

THE PINE CONE

Official Newsletter of the Albuquerque Wildlife Federation



Albuquerque
WILDLIFE
Federation

conservationists since 1914

February 2017

Stand Up For Your Public Lands

As predicted, Congress wasted little time advancing its agenda to sell off America's public lands.

During the first week of January, House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Rob Bishop (R-UT) pushed through a rule change that sets the value of federal public lands at \$0. This means that any legislation to sell or give away federal lands does not have to be analyzed for its costs and benefits to the American people, unlike every other piece of legislation, because public lands are officially worthless.

The rule change was quickly followed by the introduction of legislation to put it into action. H.R. 621, sponsored by Utah Republican Representative Jason Chaffetz, would sell off 3.368 million acres in 10 states: Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, and Wyoming. The lands are not identified in the legislation, but some researchers have identified a report that seems to be the basis for the proposal.

The 813,531 acres identified for disposal here in New Mexico include public lands in 26 of the state's 33 counties. One 25,000 acre parcel is noted as containing "cultural resources," likely ancestral pueblo ruins. As the article reporting on H.R. 621 explains: "The land is most likely a giant tract southwest of the town of Quemado, and some of the land abuts the Gila National Forest, home to the endangered Mexican gray wolf, the Gila trout, and some of the best elk hunting in the U.S."



Magdalena Mountains,
Mason Cummings

If H.R. 621 or similar legislation passes Congress and is signed by President Trump, New Mexico would lose this part of our natural heritage forever.

Fortunately, not all the news is bad. President Trump's nominee to run the Interior Department, Montana Republican Congressman Ryan Zinke, has stated that he opposes privatizing the nation's public lands. He is a hunter and angler and has said he has a personal appreciation for the value of public lands.

In addition, here at the local level, a bipartisan coalition has come together in support of legislation to earmark funding to clean up and restore state trust lands. House Bill 24, sponsored by Representatives Candy Ezzell (R-Roswell) and Bill McCamley (D-Mesilla Park), would set aside 1% of the annual revenues of the state land office for remediation and restoration, with a particular focus on projects designed to keep watersheds healthy.

If you value our public lands and want to see them restored rather than disposed of, the most important thing you can do right now is make your voice heard. The Wilderness Society has an action alert explaining how to contact your representatives and express your opposition to H.R. 621.

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UPDATE ON 2017 VOLUNTEER RESTORATION SERVICE PROJECTS

The AWF projects committee met last month to put together our schedule of volunteer restoration service projects for the year. We will be returning to many of our treasured legacy sites across the state, and look forward to seeing how our work in past years has helped to heal damaged landscapes.

The tentative schedule is listed below. As usual, our first project of the year will be a day project in Albuquerque – check next month’s newsletter for final confirmation of the project date, as it is still being finalized.

As you know if you have joined us in the past, these projects are terrific opportunities to discover amazing places and work side by side with enthusiastic conservationists to restore them. We always have a lot of fun, and it is inspiring to see how our work can make a difference for wildlife. If you haven’t participated in a restoration service project before, or if you haven’t come out for a while, we hope you’ll join us in 2017!



2017 SERVICE PROJECTS CALENDAR

- March 25*Day project at Valle de Oro
** may be rescheduled, check next month’s newsletter*
- April 28-30.....Cebolla Canyon near Grants, NM
- May 12-14.....Rio Mora Wildlife Refuge
- June 9-11..... Midnight Meadows near Questa, NM
- July 14-16.....Valles Caldera I
- August 11-13.....Valles Caldera II
- September 8-10.....Limestone Canyon, San Mateo Mtns
- October 14.....Day project in the Sandia Mountains

AWF BOARD 2017

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NO AWF MEETING THIS MONTH - ATTEND A PARTNER EVENT!

AWF does not have a speaker scheduled for this month, but as you can see below (and in the following pages), our partner organizations have a lot going on. We encourage you to attend one or more of these events where you can learn about and speak up for New Mexico's wildlife and wild lands. See you there!



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Meanwhile, here in New Mexico you can join a large coalition of conservation organizations at a rally in support of our public lands on February 1 at the state capitol (more information below). Groups in many other states are holding similar gatherings. The more of us who show up for these rallies, the stronger the message sent to lawmakers: our public lands belong to all of us, and we will fight with everything we've got to keep them that way.

Kristina G. Fisher
AWF President



*Magdalena Mountains,
Mason Cummings*

Join the New Mexico Wildlife Federation for a Rally in Support of Our Public Lands!

Wednesday, February 1, 11:00 a.m., State Capitol Building

If you hike, camp, hunt, or fish on Forest Service and BLM lands, join the New Mexico Wildlife Federation for a rally in support of keeping these national lands in public hands. There is a growing movement to seize millions of acres of national public lands and turn them over to individual states, including New Mexico. If this happens, New Mexicans will lose access to lands we have enjoyed for generations. Tell policymakers that you oppose efforts to transfer our national forests, BLM, National Wildlife Refuges and other federal lands! For more info: <http://nmwildlife.org/program/public-lands-rally/>

**Keep your
hands off MY
public lands!**

UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST



Water, Wildlands & Wildlife Day at the Roundhouse

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2017, 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

NEW MEXICO STATE CAPITOL, Santa Fe

Tables and information available all day, citizen lobby trainings at 10:30 and 2:00, press conference at noon.

For more information: <https://www.facebook.com/events/239626589824245/>

<http://www.riograndesierraclub.org/environment-day-roundhouse/>

Rally for Mexican Gray Wolves

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2017, 1:00 p.m.

NEW MEXICO STATE CAPITOL, Santa Fe

While you're at the Roundhouse for Wildlife Day, you can attend a rally for endangered Mexican gray wolves! With just six breeding pairs in the wild, New Mexico's and Arizona's Mexican gray wolf populations need genetically-diverse wolves to be released from captivity before it's too late. Governor Martinez has opposed the release of wolves into New Mexico, and this rally will urge her to change that position. For more information: <https://www.facebook.com/events/149765248858735/>



Aldo Leopold Writing Contest for Students

DUE DATE: February 7, 2017

For 6th - 12th grade New Mexico students, the Aldo Leopold Writing Contest is an effective and inclusive way to engage the next generation of citizen leaders in an urgent conversation about how to address the changing realities brought about by climate disruption, biodiversity loss, growing freshwater demands, and other pressing global conservation issues. This year's topic: How is the way people treat each other related to the way people treat the land? More info: <http://www.leopoldwritingprogram.org/>

River Otter Identification 101

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2017, 5:30-7:00 p.m.

AMIGOS BRAVOS, Taos

Join Amigos Bravos Thursday, February 9th at the Bureau of Land Management Taos Field Office for a free training to help us identify and survey river otters and become part of our ongoing efforts to monitor river otters in New Mexico. You will learn how to identify river otters by track, scat, slides and sightings. Kids welcome! A great family activity! More info: <https://www.facebook.com/events/174606199691491/>



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MORE UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST

2017 New Mexico Governor's Special Hunt Auction & Banquet

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2017, 7:00 p.m.

Expo NM Creative Arts Bldg, 300 San Pedro Dr. NE, Albuquerque, NM

Steven Rinella, host of the hit TV show MeatEater, will join the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish at the Governor's Special Hunt Auction and Banquet. Once again, the department will be auctioning over a dozen premier hunting and fishing packages to benefit the Game Protection Fund of New Mexico.

For more information and to purchase tickets: <http://www.firstinthefield.org/>

Fee Free Day at Valles Caldera National Preserve

FEBRUARY 20, 2017 (President's Day)

This is one of 10 days this year when all National Park Service areas are fee free - no entrance fees! In the Los Alamos area, that includes both Bandelier National Monument and the Valles Caldera National Preserve. At the Valles Caldera, the bookstore (run by Los Amigos de Valles Caldera) is planning to offer a 15% discount throughout the store on each fee-free day.



2017 Land & Water Summit: Growing Community Relationships: Just Add Water!

FEBRUARY 23-24, 2017

XERISCAPE COUNCIL OF NEW MEXICO,

Sheraton Airport Hotel, Albuquerque

Includes sessions on riparian restoration, stormwater management, land preservation and more!

For more info and to register: <http://www.xeriscapenm.com/conference/>

Bosque Ecosystem Monitoring Program 20th Anniversary Celebration



TUESDAY, MARCH 7, 2017, 4:00-7:30 p.m.

UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO, Albuquerque

Join scientists and students at the Crawford Symposium - Green Trails for the Next Generation to continue and honor BEMP Co-founder Dr. Crawford's legacy of pioneering a green trail for learning and achieving in science. In that spirit, the Crawford Symposium focuses on research and restoration along the Rio Grande, its bosque, and its watershed. Please RSVP by February 24, 2017.

More info: <http://bemp.org/crawford-symposium/>

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 (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: \$ _____