

AWF Newsletter

May 2013

AWF MONTHLY MEETING

Thursday, May 9, 2013 | 7:30 pm
Manzano Mesa Center

Guest Speaker: Dr. Kerry Mower

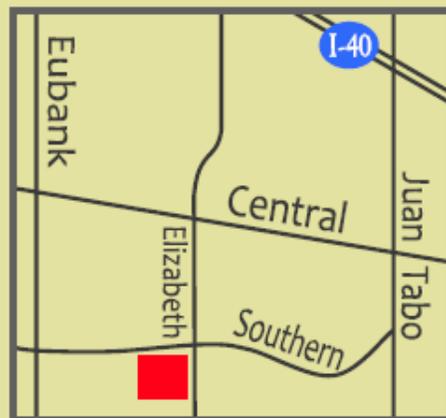
Topic: Update on Wildlife Diseases in New Mexico

This month's guest speaker will be Dr. Kerry Mower, a wildlife disease specialist with the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish and an expert on Chronic Wasting Syndrome. He will share an update on wildlife diseases in New Mexico.



AWF MEETING LOCATION

Manzano Mesa Multigenerational Center
501 Elizabeth SE at Southern



AWF IN THE NEWS!

It's unusual for AWF's volunteer service projects to draw much media attention, but on the morning of Saturday, April 20, reporter Michael Sullivan and photographer Cable Hoover of the *Gallup Independent* tracked us down at Cebolla Canyon in El Malpais National Conservation Area. They accompanied us on our work that

morning and put together a terrific front-page article that ran on Earth Day. On Sunday the 21st, Beth Von Seggern (Klotz) from the *Cibola County Beacon* joined us and wrote another great piece highlighting AWF's work. You can check out copies of both articles in this newsletter.

We greatly appreciate this recognition of AWF's restoration service projects, which are a hallmark of our organization, and we hope that these articles will attract even more volunteers to future projects. Particular thanks to Beth for helping me track down copies of both articles to include in this newsletter—and for her brand new AWF membership!

-Kristina

ALBUQUERQUE WILDLIFE FEDERATION

P.O. Box 20225 | Albuquerque, NM 87154

abq.nmwildlife.org

JOIN US FOR THE MAY VOLUNTEER SERVICE PROJECT!

Zuni Mountains - May 17-19, 2013

LOCATION: Zuni Mountains, western New Mexico.

THE PROJECT: Volunteers will work on fencing and hand-build structures to improve riparian habitat for the endangered Zuni Bluehead Sucker.

SCHEDULE:

Friday, May 17 - Meet at campsite, dinner on your own.

Saturday, May 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.

Sunday, May 19 - Breakfast on your own (leftovers often available). Short work day for those who can stay.



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. AWF will provide snacks, ice water, and drink mixes during the work days (please bring your own mug or water bottle).

TO SIGN UP: Contact Scial at rioscial@gmail.com

Directions and details will be sent to you after you sign up

AWF's Board

OFFICERS

*President – Michael Scialdone
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Larry Dwyer
Dennis Muirhead
Kurt Nolte
Luke Shelby
Bob Tilley
Bill Zeedyk*

2013 AWF Project Schedule

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| ✓ MARCH 23 | Local day project in the Albuquerque Open Space |
| ✓ APRIL 19 to 21 | Cebolla Canyon, SE of Grants, NM |
| MAY 17 to 19 | Zuni Mountains |
| JUNE 14 to 16 | Red Canyon on east side of the Manzano Mountains |
| JULY 19 to 21 | Valles Caldera |
| AUGUST 16 to 18 | Valles Caldera |
| SEPTEMBER 13 to 15 | Limestone Canyon in the San Mateo Mountains |
| OCTOBER 19 | Local day project with the Sandia Ranger District |

RECAP OF APRIL SERVICE PROJECT

Cebolla Canyon - April 19-21, 2013



This spring marked AWF's thirteenth year working in Cebolla Canyon, and all the volunteer hours are really making a difference. We found that many spots where

we had built rock structures a year ago were holding standing water in spite of the dry weather. The wetland vegetation around Cebolla spring, which was nonexistent when AWF began working in the area, now extends for many acres—including a growing patch at the base of "Lake Cebolla," an ephemeral pond that fills each year with the summer monsoons.



This year our efforts focused on planting bulrushes and willows to extend the wetland area and enhance habitat for migrating waterfowl and native wildlife. Special thanks to Bill Zeedyk's neighbors, Margie Tatro and Mark Reineke, who brought their mini-excavator out and volunteered their time to remove many bulrushes from a stock pond for transplant!



Bill's long-term vision for Cebolla Canyon includes restoration of several native animal species such as meadow and jumping mice, leopard and western chorus frogs, and even fish for the perennial pools. After wrapping up our work on Saturday, the volunteers toured the project site with Bill and Matt Schultz of the New Mexico Environment Department to learn about past work and future plans.

Thanks to our Volunteers!

Participants in AWF's April Volunteer Service Project:

Jeff Adams
 Jason Angowski
 Stephen Bohannon
 Phil Carter
 Tania Critchfield
 Tammie Crowley
 Michael D'Errico
 Rich Diver
 Barb Diver
 Tracy Diver
 Kristina G. Fisher
 Bob Hasbrook
 Sandie Kutarnia
 Maryann McGraw
 Mary Maulsby
 Sharon Miles
 Tom Morris
 Juliette Nolan
 Robert Nordstrum
 Mark Reineke
 Rachel Rilling
 Cebastien Rose
 Toby Rosenblatt
 Matthew Schultz
 Michael Scialdone
 Marilyn Szydowski
 Margie Tatro
 Hamish Thompson
 Kristen Van Fleet
 William Zeedyk &
 grandson Jason



THE TRUTH WELL TOLD

Independent



Monday

April 22, 2013
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WET & WILD



Cable Hoover/Independent

Above, Bob Hasbrook and other volunteers transplant vegetation as they work to restore the depleted wetlands at Cebolla Canyon in El Malpais National Monument Saturday. **Below,** a cistern at Cebolla Spring marks the source of water for a section of recently restored wetlands at Cebolla Canyon in El Malpais National Monument Saturday.

Volunteers work to restore Cebolla Canyon wetlands

By Michael Sullivan
Cibola County Bureau
cibola@gallupindependent.com

CEBOLLA CANYON — Viewing the long, broad expanse of Cebolla Canyon today, it's hard to imagine the arid, overgrazed land was once productive farmland. It may never be again, but a dedicated group of volunteers gathered Saturday and Sunday to do what they could to at least restore a former wetlands.

In the 13th year of restoring the natural wetlands, two dozen volunteers with the Albuquerque Wildlife Federation and Rio Puerco Alliance converged on the canyon in the El Malpais Conservation Area to cut and replant willows, uproot and replant bulrushes, and continue to assist nature in healing what man has rent asunder.

Carrots and cabbage were raised in the canyon during the 1930s, when water from

natural springs was first dammed and diverted into irrigation ditches by settlers from the Dust Bowl territory. Some 200 people once lived in the canyon, Albuquerque Wildlife Federation



Cable Hoover/Independent

Phil Carter, center, and other volunteers from Albuquerque and Santa Fe use shovels to brake up clumps of bulrushes so they can transplant the vegetation at Cebolla Canyon in El Malpais National Monument Saturday.

board member Michael Scialdone said.

Ruins of some dwellings still stand. World War II drew the men away from farming the land, and cattle grazing took over. Water from far up the canyon was again diverted to water the livestock. Thousands of acres of once fecund land gradually became desert. Years of drought conditions have played a role.

Former New Mexico Gov. Bruce King ranched about 7,000 acres in the area before selling out. There are now two ranches — the Cross Five and the York.

As they have every year, volunteers camped lower down the canyon, several miles east of New Mexico Highway 117, in an open area on the edge of a deep arroyo that was carved out by decades of monsoon water rushing through denuded grasslands. Their work sites were higher up the canyon, where one small group was to cut some wil-

See Cebolla Canyon, Page 5



Cable Hoover/Independent

Project founder Bill Zeedyk stops to survey the progress of the 13-year project to restore the wetlands at Cebolla Canyon in El Malpais National Monument Saturday.

Cebolla Canyon

Continued from Page 1

lows as shoots to be planted six miles farther along the deeply rutted road. Most of the work party had some muddy work ahead of them near a livestock pond.

As former U.S. Forest Service biologist Bill Zeedyk supervised the operation, teams divided into twos hauled bulrushes that were dredged out of the pond by Mark Reinecke of Sandia Park, operating a "mini excavator," across the road, over and under two barbed wire fences, to replant the wetland sedges in a dried-out area. The 1,200-foot-long sandpit, which Zeedyk named "Lake Cebolla," does occasionally hold water.

The replanting of vegetation, which began in 2010, is meant to retain the water longer and eventually expand the space into the wetland it once was. Sand, which has gradually filled in above the once-muddy soil, acts as a sponge, Zeedyk said, and allows water to percolate down about 10 feet to the natural water table.

Similar work has already been done, down the canyon at Cebolla Spring. Now a small pond, surrounded by green vegetation, the spring area

was "a mud pit" before restoration, Matt Schulz of the New Mexico Environment Department said.

"The saturation process is moving downstream," Schulz said, pausing by the spring. "We plugged a drainage ditch to foster the saturation. There's now 100 wetland acres, which is sizeable for New Mexico."

Zeedyk, 78, retired from the Forest Service several years ago and traveled the world with his wife, who is now deceased. Puttering around the house didn't work for him, so he returned to the work he loves most — assisting Mother Nature. He is in demand as a consultant throughout New Mexico, Colorado and Arizona on projects designed to undo damage humans have done to the earth.

He has been working on the Cebolla Canyon wetlands restoration since 2000, in cooperation with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management. Most of the 50,000 acres targeted for restoration are controlled by the BLM.

Following a master plan approved by the BLM, much has been accomplished since 2000, Zeedyk said. Berms have been formed, detention basins created, and small rock dams

have been built — using heavy equipment and funding from state and federal grants. The earth works are designed to restore a natural flow of water in the upper reaches of the canyon.

Reviving wetlands will attract more wildlife, such as birds and deer, Zeedyk said.

Asked how long it might take to restore the land, while walking through a dry expanse of rabbit brush and not much other vegetation, Zeedyk deadpanned: "Maybe a hundred years."

The Cebolla Canyon project is important to him. As he surveyed what has been done so far, he admitted that as more willows and bulrushes are planted, "The next couple years we'll see a big difference."

The volunteers

Barb Diver, who drove over from Albuquerque Friday to set up camp, has been volunteering with the Albuquerque Wildlife Federation for the past four or five years, focusing on riparian repair. She became hooked on the work during a project in the Valle Caldera, near Los Alamos, and sees it as "healing" the land.

"You're doing some work that's

beneficial," she said.

Phil Carter, also from Albuquerque, had a simple explanation.

"It's fun," he said.

Carter described himself as a regular, part of a core group that shows up for such projects from March through October. The work and camaraderie of the camp are enjoyable, and there are always new people showing up.

One of the new people was Tammie Crowley, of Santa Fe, who was attracted by the nature of the work. Interviewed as the campers enjoyed a breakfast feast of burritos, prepared on two gas stoves by Scialdone, she also described the backcountry adventure as fun — at least the camping part.

Hours later, covered with mud from schleping bulrushes in a rock skid about 100 yards back and forth, Crowley was still having fun and said the work was "fulfilling."

Another group of volunteers, under the auspices of the Wild Turkey Federation, will arrive at the end of June to build more rock dams, Zeedyk said.

Clearly pleased with what has been accomplished since 2000, Zeedyk said, "We're making really extraordinary progress."

CIBOLA BEACON

CIBOLABEACON.COM

Volume 78, Number 34

Friday, April 26, 2013

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Cibola Beacon Friday, April 26, 2013 B3

Earth Day Project - Cebolla Wetland Restoration

VOLUNTEERS
COME FROM
ACROSS
THE STATE

By Beth Klotz
Beacon Contributing Columnist

CIBOLA COUNTY -
Technically, I understand that forest fires do not acknowledge property lines.

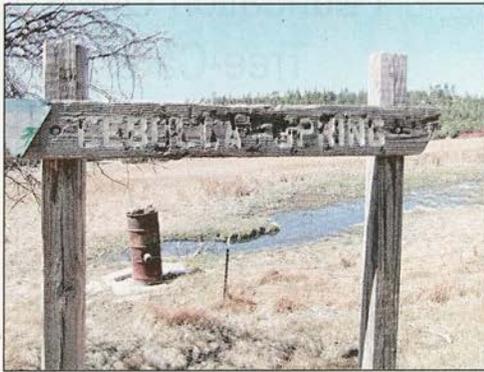
Pollution does not honor political boundaries.

The effects of global warming will not be limited to one less-inhabited area or to one of the "less-important" species.

Still, I found myself being astonished at the amount of travel by and commitment of the people involved in restoring the health of our area's Cebolla Valley.

More than two dozen volunteers from Albuquerque, Santa Fe, Vallecitos (north of Ojo Caliente) and Silver City set up an overnight camp and settled in for several days of hard labor, pleasant companionship April 19-21.

Their mission: ensuring a healthier natural environment.



BEACON / BETH KLOTZ

Results from the labor of the previous twelve years are seen as standing water is now present at Cebolla Springs, which is just down from the current site of restoration.



BEACON / BETH KLOTZ

Volunteers haul rocks and create a damn using litters, as no mechanized equipment can be used per the 1964 Wilderness Act. From left to right, are: Kristin Van Fleet, sitting; Stephen Bohannon, standing; Michael Scialdone, sitting; Bob Hasbrook, standing.

The event was an ongoing effort of the Cebolla Valley Restoration Project (CVRP).

The Cebolla Canyon is southeast of Grants, several miles east of New Mexico Highway 117.

Cebolla Valley was a riparian area, with a shallow water table and a rich and a diverse array of plants and animals until 80 years ago. The area was then homesteaded and farmed for several years, abandoned during World War II, and cattle have grazed there ever since. The hydrologic changes the homesteaders made were left in place, which has resulted in degradation of this riparian zone.

The restoration effort is an attempt to return Cebolla Valley from a barren-looking landscape that supports very little wildlife and almost no diversity back to its former, healthier self.

The CVRP has been a joint venture, according to Matt Schultz who is an Environmental Scientist-Specialist with the state's Surface Water Quality Bureau.

Major stakeholders include the Albuquerque Wildlife Federation (AWF), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), New Mexico Environmental Department, New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, and the Rio Puerco Alliance. Other volunteer groups have included the Acoma Conservation

Corps and the National Turkey Federation.

I caught Bill Zeedyk, one of the workers, putting sticks in the ground. He was kind enough to explain that these harvested willow shoots had a good chance of surviving next to the rock dam they had just built. The willow trees would eventually help secure the rocks with their roots, act as a barrier, and catch more soil and water for the dam function, serve as ground cover for birds, and provide forage for deer and elk.

Zeedyk, a former U.S. Forest Service research biologist, currently runs a private consulting business, and is an invaluable

resource for the project, according to participants.

Michael "Shel" Scialdone, current AWF president, explained the process of restoration. The hand-built dams and plantings of bulrushes and willows will eventually result in small, meandering water flows instead of just the "down-cutting" areas (deep slashes or arroyos) that currently preside.

The resulting scattered wetlands will support the

See CEBOLLA, Page B4

CEBOLLA

From PAGE B3

original biodiversity of the canyon area.

And why were people hauling rocks, shoveling sand, and digging by hand, I wondered?

BLM Ranger Jennifer Cutillo explained that the Cebolla Valley area is covered by the 1964 Wilderness Act. By law, no mechanized equipment may be used except for vehicles on designated roads. The rock-hauling "wheelbarrows" were actually litters and looked like stretchers without wheels, requiring one person at the front and another at the back to carry rocks like an invalid patient.

Even with the challenging limita-

tions, the volunteers appeared to be a healthy, happy and focused lot. The group represented good biodiversity and seemed to have a large age range, diverse backgrounds, and points of origins.

Their shared meals were cooked on outdoor grills, and rest-periods often included games of disc golf and hacky-sack.

How does one get involved in such projects?

Santa Fe resident Tammy Crowley had originally helped with a cleanup project at Buckman Mesa near Santa Fe, a site near a river that had been over-cut for timber, and then was used as a garbage dump.

She met Scialdone while working at the Buckman site, learned about other AWF projects, and joined up.

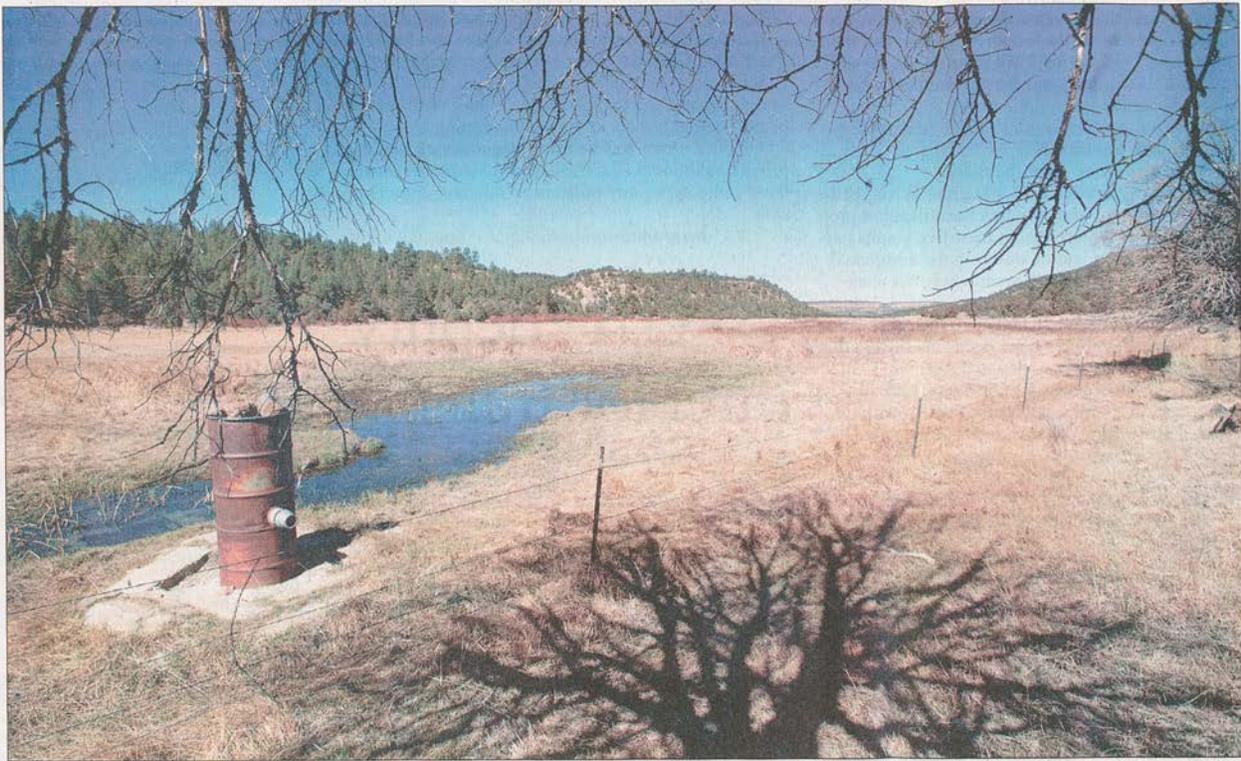
Well, shoot. After meeting such

friendly, dedicated people, seeing the physical results of their efforts, and reading the terrific newsletter produced by AWF Vice-president Kristina Fisher, I will be joining.

Although I don't normally consider myself "a joiner," the activities, community, and long-term rewards are too tempting to pass up. And, I admit, a chance to acquire a beautiful long-sleeved T-shirt designed by Stephen Bohannon helped.

But beware; if you snoop on their website, I may see you soon at some restoration function, improving the health of the planet.

If your interest is piqued, check out their website at abq.nmwildlife.org, or email abqwildlifefederation@gmail.com for more information.

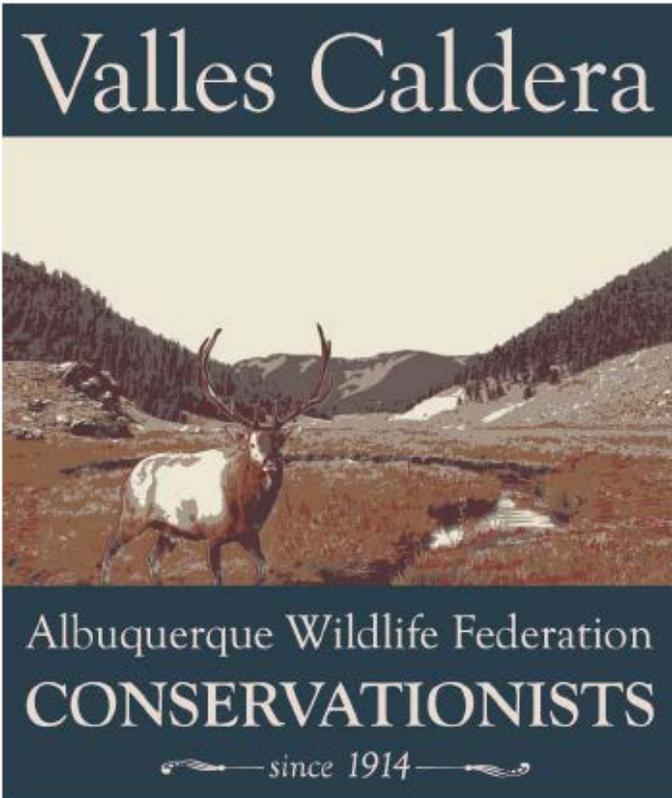


Cable Hoover/Independent

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



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: \$ _____