlife habitat and riparian restoration is instrumental to AWF's success. Dr. Richard Becker was a great mentor, and a promoter of the land ethic of Aldo Leopold, an AWF co-founder in 1914. The Mendels, Joyce and Cliff – both past Presidents – have made a long-term and continued commitment. Margie and Jim Hubert have been confidants to me: Jim, a retired Fish & Wildlife Manager, is an active critic of public lands grazing. At the December Annual Meeting, Marge stressed that AWF projects must continue for the organization to prosper. Glenda, Dennis, and Pat have made the work easier for all of us.

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Jim Hubert's

Notable Quote of the Month

"You cannot protect the environment unless you empower people, you inform them, and you help them understand that these resources are their own, that they must protect them."

– 2004 Nobel Peace Prize Winner
Wangari Maathai (recently deceased),
a Kenyan environmentalist,
on her website *The Greenbelt Movement*

DEPARTING MESSAGE *continued from page 1*

Having being a member for only seven of AWF's 98 years, I do not know all those who have contributed to AWF's legacy and traditions. I do know that the commitment and hard work of everyone -- past and present -- have allowed AWF's reputation to expand.

During my time, restoration projects have been AWF's trademark. The current AWF leaders are committed to the continued restoration of wildlife habitat. Michael Scialdone, known as Scial, has been an important part of project success for the past six years. As AWF President, Scial plans to maintain this emphasis on restoration.

AWF has a list of important and exciting projects planned for 2012 (see page 3). AWF also has interesting, topical speakers at our monthly programs, a great monthly newsletter, and an informative website. If you are curious about AWF, check out the website abq.nmwildlife.org, or attend a monthly meeting.

The AWF 2012 Board of Directors has a good complement of returning members, including Toby Rosenblatt returning after two years, and new member Kristina Gray Fisher serving as Vice President.

Pat and I will participate in a few projects this year and will provide support. We wish AWF continued success and prosperity.

Gene Tatum

See more from Gene on page 5

Brian Gleadle Retires from AWF Board – Goodbye and Thank You!

Albuquerque Wildlife Federation has been honored to have Brian Gleadle, NMDG&F, as an appointed Board Member for several years. He has provided copious insight, as well as timely and cogent reports on Department activities, and has been a calm and gentlemanly presence on our Board. Brian will retire from the NMDG&F mid-year. We will miss him. He writes:

During the upcoming months the Department will become fully involved with our new leadership and focus efforts towards any associated reorganization and/or prioritization of duties that are typical during these changes. As a result, I find the need to step down from participation on the Albuquerque Wildlife Federation Board to devote the necessary time to these undertakings.

I have truly enjoyed getting to know each of you and understanding your passions and work efforts that benefit the wildlife of the state. If you ever need information regarding department programs please do not hesitate to call. ... I wish you good luck and have a happy New Year.

*Brian Gleadle
Chief of Northwest Area Operations
New Mexico Department of Game & Fish*

Wildlife Briefs

Let's End the Beaver-Killing Campaign

According to **WildEarth Guardians**, USDA's Wildlife Services killed over 230,000 beavers nationwide in the last decade. The conservation group is advocating for both state and federal programs that recognize beavers as climate change heroes, claiming that beaver are crucial for creating wetlands, maintaining wildlife habitat, controlling flooding, and even helping endangered ecosystems adapt to climate change.

A Lone Beaver's Survival at Stake

On November 5th, a group of nearly 20 hearty souls endured frigid Northern New Mexico late fall temperatures to bring food to a lone beaver. The beaver had recently established residence within the **Valles Caldera**, and had constructed a dam from mixed conifers, grasses, and mud, due to the lack of willows along the stream. Beavers subsist mostly on grasses during the summer, but willow and riparian woody species are essential for survival during the dormant winter. Seeing that there were insufficient willows to provide forage for the beaver's winter food stores (the site had not had enough time to grow the necessary materials), local activists assembled to haul small tree stocks to the dam site.

– Source: WildEarth Guardians

NM Wildlife Federation News

At its final meeting for 2011 on December 15, the NM Game Commission offered no formal direction on two important issues to New Mexico sportsmen – the future of new private land access agreements for bighorn sheep to be funded by the creation of resalable bighorn licenses, and distribution of funding for the popular Habitat Stamp Program.

Commissioners had few questions and offered no specific direction on Department of Game and Fish plans to create a new access program for bighorn sheep hunts on private land. The department has drafted agreements to give transferable, resalable bighorn licenses to landowners around the Fra Cristobal and Culebras Mountains ranges in exchange for providing access to those lands to public draw hunters. The Fra Cristobal program would give the Armendaris Ranch three desert bighorn licenses next year in exchange for giving full access to three public draw hunters.

Earlier, the New Mexico Wildlife Federation reported that the same one-for-one formula was planned for the Culebras. Surprisingly, however, the draft agreement for the Culebras discussed last week calls for cutting the public's share of Rocky Mountain bighorn hunts to one in three. The department proposes to put one license in the Big Game Draw for every two given to the landowners – Vermejo Park Ranch and Rio Costilla Cooperative Livestock Association.

Department staff asked the commission to revise the funding distribution formula for the popular Habitat Stamp Program. Five options were under consideration, but commissioners deferred action, and ideas from individual commissioners to narrow or revise the list of proposals failed to find majority support.

– Joel Gay, NMWF

A reminder about dues

Just a reminder that AWF membership dues payments cover one calendar year, January through December. So membership fees for 2012 are now payable, and (technically) due by January 31, 2012. We tend to be somewhat flexible on the timing, however, and are happy to receive dues payments whenever they arrive.

There is a membership form on page 5 of this newsletter for your convenience when renewing.

Thank you to those “totally on the ball” members listed below who are already up to date!

MEMBERSHIPS

RENEWED MEMBERS

Phil Carter & Kristina Gray Fisher – Sustaining
 Marjorie Gerber
 Richard E. Leonard – Patron
 Dennis & Glenda Muirhead
 Oscar Simpson
 Bill Zeedyk & Mary Maulsby - Sustaining

Thank You

2012 PROJECT SCHEDULE

March 17	Cedro Creek – East Mountains
April 20-22	Cebolla Canyon
May 18-20	Cebolla Canyon
June 15-17	Rio de las Vacas
July 20-22	Valles Caldera
August 17-19	Valles Caldera
Sept 14-16	Limestone Canyon
Oct 20	Sandia Ranger District

Gene and Pat Bow Out —Off the Board, that is

Board meetings just won't be the same this year, without Gene Tatum and Patricia Hester serving as officers for AWF. As Gene indicated in his “Departing Message,” he has served as President for five years, and he was also Vice President for one. Pat willingly took on the responsibilities of Secretary for the organization. And, in many ways, they literally made our projects happen.

But life is changing for the two of them: Pat retired in 2011 (hooray!) and Gene has been retired for several years (which allowed him to be such an involved and productive AWF officer). Now their farm in Idaho, their myriad dogs and cats, their other interests and passions—all are claiming their time.

We still expect to see them out at projects, when their schedules permit. For now, though, we would like to express our huge appreciation to both of them for their invaluable service, knowledge, persistence, and commitment to AWF. Gene and Pat, Albuquerque Wildlife Federation would not be what it is today without the two of you.

New Officers Elected for 2012

At Albuquerque Wildlife Federation's Annual Meeting on December 8, we ate some good food, we visited, we enjoyed Scial's recap of our project year, and we elected new officers for this new year:

President – Michael Scialdone
 Vice President – Kristina Gray Fisher
 Secretary/Treasurer – Glenda Muirhead

Serving on our Board of Directors for 2012 are:

Stephen Bohannon
 Dennis Muirhead
 Kurt Nolte
 Toby Rosenblatt
 Luke Shelby
 Bill Zeedyk

As an all-volunteer organization (i.e., no staff), we rely totally on the generosity of people to become involved and to commit their time and efforts to sustaining AWF's mission as we approach our centennial in 2014.

We especially appreciate the dedicated individuals who agree to serve as officers and board members, whether for the first time or for “yet another year.”

And, of course, we look forward to again seeing the dozens of excellent volunteers who join in on our service projects season after season...but new faces are always welcome, too! You all are what make our projects happen.

Grazing Issues

Trifecta for Ranchers, the Environment, and Taxpayers

Good ideas never die. Conservationists, including WildEarth Guardians, have been promoting voluntary grazing permit retirement for a decade. In November 2011, Representative Adam Smith (D-WA) introduced the **Rural Economic Vitalization Act (REVA, H.R. 3432)** in Congress, which would allow third parties to compensate ranchers to permanently retire their federal grazing permits. This legislation is a win-win-win solution for ranchers, the environment and taxpayers. Grazing could finally be eliminated on sensitive public lands and watersheds; the federal government would save money on the retired allotments; and ranchers could use their compensation to downsize their operation, start a new business or retire. REVA is gaining Congressional cosponsors and support for the legislation is building among conservation, animal welfare, birding and government accountability organizations.

Grazing permit retirement is a voluntary, non-regulatory, market-based solution to public lands grazing conflicts. Permittees determine if and when they want to retire their grazing permits. Permittees and third parties separately agree how much a permittee will be paid for relinquishing their permit. And federal agencies facilitate the transaction by immediately retiring grazing permits received from a permittee. The Rural Economic Vitalization Act caps the total number of grazing permits that may be retired each year at 100.

– Source: WildEarth Guardians

Status of H.R. 3432: Referred 12/19/2011 to House Subcommittee on Conservation, Energy, and Forestry



Ungrazed private land is on the left; cattle-grazed Sequoia National Forest is on the right. Photo courtesy of Mike Hudak's Photo Gallery of Ranching on Western Public Lands

Off-Highway Vehicles

Time for Uniform Legislation

Oscar Simpson, member of AWF's Wildlife Issues Committee and Chair of the NM Chapter of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers, is hoping to initiate legislation to regulate off highway vehicles at the national level.

Oscar is circulating a letter to provide support for NM's Congressional Delegation to back or introduce legislation that would require all federal public land management agencies to incorporate key points into uniform policies and rules for commonsense management of off highway vehicles (OHVs) and management of our public lands. Because our federal land management agencies have limited staff and resources and deep funding cuts will limit their ability to manage OHV programs on our public lands, we need uniform nationwide rules that would help facilitate better management and enforcement of OHVs and help mitigate the impacts to our public lands wildlife and water resources.

The goal is to get legislation introduced early in calendar year 2012. This legislation would incorporate the following:

- Require OHV registration numbers or decals that feature large, bold, highly visible identification numbers (3" high and 1" wide).
- Limit motorized vehicles to only designated routes, prohibit cross country OHV travel and not allow OHV users to create their own trails.
- Establish a minimum fine of \$250 for any motorized vehicle determined to be operating in an area not designated for that vehicle.
- Impose a fine of \$500.00 for a second offense with progressively more severe penalties for repeat offenses.
- Define the above offenses as class B misdemeanors for the BLM, so that cases can be handled quickly, and with a minimum of resources.
- Ensure that the above penalties are applied consistently across all public lands managed by the Departments of Agriculture and Interior.

Since 2009 the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, chaired by Senator Bingaman, has been interested in introducing legislation that would address the needs outlined above but other priorities have kept this issue stagnant.

Oscar will be collecting sign-on letters from individuals, sportsmen, equestrian trail riders, elected officials, national and local organizations, businesses, ranchers/farmers, etc. Some time in late January he will submit them to NM's Congressional Delegation.

Oscar found compelling information to justify federal legislation in a 2009 report by the Government Accounting Office (GAO-09-509). The GAO report concluded in the executive summary that our federal land management agencies can not: 1. sustainably manage existing OHV use areas, 2. protect the areas' resources, 3. ensure compliance with regulations, 4. educate users, 5. maintain use areas, or 6. manage or enforce OHV use because of limited staff and financial resources.

If you would like to read Oscar's letter and sign on, or learn more about this important issue, please contact him at oscarsimpson3@yahoo.com.

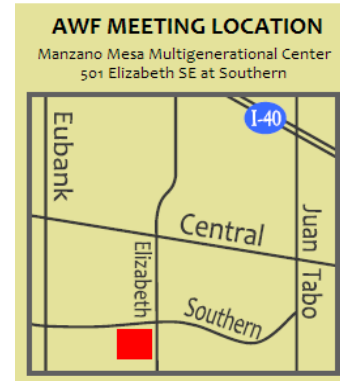
Spend Money, Reap Rewards – An Editorial by Gene Tatum

From the LETTERS page of the *Albuquerque Journal*, January 3, 2012

The Article about Price's Dairy becoming an “urban wildlife refuge” referred to a funding source to purchase the land. As a retired federal government employee, I am familiar with the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund. This fund's money doesn't come out of taxpayers' pockets.

This fund is the public's share of offshore oil revenues and is intended to be used for projects like the Price's Dairy refuge. This fund has been used for public and recreation purposes such as our own Tingley Beach and to protect the petroglyphs on the West Mesa, not to mention to build ball fields, parks and swimming pools all over New Mexico.

Congress already has the funds to make the Middle Rio Grande National Wildlife Refuge. They just need to take action and use some of these public dollars to acquire the land needed to establish this urban wildlife refuge.



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A W F M E M B E R S H I P A P P L I C A T I O N

Albuquerque Wildlife Federation | PO Box 20225 | Albuquerque, NM 87154

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