

# AWF Newsletter

## November 2013

### Save the Date!

On Thursday, Dec. 12, 2013, AWF will hold its annual meeting and end-of-year banquet. Be sure to attend for delicious food, good company, and your chance to elect the 2014 AWF board!

### AWF MONTHLY MEETING

**Thursday, November 14, 2013  
7:30 pm**

**Manzano Mesa Center**

**Topic:**  
**Potential Wildlife Impacts of the Plan to Develop Albuquerque's Bosque**

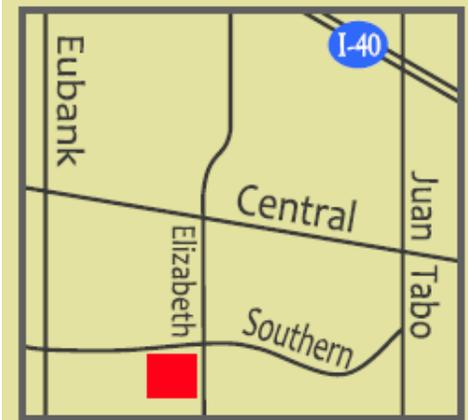
AWF's November speaker will discuss the the City's proposed "Rio Grande Vision" plan to develop the Albuquerque bosque and its potential impacts on wildlife and important habitat resources. (More information about the development proposal is included on pages 5-6 of this newsletter).

Join us to learn more about the details of the plan, the concerns of the groups opposing it, and ways you can become involved.



#### AWF MEETING LOCATION

Manzano Mesa Multigenerational Center  
501 Elizabeth SE at Southern



**ALBUQUERQUE WILDLIFE FEDERATION**  
P.O. Box 20225 | Albuquerque, NM 87154  
[abq.nmwildlife.org](http://abq.nmwildlife.org)

# RECAP OF 2013 SERVICE PROJECTS

This year's volunteer restoration service projects saw great turn-out and lots of wonderful work completed on our public lands, from the Valles Caldera to the Zuni Mountains. The year's projects were also marked by weather extremes, with June's project relocated to private land after the national forests were closed due to fire risk and September's project flooded out (a first for us!) after a week of record rains. Our final October project was unfortunately cancelled due to the federal government shutdown. However, AWF's dedicated volunteers persevered through it all and we are looking forward to another great year in 2014.

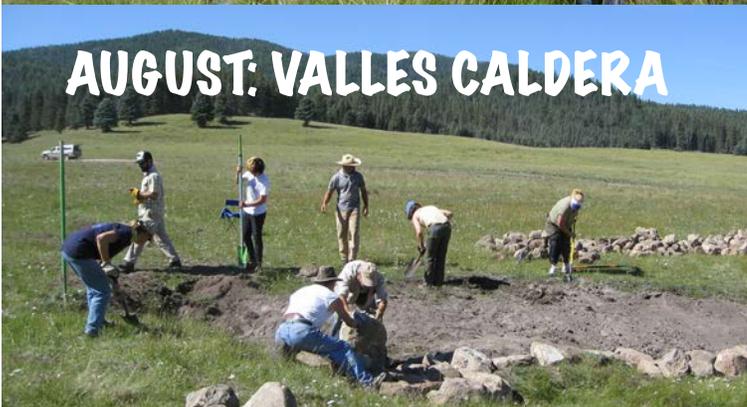
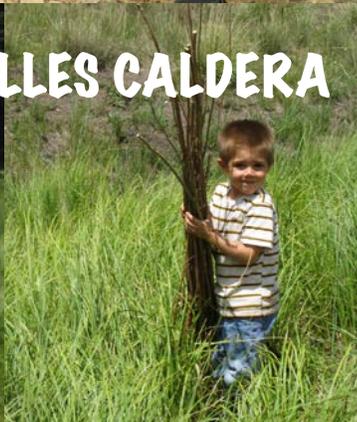
If you have ideas for projects or would like to be involved in the planning process for next year's projects, please contact Scial at [rioscial@gmail.com](mailto:rioscial@gmail.com)



## JUNE: GLORIETA MESA



## JULY: VALLES CALDERA



## AUGUST: VALLES CALDERA



## SEPTEMBER: LIMESTONE CANYON



**HOPE TO SEE YOU AT AN AWF PROJECT IN 2014!**

See many more photos of AWF's volunteer restoration service projects at: [abq.nmwildlife.org](http://abq.nmwildlife.org)

# UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES & EVENTS OF INTEREST

## **Quivira Coalition Inspiring Adaptation Conference**

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 13-FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2013**

**Embassy Suites Hotel, Albuquerque, NM**

This three-day conference features scientists, ranchers, farmers, conservationists, urban planners and others who bring bright ideas and important tools to share from their adaptation toolbox. On Wednesday evening, a keynote speech will be presented by Gary Snyder and Jack Loeffler.

Learn more and register at:

[http://quiviracoalition.org/2013\\_Quivira\\_Conference\\_/](http://quiviracoalition.org/2013_Quivira_Conference_/)

## **Volunteer Opportunity: Riparian Restoration on the Upper Pecos River**

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2013, 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.**

**Upper Pecos River**

The Truchas Chapter of Trout Unlimited is looking for volunteers to work on riparian habitat restoration/protection along the Pecos River. The Chapter will be providing lunch to the volunteers who participate in the project.

The Santa Fe National Forest has received a grant to help protect the Pecos riparian area around the Dalton Creek/Rainy Day area. This area has been heavily abused by dispersed campers over the years and the Forest Service is seeking to restrict access to camping along the river side of Highway 63. The project primarily involves placing wooden bollards (about 8" diameter by 5 ft long) into augered holes and building wooden fence. The work will involve modest lifting and light shovel work to clean out the augered holes, dropping the bollards/posts into the holes, and backfilling.

RSVP to Art Vollmer, [fish4rgct@gmail.com](mailto:fish4rgct@gmail.com) or 505-474-1495 or Bill Zenger, [lakota77@earthlink.net](mailto:lakota77@earthlink.net) or 505-466-6343.

## **Volunteer Opportunity: Valles Caldera National Preserve Forest Monitoring**

**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 8 & SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2013, 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.**

**Valles Caldera National Preserve**

Come enjoy the crisp, autumn beauty of the Preserve during one or both of the volunteer work days. Volunteers will collect forest monitoring data in areas of the Preserve impacted by the recent Thompson Ridge Fire.

For more information or to volunteer contact Lead Educator Brittney Van Der Werff by phone at 505-629-1418 or email [bvanderwerff@vallescaldera.gov](mailto:bvanderwerff@vallescaldera.gov).



**Have an event or volunteer project you'd like to see listed here?  
Please send it in for next month!**

# Bosque plan depends on details

By Leslie Linthicum, The Albuquerque Journal, Sunday, September 22, 2013

What is the value of the bosque that extends along the Rio Grande as it flows through Albuquerque?

Take a walk deep into the maze of dirt tracks that thread through cottonwoods and willows, kicking up leaves in the fall and maybe startling a wary coyote or spotting a bald eagle on a tree snag, and the answer can be found in solitude and losing one's human self in the great balm of nature.

Open up on a bike on the paved trail, and it's as much about being away from cars for tens of miles as it is about being close to nature.

Pop down to Tingley Beach on a Saturday with friends in from out of town, and it's simply an entertaining place to putter around that's free and not a mall.

Fly home to Albuquerque, and it's just a ribbon of green in the summer, gold in the fall and gray in the winter.

It's no wonder that a discussion about changing access to the river – “bringing the river more into our daily lives” – has found broad, bland support and narrow, passionate opposition.

“The bosque” means different things to different people.

I would wager that the people who feel passionately about the bosque tend to love it as it is, in all its labyrinthine wildness. And that the people who have less of a connection to that ribbon of forest – most people – would tend to entertain ideas about changing it because, after all, who would argue with trails, walkways, bridges and sculptures?

And those things do sound nice. But the devil in Mayor Richard Berry's “Rio Grande Vision,” which would invite more people to the riverbanks by creating more avenues for access, will be in the details.

What's the carrying capacity of this landscape? Should people be encouraged to congregate in certain high-traffic areas and leave the rest wild? Or should a greater number of small trails be distributed throughout the forest to prevent a heavy load in any



one area? Should we brighten up the bosque gateways and leave the rest alone? Can a fragile ecosystem stand more traffic at all?

A Journal Poll, conducted by Research & Polling Inc., found that a whopping 69 percent of people favored “adding things such as path trails, pedestrian bridges, boardwalks and viewing platforms” to the bosque.

If the pollsters had called my number, I would have been among the 6 percent in that poll saying “it depends.”

But then, during our recent, amazing rain-rain-go-away week, my opinion started to shift.

With record rains to our north, I got excited by the prospect of seeing the Rio Grande actually live up to its name and took an afternoon walk out to the Alameda pedestrian bridge to wait for the anticipated tsunami.

As the muddy river rolled by, carrying all of the debris from northern New Mexico's arroyos, people started to gather. They rode up on their bikes, stopped and watched the river flow. They parked on their way home from work and, in dress clothes, came out to take a look. They came with dogs and friends and big Sonic cups and lots of cellphone cameras.

This went on all weekend on bridges up and down the river.

The Alameda bridge is a delight. It's wide and restricted to people on bicycles, on horseback and on foot.

Traffic flows on the roadway south of the bridge, but the view to the north is a perfect introduction to the bosque, the cottonwood and willow forest that brackets the river, the source of contention.

What brought everyone out during the big storm days wasn't the beauty of that forest; it was a sense that something big was happening, that we might get to witness a natural disaster.

The irony of that was that we were waiting for expected flooding – which is natural to the bosque and far from a disaster. In fact, it's critical to the health of the trees that grow along the riverbank. Historical floods (and low-intensity fires) made the bosque more healthy, and more of them now would do more to improve the place than walkways and bridges and signs.

In other words, the bosque has bigger problems than whether we put in boardwalks or trails and how close to it we allow a coffee shop or sculptures or kayak rentals. What the bosque really needs is a bigger group of passionate advocates, people who will fight for funding to thin the forest, to pull out invasive plants and to create floodways to improve its health.

In one of the architecture firm Dekker/Perich/Sabatini's "Rio Grande Vision" planning documents, a sec-

tion labeled "Habitat vs. People" sets up the current conflict.

"There is disagreement about the appropriate and feasible balance between habitat preservation and human activities."

Um, yes.

But as our gathering on the Alameda bridge told us, as did the ones at the beautiful pedestrian bridge that runs alongside Interstate 40, there are already plenty of good options for getting out and seeing the river. There are also plenty of good options for visiting the bosque – everything from the manicured Aldo Leopold trail west of the Nature Center to wilder paths that extend for miles through the forest to benches and picnic tables within a short walk of parking lots.

As hundreds of us experienced during the flood that wasn't, the river is wide and awesome and easy to visit, and it's exciting just the way it is.

*UpFront is a daily front-page news and opinion column. Comment directly to Leslie at 823-3914 or [llinthicum@abqjournal.com](mailto:llinthicum@abqjournal.com).*

*AWF volunteers in the bosque in March 2013.*



## **AWF's Board**

### OFFICERS

*President – Michael Scialdone  
Vice President – Kristina Gray Fisher  
Treasurer – Laurie Marnell  
Secretary – Toby Rosenblatt*

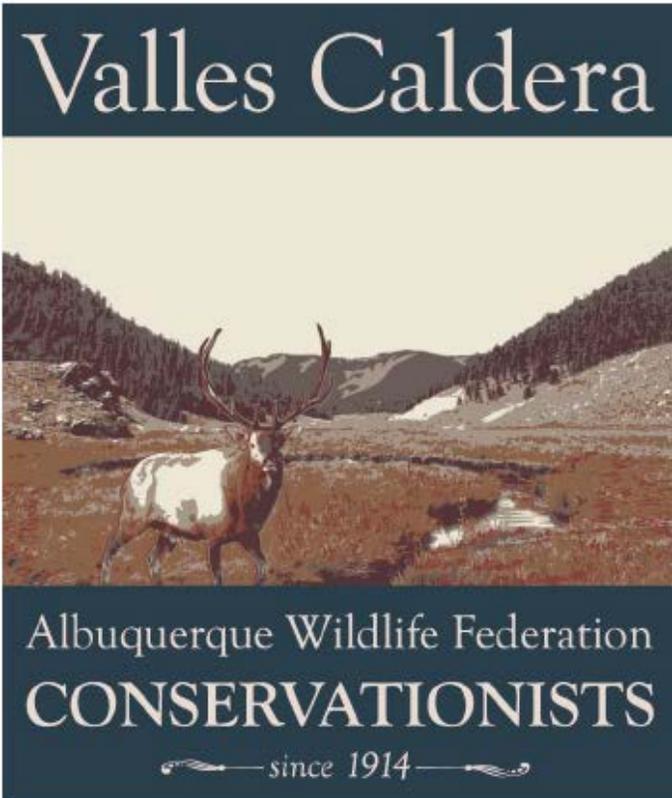
### DIRECTORS

*Stephen Bohannon  
Larry Dwyer  
Dennis Muirhead  
Kurt Nolte  
Luke Shelby  
Bob Tilley  
Bill Zeedyk*

# JOIN AWF!

Become a part of this unique all-volunteer organization dedicated to the protection and restoration of New Mexico's wildlife and habitat!

If you enjoy attending AWF's monthly meetings or weekend service projects, we hope you'll help us make them possible by becoming a member! And if you're already a member, please consider buying an AWF-exclusive Valles Caldera T-shirt for yourself or as a gift for a friend or family member.



AWF's Valles Caldera T-shirt was designed by Stephen Bohannon, the graphic artist and AWF board member who designed our popular Valle Vidal shirt a few years ago. It is printed on an organic cotton shirt and available in sizes S, M, L, & XL.

**Price: \$25 Shipping: \$5**

To order, mail in the form below or email your order to: [abqwildlifefederation@gmail.com](mailto: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: \$ \_\_\_\_\_**