Protesting the Greater Chaco Landscape

On Monday, November 22, Interior Secretary Deb Haaland stood alongside tribal leaders in Chaco Culture National Historical Park and launched a process to halt federal oil and gas leasing within 10 miles of the park for the next 20 years.

As with Bears Ears National Monument, which was discussed in last month’s newsletter, Native activists and allies have been fighting to protect the greater Chaco landscape for decades. The park itself was set aside by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1907, protecting about 30,000 acres around the heart of the ancient Puebloan ruins.

However, advancements in fracking technology meant that oil and gas development has pressed ever closer to the national park in recent years. This extractive development negatively impacted the ancient Chacoan roads that radiate outward from the park, and drilling rigs crowded close to Chacoan structures outside the park’s boundaries. Oil and gas development also harmed many Native families who still live in the Greater Chaco area and suffer health impacts from degraded air quality, including high concentrations of particulate and chemical pollution from fracked wells.

Haaland’s announcement is just the beginning of a long process, which will involve tribal consultation and opportunities for public comment. (It should be noted that some tribal members who own mineral rights in the area oppose the proposed buffer zone because it will make their oil and gas deposits harder to develop.)

Legislation has been introduced in Congress to make the 20-year protections permanent. However, that law may not even be needed. At the Glasgow climate summit last month, nations for the first time explicitly acknowledged the necessity of phasing out fossil fuel development and use. Making that goal a reality will be profoundly difficult and fraught with setbacks, but as the consequences of unmitigated climate change become ever costlier and deadlier, the momentum to make those hard and necessary changes will grow.

In every war, there is always a last person who is killed, sometimes after the final outcome is clear, maybe even after the peace treaties are being signed. The end of fossil fuel extraction and use is finally, belatedly upon us – yet irreplaceable landscapes will continue to be destroyed by oil and gas drilling for some years to come. One day, there will be a final place that is destroyed for fossil fuel development. Thanks to the efforts of many dedicated activists, it won’t be Chaco.

Kristina G. Fisher
AWF Secretary
DECEMBER 9, 2021: Annual Members Meeting, Potluck, & Board Election

Join us for our annual members meeting & holiday potluck, and help elect the AWF board for 2022!

Date: Thursday, December 9, 2021

Time: Potluck from 6:30-7:30 (bring a dish to share!)  
Board Election: 7:15 (zoom option available)

Location: City of Abq Open Space Visitor Center  
6500 Coors Blvd NW (see next page for directions)

We are delighted to be bringing back AWF’s holiday potluck for anyone who feels comfortable joining us in person, and we also welcome any AWF members who prefer to attend virtually to join us via zoom for the board election. Please note that the state’s indoor mask mandate remains in effect when people are not eating and drinking, and we strongly encourage those attending in person to be fully vaccinated (and get your boosters!).

The in-person potluck will begin at 6:30 pm, and we will launch the zoom meeting a little after 7:00. The board election will take place at 7:15 pm.

Any dues-paying AWF member is eligible to vote for and serve on the board. If you are interested in helping organize AWF’s volunteer restoration projects and recruiting speakers for our meetings, we hope you’ll consider running for the board! Feel free to email us at abqwildlifefederation@gmail.com if you have any questions about serving on the board.

Time to renew your AWF membership!

Annual memberships expire in December, so please renew yours today! You can renew online at abq.nmwildlife.org or by filling out and mailing in the form on the last page of this newsletter. Your dues pay for restoration tools and supplies and make it possible for AWF to provide snacks at meetings and meals at projects. Thank you!

Directions to Join the Board Election via Zoom

Link to Join Zoom Meeting:  
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81502627683?pwd=ejVrcWlrNFdtRUs5Y1JBeG9KL1hvUT09

Passcode: 072114

Or join the zoom meeting by phone: 1-346-248-7799

Meeting ID: 815 0262 7683
Passcode: 072114
Directions to the Annual Members Meeting, Holiday Potluck & Board Election
City of Abq Open Space Visitor Center, 6500 Coors Blvd NW
between Montaño Rd. and Paseo del Norte at the end of Bosque Meadows Rd.

From north via Paseo del Norte:
1) Take the Coors Blvd South exit. (Be in one of the two left lanes when Paseo ends at Coors.)
2) Proceed for 1.1 mile south on Coors Blvd.
3) Get in the left turn lane and turn left onto Bosque Meadows Rd NW.
4) Proceed straight, go through the gate, and to the parking lot. The entrance is in the southeast corner of the parking lot.

From the south via I-40 or Montaño west:
1) Take the Coors Blvd North exit
2) Be prepared to turn right after the La Orilla Rd NW intersection.
3) Turn right onto Bosque Meadows Rd NW.
4) Proceed straight, go through the gate, and to the parking lot. The entrance is in the southeast corner of the parking lot.
2021 ACTIVITIES REPORT

Ecological Restoration Service Projects

April 23-25, 2021 – Trail-building in Rio Mora Wildlife Refuge near Watrous

May 14-16, 2021 – Riparian restoration at Ft. Union Ranch

June 4-6, 2021 – Riparian restoration at Ft. Union Ranch

July 16-18, 2021 – Riparian restoration in Limestone Canyon, San Mateo Mountains near Magdalena

August 13-15, 2021 – Wetland restoration at Midnight Meadows near Questa

August 27-29, 2021 – Wetland restoration in the Ring Place Meadow of Valle Vidal

September 17-19, 2021 – Post-fire restoration work at Rio en Medio, near Santa Fe

October 22-24, 2021 – Acequia protection project at the Rolling Hills Ranch, near Anton Chico

October 30, 2021 – Riparian restoration at Cedro Creek near Tijeras

Educational Presentations & Meetings

February 11, 2021 – “Protecting the Florida Mountains of Southwestern New Mexico,” Logan Glaseknap, New Mexico Wild

April 11, 2021 – “Riparian Restoration with Clay Structures,” Paul Ross, AWF Board Member

August 5, 2021 – “The Sagebrush Sea,” Online Movie Night & Discussion

Advocacy & Outreach

January 27, 2021 – Signed letter of support for protecting the sacred Oak Flat area in Arizona’s Tonto National Forest

February 1, 2021 – Sent letter to President Biden urging restoration of the wildlife corridors severed by the border wall

November 4, 2021 – Signed onto letter of support for the Green Amendment to New Mexico’s constitution
Reforming State Wildlife Commissions
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2, 5:00 p.m., online
WILDLIFE FOR ALL
Wildlife advocates in many states are grappling with how to reform wildlife commissions to make them more representative of the broader public. But what is the ideal commission? Panelists will give an overview and brief history of commissions and present their views on the ideal commission structure. To register to attend: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_kztVsgU0SU-IsoR3bCxe5Q

Santa Fe Watershed Association’s 2021 Winter Watershed Benefit
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 7, 6:00 p.m., online - Regenerative Agriculture & Healthy Soils, featuring Reunity Resources and C4 Farms
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 9, 6:00 p.m., online - Water Systems & Restoration, featuring Santa Ana Pueblo and The RainCatcher
The 7th Annual Winter Watershed Benefit, the primary fundraiser for the Santa Fe Watershed Association, this year celebrates themes of water and resilience via short films and moderated discussions. Four short films will highlight local groups dedicated to restoration by maximizing our water and soil resources. Discuss with community experts at this two-part virtual event. For more info and to register: https://www.santafewatershed.org/event/wwb/

Local Conservation Efforts at Bandelier National Monument
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 7, 7:00 p.m., online
PAJARITO ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER
This presentation by Bandelier intern Kathryn Brooks will discuss the efforts Bandelier National Monument is making to protect and restore its natural resources, including bird banding and beaver and cutthroat trout reintroductions. For more info: https://peecnature.org/events/details/?id=37653

Threatened and Endangered Species at Bandelier National Monument
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 7:00 p.m., online
PAJARITO ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER
This presentation will educate a high school audience about local threatened and endangered species in Bandelier National Monument. The presenter will detail her experiences working on surveying for the endangered Jemez Mountains Salamander, New Mexico Meadow Jumping Mouse, and Mexican Spotted Owls. The goal of this presentation is to inform a younger audience about the potential for doing this type of work in their future careers. For more info: https://peecnature.org/events/details/?id=37658

Annual Christmas Bird Count
DECEMBER 14, 2021-JANUARY 5, 2022
AUDUBON NEW MEXICO, Statewide
As participants in the Audubon Christmas Bird Count, you can be one of more than 70,000 counters at more than 2,300 locations stretching from the Arctic Circle to the tip of South America. Since 1900, the Christmas Bird Count has provided scientists with critical data about bird populations in the Americas. For more information: https://nm.audubon.org/conservation/audubon-new-mexicos-christmas-bird-count
https://www.audubon.org/conservation/join-christmas-bird-count

Send your event information to: abqwildlifefederation@gmail.com!
JOIN US!
Become a Member of the Albuquerque Wildlife Federation

The Albuquerque Wildlife Federation is an all-volunteer organization founded by Aldo Leopold and dedicated to protecting and restoring New Mexico’s wildlife and habitat resources.

Our work is only possible thanks to the generous support of our members.

If you like the work we do, we hope you will help keep this legacy going by becoming a member or renewing your membership.

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 __________ $10
☐ Individual __________ $25
☐ Family ___________ $35
☐ Sustaining ________ $50-99
☐ Patron ____________ $100
☐ Lifetime __________ $500 (one-time payment)

Dues: $_____________
Extra Contribution: $_____________
TOTAL ENCLOSED: $__________