

THE PINE CONE

Official Newsletter of the Albuquerque Wildlife Federation



Albuquerque
WILDLIFE
Federation

conservationists since 1914

May 2017

A Monumental Loss

On April 26, 2017, President Trump signed an Executive Order directing the Interior Department to review all national monuments that have been designated in the last 21 years and make recommendations about whether they should be shrunk or eliminated.

While the action was reportedly aimed specifically at rolling back protections of two national monuments located in Utah (Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante), two of the 24 protected areas on the list are here in New Mexico: the Rio Grande del Norte and Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks national monuments.

Any attack on the Rio Grande del Norte will be fiercely fought. This monument is strongly supported not only by its entire Congressional delegation – Representative Ben Ray Lujan and Senators Udall and Heinrich have all released statements defending the monument – but also by the many local businesses that have benefitted from a 40% increase in tourist visits since the monument was set aside in 2013.

But Organ Mountains Desert Peaks is in a much more precarious position. Representative Steve Pearce has staunchly opposed its protection, and last year he introduced a bill that would have shrunk the monument to one-tenth of its size: from 500,000 acres to 54,800 acres.

The fate of all 24 monuments will be determined following a 120-day review period (concluding August 24, 2017).



The controversy is unlikely to end there. The Antiquities Act, which authorizes presidents to create national monuments, does not include any language granting the president the power to revoke previous designations. It is almost certain that litigation would follow any presidential action to roll back protections of these 24 monuments.

Before we even reach that point, your voice can make a difference. Secretary Zinke has justified the review by arguing that these monuments had been designated “without adequate public outreach,” stating that monument “designations have too often excluded the people most directly affected by the designations. The local community, the loggers, the fishermen, those areas that are affected should have a say and a voice.”

On this last point we agree. All of you who value these extraordinary places for hunting, fishing, hiking, camping, wildlife watching or other recreation: please contact Secretary Zinke and your congressional delegation and urge them to keep protections in place for your national monuments.

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Kristina G. Fisher
AWF President

MAY 11, 2017 MEETING: Norm Gaume

Thursday, May 11, 2017, 7:30 pm
Albuquerque Friends Meeting House
1600 5th Street Northwest

Topic: Stopping a Billion-Dollar Boondoggle - Update on the Proposed Gila River Diversion Project

At this meeting, we will hear a presentation from Norm Gaume about the latest developments in the ongoing battle over the proposed diversion project on New Mexico's last undammed river.

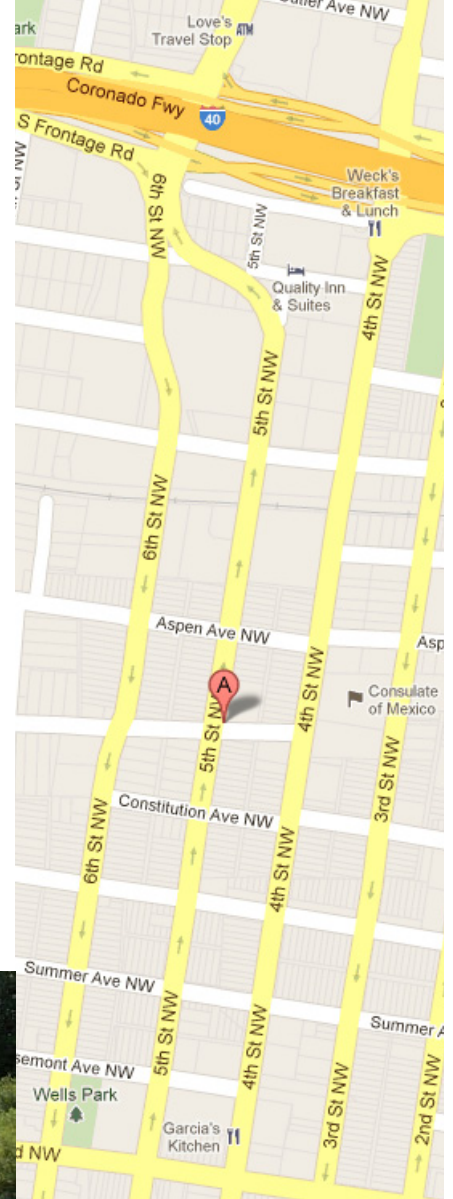
In late 2014, the New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission voted to approve a water diversion and storage project on the Gila River that would capture up to 14,000 acrefeet a year (though in low flow years, that number would fall to zero) and would cost upwards of \$1 billion. The project was fiercely opposed by many New Mexicans, including former Interstate Stream Commission Director Norm Gaume, who successfully sued the agency for signing multimillion dollar contracts with engineering firms in secret, in violation of the state's transparency laws. In 2016, the proposed diversion was scaled back, and last month, the project was sent back to the drawing board once again. Join us to find out what's next for the Gila River.

Speaker Bio: Norm Gaume

Norm Gaume is a mostly retired licensed water engineer. Norm grew up in southern New Mexico and received BS and MS degrees in Electrical and Civil Engineering from NMSU. His career includes 4 years with a water resource modeling engineering firm, 19 years with the City of Albuquerque, 6 years as Director of the New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission, and 12 years as a self-employed consulting engineer. For the past several years, Norm has been working to hold his former agency accountable and stop the misguided proposal to dam and divert the wild Gila River.

Directions to the Meeting:

The Albuquerque Friends Meeting House is located at the corner of 5th and Bellamah. From I-40, take the 6th street exit, then South to Bellamah.



MAY 12-14, 2017 SERVICE PROJECT: Rio Mora Wildlife Refuge

LOCATION: Rio Mora National Wildlife Refuge near Las Vegas, NM

THE PROJECT: This month, AWF volunteers will return to one of our favorite project sites: the Rio Mora National Wildlife Refuge (formerly the Wind River Ranch). The refuge was established in 2012 with the goal of protecting and restoring riparian and grassland habitat for the benefit of a wide variety of species, including long-billed curlew, loggerhead shrike, burrowing owl, mountain plover, Southwestern willow flycatcher, a number of aquatic species, and migratory grassland and woodland birds.

AWF volunteers have participated in restoration activities on the property both before and after it became a national wildlife refuge. This year, we will continue our work hand-building rock restoration structures to help hold water on the landscape and make the habitat even better for wildlife.

SCHEDULE: Friday, May 12 – Sunday, May 14

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 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.*



2017 SERVICE PROJECTS CALENDAR

- April 1.....Day project at Valle de Oro
- 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

OFFICERS

- President – Kristina G. Fisher*
- Vice President – Cameron Weber*
- Treasurer – Laurie Marnell*
- Secretary – Toby Rosenblatt*

DIRECTORS

- Braden Belliveau*
- Stephen Bohannon*
- Phil Carter*
- Michael “Scial” Scialdone*
- Bob Tilley*
- Kristin Van Fleet*
- Bill Zeedyk - Director Emeritus*

UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST

Community BBQ & Day of Action for National Monuments

TUESDAY, MAY 2, 2017, 5:00-7:00 p.m.

NEW MEXICO WILDERNESS ALLIANCE

Taos Fly Shop, 338 Paseo Del Pueblo Sur, Taos, NM

Our Rio Grande del Norte National Monument is under threat! Join us for a community barbeque to show how much local support the monument has. The event will include: a live broadcast from KTAOS Radio, fajitas and beer provided by Taos Mesa Brewing; a sneak preview of Gregg Flores' new film Fishing on the Rio Grande; and more. More info at:

<https://www.nmwild.org/events-outings/70-day-of-action-community-bbq?date=2017-05-02-17-00>



Second Annual Taos Land & Water Conference

THURSDAY, MAY 4, 2017, 9:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Sagebrush Inn, 1508 Paseo Del Pueblo Sur, Taos, NM

The Taos Land and Water conference brings together local experts, advocates, practitioners and community members to engage in dialogue, share innovation, and explore consensus around land and water in our community. To register:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2nd-annual-taos-land-and-water-conference-tickets-33716176993>

The History & Future of Mexican Gray Wolves

SATURDAY, MAY 6, 2017, 12:45 p.m.

NEW MEXICO WILDERNESS ALLIANCE, Albuquerque Zoo & Bio-Park

Join Judy Calman, NMWA staff attorney, in a discussion about the history of Mexican wolves, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service recovery program and current litigation relating to Mexican wolves. For more information:

<https://www.nmwild.org/events-outings/72-the-history-and-future-of-mexican-wolves?date=2017-05-06-12-45>

Volunteer Work & Monitoring Weekend at Red Canyon Reserve

MAY 6-7, 2015

QUIVIRA COALITION'S RED CANYON RESERVE, near Socorro, NM

Volunteers will assist with vegetation monitoring, conducting a census of milkweed, and building several erosion control structures. Sign up at:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/land-health-workshop-red-canyon-reserve-registration-32007574517>



New Mexico Wildlife Federation's First Annual Campfire Gala

FRIDAY, MAY 19, 2017, 5:00-10:00 p.m.

Hyde Park Lodge, Santa Fe

Join the New Mexico Wildlife Federation for their First Annual Campfire Gala! There will be a delicious meal of fresh game, a gourmet s'mores bar, campfire stories, a silent auction and other entertainment.

Sign up at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/campfire-gala-tickets-33256968488#tickets>

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: \$ _____