As many of us celebrated Independence Day over the last weekend by getting out and enjoying New Mexico’s public lands and waters, there were heartening developments from our elected representatives about the work they are doing to protect this essential element of our national heritage.

New Mexico Senators Martin Heinrich and Ben Ray Lujan have introduced the Pecos Watershed Protection Act, which would protect the Upper Pecos Watershed from destructive hard-rock mining. The senators are joined by Representative Teresa Leger Fernandez in sponsoring legislation to protect 13,000 acres of the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument as the Cerro de la Olla Wilderness.

Meanwhile, Interior Secretary Deb Haaland, formerly part of our delegation, has recommended that the Biden administration restore full protections to Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante national monuments.

These actions are consistent with the desire of the majority of American voters, whom polls show strongly favor conservation measures. However, that overwhelming public support only matters if our government remains responsive to the will of the people.

Many states (New Mexico, thankfully, is not among them) have been passing laws making it more difficult to vote, with measures restricting absentee, mail-in, and early voting, and expanding purges of voter rolls. In addition, all states are redrawing their legislative and congressional districts this year, and in too many cases, gerrymandering them so that politicians will be picking their voters rather than the other way around. All of these actions can mean that elected officials are more accountable to powerful, well-funded special interests than they are to the people they are supposed to represent.

So along with cheering on our congressional delegation for sponsoring bills to protect New Mexico’s public lands and waters, we also need to urge them to take action to strengthen our democracy. There are bills under consideration in Congress that would end partisan gerrymandering and limit states’ abilities to prevent eligible voters from voting. These reforms are urgently needed in order to protect our ability to secure conservation wins in the years to come.

Please consider contacting your representatives or even attending a local event this month to support reforms that will strengthen our democracy. Protecting our nation’s natural heritage requires keeping our elected officials responsive to the will of the majority of Americans – and that requires fair elections.

Kristina G. Fisher
AWF Secretary
JULY 16-18, 2021 SERVICE PROJECT: Limestone Canyon

LOCATION: Limestone Canyon, San Mateo Mountains

THE PROJECT: This month we are returning to one of our favorite restoration sites: Limestone Canyon in the San Mateo Mountains. (We had originally planned to be in the Valle Vidal in July, but that project has been shifted to next month.) This project will mark our 15th year of working in Limestone Canyon, and it has been gratifying to see how our structures have raised the streambed and rewetted the meadows, leading a relict stand of narrowleaf cottonwood trees to send up new shoots that are now growing into strong young trees.

SCHEDULE: Friday, July 16 – Sunday, July 18
Volunteers do not need to be present for the entire weekend to participate. You are welcome to join us just for the work day Saturday, or camp for just one of the two nights.

GEAR: Bring everything you need for a weekend of camping and restoration work, including work gloves, hat, long sleeves, long pants, sturdy boots, and sunscreen. We recommend bringing a change of shoes, and waterproof boots or boots you don’t mind getting wet. Rain gear, layers, warm clothes for the evenings and plenty of water are essential.

FOOD: The Saturday evening potluck is back! AWF will provide breakfast burritos on Saturday morning and bison or veggie burgers on Saturday evening. Please bring a dish to share for the Saturday potluck dinner, along with your own lunches, Friday dinner, Sunday breakfast, and lots of water!

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.

Click here to review AWF’s revised COVID-19 safety protocols.
RECAP OF JUNE 4-6, 2021 FT. UNION RESTORATION PROJECT

In early June, AWF volunteers returned to Ft. Union Ranch, continuing the work we began in May to restore Higgins Canyon. Our restoration work focused on addressing channel downcutting that occurred as a result of heavy wagon travel between Ft. Union and Mora back when the fort was active in the mid-1800s. Over time, the rock structures we built will capture sediment, hold water, and nurture the growth of willows and cottonwood trees, providing rare riparian habitat in this dry region.

AWF volunteers built even more structures in June than we had completed the month before, and we were glad to see that the one-rock dams and baffles we constructed just a few weeks earlier had performed beautifully during a heavy rain. We are grateful for our partnership with the Ft. Union Ranch managers and the Hermit’s Peak Watershed Alliance that allows us to help restore such a special place, and we look forward to returning and continuing the work in the years ahead!

See lots more photos of AWF’s restoration projects at: abq.nmwildlife.org!

Thanks, Volunteers!

Megan Begay
Peter Callen
Phil Carter
Kristina G. Fisher
Rod Flores
Conrad Greaves
William Greaves
Lia Griesser
Patrick Gutierrez
Daniel Havey
Meagen Larsen
Ganga Little
Laurie Marnell
Jeremiah Martin
Jordan Martinez
Mary Maulsby
Anabella Miller
Leslie Morrison
Thomas Nguyen
Shantini Ramakrishnan
Paul Ross
Heather Sharpe
Hamish Thompson
Joshua Wagner
Cameron Weber
Jim Wilson
Bill Zeedyk
UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST

Provide Public Input on the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan
VIRTUAL TOWN HALL - CENTRAL REGION: TUESDAY, JULY 13, 5:00-6:30 p.m.
Join a virtual town hall to share your perspective on the strengths, weaknesses, issues, and opportunities of outdoor recreation resources on public lands. Sign up to participate at: https://www.getoutsidenm.org/participate

Participate in Citizen Science Bird Study
Between now and July 15, observe birds on Deception Peak above Santa Fe and submit your observations for a study on the impact of climate change on mountain birds. For more info: ethanblinck@gmail.com https://nmpoliticalreport.com/2021/06/16/new-mexico-birders-have-the-opportunity-to-participate-in-a-community-science-project/

Help Save Endangered Butterflies
SATURDAY, JULY 10, 9:30 a.m.-mid-afternoon
Sacramento Mountains checkerspot butterflies live only in the mountains around Cloudcroft and are perilously close to extinction. On Saturday, July 10, biology Ph.D. candidate Rachael Ryan will be leading a surveying trip to count checkerspots and set up a captive breeding program. She is looking for volunteers to assist her, and she will provide training and equipment. Families, children, and well behaved pets are welcome! For more info, email Rachael at backyardfarmslc@gmail.com

Composting Workshops in the Edgewood Conservation District
MONDAY, JULY 12, 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.; 3:30-5:30 p.m.
QUIVIRA COALITION
Quivira is hosting two composting workshops in collaboration with Reunity Resources: Aerated Static Composting at Polk’s Folly Farm in San Antonito, and Worm Composting at Harvest Trail, Sandia Park. Priority goes to those living in the Edgewood district (Northern Torrance county, eastern Bernalillo County, and southern Santa Fe County). For more info: https://quiviracoalition.org/events/july-edgewood-compost/

Improving Water for Livestock & Wildlife on New Mexico’s Rangelands
THURSDAY, JULY 22, 8:30-4:30 p.m., Sol Ranch, Wagon Mound
Join Bat Conservation International, Rangeland Hands, and Sol Ranch for this one-day, hands-on workshop to learn how to get the most out of your rangeland surface and ground water to benefit livestock and wildlife. For more info and to register email dtaylor@batcon.org.

Wild & Scenic Film Festival on Tour in Santa Fe
THURSDAY, JULY 29, 6:00-9:00 p.m., livestream
SANTA FE WATERSHED ASSOCIATION
A Virtual Festival Experience: the Santa Fe Watershed Association presents an evening of inspiring and panoramic short films and custom videos about environmental resilience in the Southwest, including fire, healthy soils, watersheds, equity in the outdoors, climate change and reforestation. Films will be available as video-on-demand for 5 days following the livestream. Tickets from $15, proceeds benefit the education, restoration, stewardship and advocacy programs of the Santa Fe Watershed Association. For more info and to buy tickets: https://www.santafewatershed.org/wild-and-scenic-film-festival/

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 ENCCLOSED: $___________