

THE PINE CONE

Official Newsletter of the Albuquerque Wildlife Federation



Albuquerque
WILDLIFE
Federation

conservationists since 1914

April 2015

Happy 80th Birthday to Bill Zeedyk!



On March 26, 2015, AWF had the honor of partnering with the Quivira Coalition and the New Mexico Environment Department to host a Wetlands Roundtable celebrating Bill Zeedyk's 80th birthday.

The day was filled with presentations of Bill's restoration projects, from his early experiments with induced meandering at Hubbell Trading Post in Arizona to a major ongoing project in the Gunnison Basin of Colorado—as well as several projects that AWF has been a part of, including restoration at Stewart Meadows and Rio Mora National Wildlife Refuge.

We realized last year when we marked AWF's 100th anniversary that Bill has played a key role in the organization for about a third of its existence. He has served on the board since the 1970s, including as past President, and has

been one of the guiding forces behind AWF's restoration work. Bill helps AWF connect with state and federal agencies that need restoration volunteers and plans many of the projects, not to mention having pioneered the design of almost every restoration structure we build.



Representatives of AWF and the Quivira Coalition thanked Bill for his leadership in a lunchtime tribute, after which we all enjoyed an amazing cake featuring many of Bill's signature restoration structures. After the roundtable concluded, many AWF members and other friends and students of Bill's gathered at Kaktus Brewery in Bernalillo to tell stories and continue the celebration.

Bill, thank you for all the inspiring and invigorating adventures in restoration that you've led us on, and we look forward to many more!

Kristina G. Fisher
AWF Vice-President

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APRIL 2015 EDUCATIONAL SPEAKER: Steve Harris

Thursday, April 9, 2015, 7:30 pm
Albuquerque Friends Meeting House
1600 5th Street Northwest

Topic:
Rio Chama Flow Project & Gila River Update

Steve Harris, Executive Director of the nonprofit Rio Grande Restoration, will describe his work on the Rio Chama Flow Project and provide an update on the status of the proposed Gila River diversion.

Over the years, boaters, anglers, water and land managers have talked about how the ecology of the Rio Chama could be improved by a shift in the way the river's flow is managed. Now, Rio Grande Restoration's Rio Chama Flow Project has taken on the task of turning that talk into action. Funded by state and nonprofit sources, the project team expects that success in providing a more natural hydrograph on the 30-mile Wild & Scenic River stretch below El Vado Dam and above Abiquiu Reservoir will create a template for management of the entire Rio Chama – and other disturbed river systems in the Southwest.

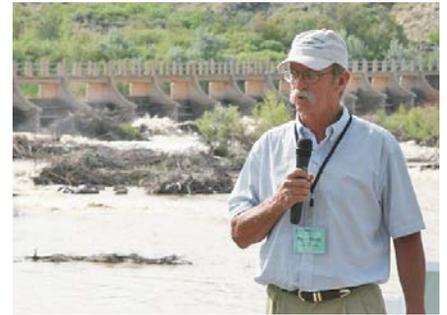
The project's objective is straightforward: To suggest alterations in water operations at Heron, El Vado and Abiquiu reservoirs that will improve the health of the river's natural environment while fulfilling institutional water storage and delivery requirements. Essentially, the Project team advocates for the inclusion of "environmental flows" in the operating plans of dam managers.

Speaker Bio:

Steve Harris is Executive Director of Rio Grande Restoration non-profit river conservation group dedicated to protection of the ecological and economic values provided by the Rio Grande. In this capacity he writes, speaks and advocates for the resolution of river issues, especially policies to protect flowing water. He participates in public policy forums, such as regional water planning and manages the Rio Chama Flow Project. Steve is also, since 1976, the owner of the river touring company Far-Flung Adventures, which has introduced thousands of persons to the Rio Grande. He resides in a small riverside village in northern New Mexico, at the bottom end of the acequia del ojo.

Directions to the Meeting:

The Albuquerque Friends Meeting House is located at the corner of 5th and Bellamah. From I-40, take the 6th street exit, then South to Bellamah.



APRIL 17-19, 2015 SERVICE PROJECT: Cebolla Canyon

LOCATION: Cebolla Canyon in the El Malpais National Conservation Area, south of Grants, NM

THE PROJECT: This legacy project will build on work that AWF volunteers have completed at this site over the past fourteen years. Our work will focus on hand-building rock structures to restore and expand a spring-fed wetland as part of a comprehensive ecosystem restoration effort.

SCHEDULE:

Friday, April 17 - Meet at campsite. Dinner on your own.

Saturday, April 18 - Breakfast burritos and coffee/tea provided by AWF. Safety talk, project overview, and begin work on project. Lunch on your own; potluck dinner with burgers provided by AWF. Campfire/socializing.

Sunday, April 19 - Breakfast on your own (leftovers often available). Short work day for those who can stay until noon; leave as you need to.

GEAR: Bring everything you need for a weekend of camping. For the work, don't forget gloves, hat, long sleeves, long pants, sturdy boots, and sunscreen. Warm clothes for the evenings and plenty of water are essential.

FOOD: AWF will provide breakfast burritos on Saturday morning and bison or veggie burgers on Saturday evening. **Please bring something to share for the Saturday potluck dinner**, along with your own lunches, Friday dinner, and Sunday breakfast. Plenty of water is also essential!

TO SIGN UP: Contact Scial at rioscial@gmail.com or 505-480-2906. *Directions and further details will be sent to you once you sign up.*



2015 SERVICE PROJECTS CALENDAR

March 7.....Day project at Valle de Oro

April 17-19.....Cebolla Canyon near Grants, NM

May 15-17.....Rio Mora Wildlife Refuge

June 19-21.....Midnight Meadows near Questa, NM

July 17-19.....Valles Caldera I

August 14-16.....Valles Caldera II

September 11-13...Limestone Canyon, San Mateo Mtns

October 3.....Day project on Glorieta Mesa

October 17.....Day project in the Sandia Mountains

AWF BOARD 2015

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Kristin Van Fleet
Cameron Weber
Bill Zeedyk*

OVER 40 PEOPLE ATTEND AWF'S FIRST VOLUNTEER PROJECT OF 2015!

Thanks, Volunteers!

Marcie Amendolagine
Vincent Amendolagine
Pam Bliss
Poola Bojorquez
Charlie Brayer
Brian Caven
Max Caven
Olivia Caven
Tanya Critchfield
John Dickel
Barb Diver
Rich Diver
Bonnie Dodge
Chris Good
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Sohpia Richards
Toby Rosenblatt
Danilo Sinoche
Rocio Solis
Evan Strickland
Logan Strickland
Michelle Strickland
Marilynn Szydowski
Hamish Thomson
Bob Tilley
Daniel Torres
Valentino Young

AWF kicked off its 2015 Volunteer Service Projects season on March 7th at Valle de Oro National Wildlife Federation in Albuquerque's South Valley.



AWF first partnered with the Refuge last year when we were looking for a place to host our 100th Birthday Celebration. Given Aldo Leopold's legacies of supporting early establishment of the National Wildlife Refuge system and convincing Albuquerque to set aside the bosque, which is adjacent to the Refuge, as a park and nature preserve, it was the perfect spot. We enjoyed working with Jennifer Owen-White, the Refuge's manager, and let her know we would like to continue coming to the Refuge with our volunteer projects.

After gathering up to talk safety and give an overview of the project, we split into groups and headed out. One group went to dig out Ravenna grass along the Rio Grande on bosque land owned by the State Land Office (SLO). Erin Greenlee, Biologist with the SLO, also partnered on this project and was there to lead them to the site. Ravenna grass is a non-native plant similar to pampas grass and it is quickly becoming one of the worst non-native species in the bosque. The SLO had done a restoration project and volunteers went to dig out a couple of young patches in one of the restoration sites. We'll monitor the area to see if this method can work on small young patches or if they just resprout.



MARCH 7, 2015 SERVICE PROJECT RECAP CONTINUED

The remaining projects involved improving the look of the Refuge. It was a working farm until it was recently purchased to become Valle de Oro NWR. The Refuge is developing a plan to restore the farm fields to wetlands and riparian habitat, but for now they really just needed help making area more welcoming to the increasing number of visitors that are discovering its open space charm in the South Valley.

Along its entrance on 2nd Street is a chainlink fence that had dilapidated aluminum slats and spots that needed repair. Long-time AWF volunteer Tanya Critchfield, who teaches at Atrisco Heritage Academy High School, brought out a student club she started called Jaguars for Positive Change. These youth and others who joined in were determined to get rid of every one of those pesky slats and in the end all 400 feet of them were removed! Another group went out to remove some old fence not needed around the buildings and then brought over this material to repair the fence after the students removed the slats.

Finally, Serena Gutierrez got in touch with us saying she would bring out some Cub/Boy Scouts. The Scouts and some parents went to work on cleaning up trash along a large ditch that runs through the Refuge. After this, they joined in to help with removing the aluminum slats.

It turned out to be a pleasant day and an amazing project. Many thanks to all our volunteers!



UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST



New Mexico Raptors

SATURDAY, APRIL 11, 2015, 2:00 p.m.

CERRILLOS HILLS STATE PARK

Guest presenter Laura McCann will bring a Great Horned Owl, a Red-tailed Hawk, and a Turkey Vulture and explain how scientists study raptors to get important clues about environmental health. Cost: \$5.

For more information: <http://www.cerrilloshills.org/events/new-mexico-raptors>

Los Alamos Nature Center Grand Opening

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22, 2015, 2:00 p.m.

You're invited to join Los Alamos County and the Pajarito Environmental Education Center for a special grand opening ceremony and a first glimpse of this amazing new environmental education facility.

For more information: <http://peeconature.org/events/details/?id=6357>

Brush Clearing Along the Old Chile Line Railroad Near Buckman Road

SUNDAY, APRIL 26, 2015, 3:00 p.m.

Join the Sierra Club to clear brushy vegetation along the short section of the old Chile Line Railroad at the foot of Buckman Road under the guidance of Alan Hamilton. Enjoy the views of the Rio Grande and the newly cleaned-up Buckman-area landscape. For more information: contact Norma McCallan, 505-471-0005.

Apply for the Valle de Oro Youth Conservation Corps!

APPLICATIONS DUE MAY 1, 2015

The youth conservation corps is a wonderful opportunity for young people ages 15-18 to spend a summer working and learning outdoors, earning a paycheck while making a difference for wildlife at the Valle do Oro National Wildlife Refuge. For more information:

<https://www.facebook.com/ValleDeOroNationalWildlifeRefuge/photos/pcb.915172048506049/915171575172763/>

Volunteer Work & Monitoring Weekend at Red Canyon Reserve

MAY 1-3, 2015

QIVIRA COALITION'S RED CANYON RESERVE, near Socorro, NM

The Red Canyon Reserve is dedicated to land restoration activities and the preservation of wildlife. Volunteers will assist with building several erosion control structures and evaluating ground cover, species diversity and plant frequency at 21 monitoring sites across the property.

More info: http://quiviracoalition.org/Land_Water_Program/2015_Restoration_Workshops/index.html



Send your event information to: abqwildlifefederation@gmail.com!

WILDLIFE IN THE NEWS

Albuquerque named Top 10 City for Wildlife

<http://www.bizjournals.com/albuquerque/blog/morning-edition/2015/03/albuquerque-named-top-10-city-for-wildlife.html>

March 16, 2015

Albuquerque Business First

Mike English, Assistant Editor

Albuquerque's selection to a new list as one of the nation's Top 10 Cities for Wildlife is the city's latest gold star in the quality-of-life category, according to a report in the *Albuquerque Journal*.

The National Wildlife Federation announced last week that Albuquerque is among the Top 10 Cities for Wildlife "whose citizens have the strongest commitment to wildlife."

The National Wildlife Federation said it ranked America's largest cities based on three criteria: percentage of

parkland, citizen action to create wildlife habitat and school adoption of outdoor learning in wildlife gardens.

Albuquerque landed at No. 7 on the list. "First in America in parkland as a percent of city area, one quarter of Albuquerque is public parkland, providing a home for amazing resident and migratory wildlife like the majestic sandhill crane, Cooper's hawks, black bears, bobcats and deer," the National Wildlife Federation listing said.

Austin, Texas, was No. 1 on the list. Other U.S. cities cited for wildlife-friendliness were Portland, Ore., Atlanta, Baltimore, Md., Washington, D.C., Seattle, Indianapolis, Charlotte, N.C., and New York City, N.Y.

The National Wildlife Federation specifically noted AWF's efforts as one reason why Albuquerque received such a high ranking as a wildlife-friendly city!



11100 Wildlife Center Drive • Reston, VA 20190 • 703.438.6000 • www.nwf.org

Office of the President

March 6, 2005

The Honorable Richard J. Berry
Office of the Mayor
PO Box 1293
Albuquerque, NM 87103

Dear Mayor Berry:

On behalf of the National Wildlife Federation's nearly six million members and supporters, I'm writing to congratulate you and the City of Albuquerque for being ranked number seven on the National Wildlife Federation's inaugural list of "Top Ten Cities for Wildlife." We will be announcing our Top 10 List at www.nwf.org/WildlifeWeek on Monday, March 9th, the first day of our 77th annual National Wildlife Week.

The National Wildlife Federation ranked America's largest cities based on three important criteria for wildlife – the percentage of parkland in each city, citizen action to create wildlife habitat, and school adoption of outdoor learning in wildlife gardens.

It's no surprise that Albuquerque made the top ten. With nearly 400 NWF Certified Wildlife Habitats, abundant public lands and strong advocates for wildlife in the New Mexico Wildlife Federation and the Albuquerque Wildlife Federation, we know that the City of Albuquerque and its citizens are doing amazing things for wildlife.

Rio Grande Trail closer to reality as governor signs bill

http://www.santafenewmexican.com/news/legislature/rio-grande-trail-closer-to-reality-as-governor-signs-bill/article_24a3d600-6be1-5db7-875d-20f0c229a723.html

By Staci Matlock
The New Mexican
April 3, 2015

For years, State Rep. Jeff Steinborn, a Las Cruces Democrat, has been advocating for creation of a Rio Grande Trail that would showcase New Mexico's history and natural beauty.

He was one step closer to that goal Thursday when Gov. Susana Martinez signed the Rio Grande Trail bill into law. The measure creates a commission to study a route for a 500-mile path along the great river from Colorado to Mexico.

Steinborn sponsored the bill, which brought together Democrats and Republicans during a contentious session. It had wide support, clearing the House of Representatives 63-1 and the Senate 32-3.

The law's supporters say the river trail commission will have broad representation from tribes, land and river advocates, local, state and federal governments, and other groups. The measure also creates a fund so supporters can lobby for money to build sections of the trail. The commissioners will look at existing trails near or along the Rio Grande and suggest ways of linking them all together into one long tread.

Steinborn sponsored memorials in 2007 and 2009 for a Rio Grande Trail. Those measures cleared the Legislature, but they had no force of law.

This year, he didn't introduce his bill until the half-way point of the 60-day session. But it caught fire, receiving immediate support from legislators whose districts include sections of what Steinborn hopes will become a continuous trail that will draw visitors from across the country.

The Rio Grande Trail might eventually hug the 50-mile long Rio Grande Gorge in Northern New Mexico, a rift valley plunging 800 feet deep that was created millions of years ago. The area is part of the Bureau of Land Management's designated Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River, with some trails already established. Big horn sheep, river otters and Rio Grande cutthroat trout are among the wildlife species living in the gorge.



Glennis Siverson

An old railroad track called the Chili Line also winds along a portion of the gorge. South of that, the river crosses the lands of several pueblos. Each pueblo and tribe along the river will have to be consulted individually about the potential for a public trail.

Near Santa Fe, the Rio Grande Trail might pick up a few miles of existing tread off Old Buckman Road near the Buckman Direct Diversion project. Several groups have worked for years to clean up the area, plant trees and establish good trails there.

Several more pueblos own the land along the river between Santa Fe and Albuquerque.

In Albuquerque, the city has several miles of existing trail near the river.

Between Albuquerque and New Mexico's southern border, the land along the river also is a mix of pueblo, private and federal tracts, including the Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge.

Where the Rio Grande bends and becomes the natural 1,200-mile border between the U.S. and Mexico, a 10.5-mile trail already exists into Texas.

Negotiations among all the entities will take time, and money will need to be collected for the project

before a continuous trail is established for hikers, mountain bikers, horseback riders and sightseers.

“We would hope the commission will take into account all the incredible opportunities and the risks of a Rio Grande Trail,” said Rachel Conn, interim director of Amigos Bravos, a nonprofit river and watershed group. “There are incredible recreational and educational opportunities, opportunities to increase environmental stewardship. And yet there are potential risks in that we have a very wild, untrammeled river, especially in the northern portion, and concerns over how to preserve those values.

“I hope the commission will be comprehensive in the issues they look at,” Conn added.

Supporters recognize that piecing together the Rio Grande Trail might take years. “The entire length of the trail, that will take time to work out,” Steinborn said. “But there are segments that can be designated literally next year.”

The idea for the Pacific Crest Trail from the Washington-Canada border and the California-Mexico

border was born around 1926. The 2,663-mile trail was officially completed in 1993, largely through the efforts of numerous hiking clubs.

The 2,000-mile Appalachian Trail, which stretches from Springer Mountain, Ga., to Katahdin, Maine, was completed in a much shorter time frame. Conceived around 1921, it was designated as a continuous footpath on Aug. 14, 1937, by the Appalachian Trail Conference. It was not federally protected until 1968, under the National Trails System Act.

The 3,100-mile Continental Divide Trail has been in the works for 30 years. While it’s largely complete, some sections remain under review or revision, and other sections through New Mexico rely on line-of-sight from rock cairn to cairn instead of an actual tread, according to the Bureau of Land Management.

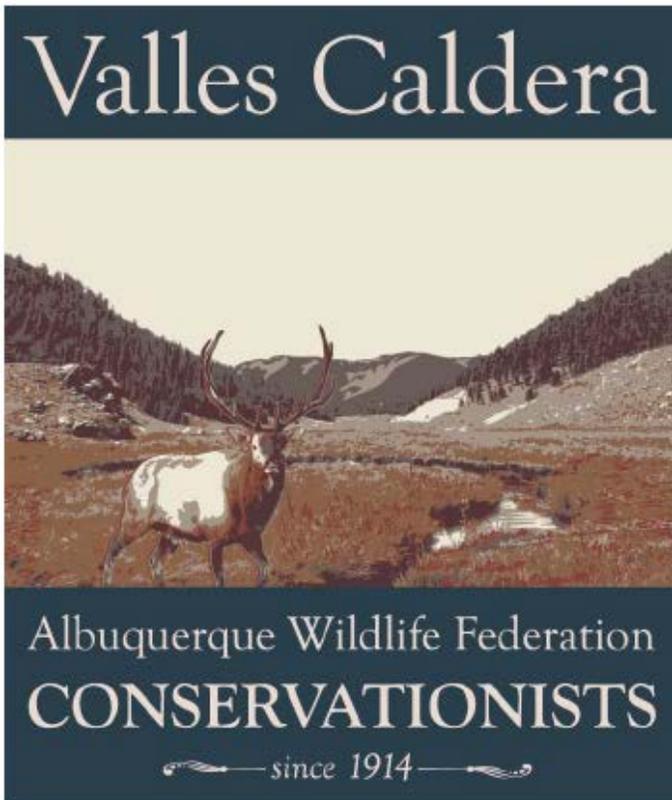
New Mexican reporter Milan Simonich contributed to this report. Contact Staci Matlock at 986-3055 or smatlock@sfnewmexican.com. Follow her on Twitter @StaciMatlock.



Geraint Smith

MAKE THE NEXT 100 YEARS POSSIBLE: JOIN THE ALBUQUERQUE WILDLIFE FEDERATION!

The Albuquerque Wildlife Federation has survived and thrived for over a century thanks to the dedication and generosity of generations of members. We encourage you to join this proud legacy by becoming a contributing member and helping support AWF's restoration service projects, monthly environmental education presentations, and other special events.



Along with becoming a member, you can support AWF's work by purchasing one of our Valles Caldera commemorative T-shirts, designed by graphic artist and AWF board member Stephen Bohannon. It is printed on an organic cotton shirt and available in sizes S, M, L, & XL.

Price: \$20 Shipping: \$5

To order, mail in the form below or email your order to: abqwildlifefederation@gmail.com



AWF MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Albuquerque Wildlife Federation | P.O. Box 20225 | Albuquerque, NM 87154

Yes, I'd like to join AWF! This is a gift membership from: _____

name(s): _____

address: _____

city, state, zip: _____

phone: _____ email: _____

- Student (under 18) ___ \$10
- Individual _____ \$25
- Family _____ \$35
- Sustaining _____ \$50-99
- Patron _____ \$100
- Lifetime _____ \$500 (*one-time payment*)

Dues: \$ _____
 Extra Contribution: \$ _____
 T-shirt & Shipping: \$ _____
TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ _____