

THE PINE CONE

Official Newsletter of the Albuquerque Wildlife Federation



Albuquerque
WILDLIFE
Federation

conservationists since 1914

May 2019

New Mexico's Wildlife in the Shadow of the Wall

Although it has mostly faded from the headlines, construction on “the Wall” has continued, inexorably, along our southern border.

From a wildlife conservation perspective the Wall is an unmitigated disaster, fragmenting habitat and severing migration corridors. Populations of animals like jaguars and javelinas end up trapped on either side, unable to cross the border in search of food, water, mates – or suitable habitat in response to a changing climate. Smaller populations become more vulnerable to genetic bottlenecks, which increases the risk of species extinction.

Contemplating these losses can feel grim and futile. But here is the thing: public attention matters.

Back in February 2018, I wrote about the Wall in this newsletter because it was threatening to devastate Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge, a biodiversity hotspot and destination for birdwatchers. In response to fierce protests and powerful activism, when Congress appropriated \$1.3 billion to build 33 miles of border wall in March of 2018, it specifically barred those funds from being used to wall off Santa Ana.

Following similar outcries, the \$1.3 billion appropriated to build an additional 55 miles of border wall ear-



lier this year protected not only Santa Ana, but also the Bentsen-Rio Grande Valley State Park, La Lomita Historical Park, the National Butterfly Center, and the Vista del Mar Ranch tract of the Lower Rio Grande Valley National Wildlife Refuge.

Unfortunately, when President Trump declared a national emergency to build the Wall, he began raiding military construction funds that came with no such restrictions.

On February 14, bulldozers began shredding forests in national wildlife refuges in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas. Conservation author Krista Schlyer has been documenting what is being lost in Texas, including critical wildlife habitat that was painstakingly restored by thousands of volunteers over several decades.

Now New Mexico is in the crosshairs.

On Earth Day, the *Albuquerque Journal* reported that of the 57 miles of new wall being proposed, 46 of them are in New Mexico. Walls are being proposed for wild and

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A tribal perspective on the proposed Bandelier National Park

By Arielle Quintana, Cochiti Pueblo tribal member



In the April 2019 *Pine Cone*, news about Senator Martin Heinrich's proposal to elevate both Bandelier and White Sands to the status of national parks was shared. As a tribal member from Cochiti Pueblo, I'm very concerned about Senator

Heinrich's proposal to make Bandelier a national park, and would like to share my concerns with an audience who also appreciates the beauty and history of our lands in New Mexico.

Throughout Bandelier, there are multiple culturally significant sites that remain an integral part of Pueblo culture and traditions. Since the creation of Bandelier National Monument, many of these culturally significant sites have been desecrated. From researchers and historians attempting to forcibly remove sites with explosives to use and damage from visitors present-day, Bandelier has been a prime example of the exploitation of Native American cultural resources that we've seen throughout history. With the creation of Bandelier National Park, I'm afraid that human impact and desecration to these sites will only increase and further disrupt traditional activities that have conducted by local Puebloan people for hundreds of thousands of years.

Additionally, much of the land that Bandelier sits on is actually designated wilderness, which is one of the highest protections of land in the country. Since the majority of Bandelier is deemed as wilderness, it feels unnecessary to make Bandelier a national park. Senator Heinrich has pointed out that one of the intentions behind this proposal is for land protection and preservation. However, it's also been pointed out by Senator Heinrich that the creation of Bandelier and White Sands national parks would generate large amounts of income for the state, and also create new jobs. I'm concerned that this proposal seems to be driven by economic interests as opposed

to land protection and preservation, especially considering that we've recently witnessed how much damage and desecration can happen to national parks when funding gets stalled, or cut, from the top.

The protection of land and the natural and cultural resources that come with it is paramount. Many of our state and federal agencies charged to do this are underfunded and under capacity, making them limited in the amount of land they can cover. How will the elevation of Bandelier as a national park address this? Further, how can entities who aren't ancestrally tied to a piece of land make decisions regarding its protection and management? The people who are best at protecting and preserving culturally significant sites are the Indigenous people who have been responsible for the care and stewardship of the land since time immemorial. It's far past the time that non-Indigenous people need to recognize that.

The land and sites that exist within Bandelier National Monument and Wilderness have gone through many changes ever since Jose Montoya from Cochiti Pueblo first brought Adolph F. A. Bandelier to Frijoles Canyon. It's a privilege when Indigenous people share the beauty and sacredness of their ancestral homelands with others, and should not be taken lightly. Unfortunately, far too often these instances are exploited. Bandelier and the sites it holds have been exploited and desecrated to the point where some are unrecognizable by elders and traditional leaders.

I oppose the creation of Bandelier National Park because I strongly believe that this change won't in any way be beneficial to the protection and preservation of culturally significant sites within its boundaries, especially since its designation both as a national monument and wilderness haven't shown to be effective in preventing desecration of these sites.

I am writing this in the hopes that when any readers have conversations with friends, family and others about supporting this proposal, the narrative they share is well-rounded and reflects the perspectives from those directly impacted.

MAY 17-19, 2019 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. 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 for over a decade. 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 17 – Sunday, May 19

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.*



2019 SERVICE PROJECTS CALENDAR

March 2.....Day project at Valle de Oro
March 15-17.....Rio Mora Wildlife Refuge
April 19-21.....Wolf Creek, Ft. Union, NM
May 17-19.....Rio Mora Wildlife Refuge
June 7-9.....Valles Caldera
July 19-21.....Valle Vidal
August 16-18.....Midnight Meadows near Questa, NM
Aug 30-Sept 1.....Limestone Canyon, San Mateo Mtns
September 20-22.....Cebolla Canyon near Grants, NM
October 19.....Day project at Cedro Creek

AWF BOARD 2019

OFFICERS

President – Kristina G. Fisher
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MAY 16-18, 2019

WETLAND RESTORATION

CREW LEADER TRAINING

At Rio Mora National Wildlife Refuge, New Mexico

Wildlands Restoration Volunteers, New Mexico Environment Department Wetlands Program, Albuquerque Wildlife Federation and wetland restoration expert Bill Zeedyk will offer a free 3-day workshop to train wetland restoration crew leaders. Trainees must demonstrate prior experience with wetland restoration and commit to leading a crew at a minimum of 2 planned volunteer work weekends (a complete list of scheduled events will be provided). Those with no prior restoration experience are invited to register for the Albuquerque Wildlife Federation's concurrent volunteer work weekend at Rio Mora National Wildlife Refuge.



FREE WORKSHOP

Develop your restoration leadership skills!

Workshop will cover:
Organization and management of volunteers
Building wetland restoration structures
Wetland restoration planting
Safety protocol

Workshop will provide:
Camping Accommodations
Food
Tools
Training Materials

Registration is open now

Please contact Morgan Crowley with Wildlands Restoration Volunteers at morgan@wlr.org, or (303) 543-1411 ext. 102

RECAP OF APRIL 19-21, 2019 FT. UNION RESTORATION PROJECT

Thanks, Volunteers!

Julie Bartlett
 Zach Bartlett
 Betty Bastai
 Braden Belliveau
 Stephen Bohannon
 Phil Carter
 Barb Diver
 Rich Diver
 Kristina G. Fisher
 Abe Franklin
 Marie A. Gonzales
 Lee Harrelson
 Sue Harrelson
 Jamie Head
 Laurie Marnell
 Jeremiah Martin
 Rachel Moore
 Dennis Muirhead
 Glenda Muirhead
 Kerry Owens
 Shantini Ramakrishnan
 Barbara Rosensimon
 Michael "Scial" Scialdone
 Kristin Van Fleet
 Cameron Weber
 Robin Woolner
 Bill Zeedyk



We had a lovely weekend for our second year partnering with Hermit's Peak Watershed Association to restore the Wolf Creek Wetlands at Fort Union Ranch. These wetlands provide critical habitat for migratory birds and other wildlife. AWF volunteers built four large one-rock dams to help reconnect the creek with its historic floodplain, and added layers to a couple of structures built last year. On Sunday morning, volunteers also helped build flow splitters on a pond to help restore wet meadows below the ranch buildings.

The Fort Union Ranch headquarters was a great place to gather for breakfast and our evening potluck, and there were even bunks available for anyone who chose not to camp. On Saturday evening, we enjoyed a presentation by Josh Miner about the conservation work being done throughout the 90,000-acre ranch, from wetland restoration to healthy forest management in the Turkey Mountains. AWF is honored to contribute to this large-scale restoration effort, which we hope will be a model for other landowners in the region.



See lots more photos of this and other restoration projects at: abq.nmwildlife.org/

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remote lands in the Bootheel area that serve as critical wildlife corridors for jaguars, Mexican gray wolves, cougars, javelinas, bobcats, gray foxes, and badgers. In order to proceed with construction, the Trump administration waived 32 federal laws protecting endangered species, the environment, and archeological sites.

Last year, we saved Santa Ana; now it is time to speak up on behalf of the wildlife in our own backyard. Support the groups fighting the Wall, like the Southwest Environmental Center, the Center for Biological Diversity, the

Southern Border Communities Coalition, and the Sierra Club. Tell your friends and family about what is happening, why it matters and why they should care – you can [submit public comments opposing the Wall here](#) (due May 8) and use this [Action Kit](#) to contact your lawmakers and write letters to the editor. We may not be able to stop this grievous wound upon our land, but we'll never know unless we try.

Kristina G. Fisher
AWF President



Photos from Krista Schlyer showing La Parida Banco Tract of the Lower Rio Grande National Wildlife Refuge before and after a large section of the forest was bulldozed to make way for the Wall.

UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST

Earth Day Clean Up & Waterfall Hike

SATURDAY, MAY 4, 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Hyde Memorial State Park, Santa Fe

Join a clean-up day at Hyde Memorial State Park, followed by a barbecue and waterfall hike. Activities include collecting litter, cleaning up the Visitor Center, and planting flowers. After the clean-up, join a ranger-led walk to the waterfall. For more information: <https://www.facebook.com/events/289932938571827/>

Journey Down the Gila Film Screening & Discussion

THURSDAY, MAY 2, 7:00 p.m. - Guild Cinema, Albuquerque

FRIDAY, MAY 3, 7:00 p.m. - Harwood Museum, Taos

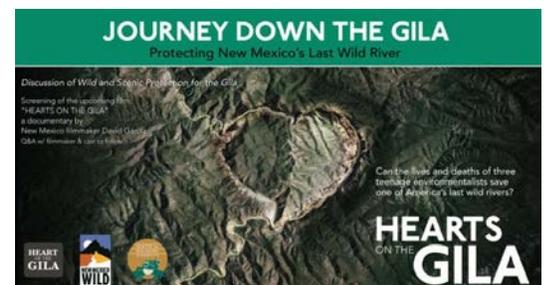
SATURDAY, MAY 4, 7:30 pm - CCA, Santa Fe

Attend a special work-in-progress screening of the upcoming film "Hearts on the Gila" by New Mexico filmmaker David Garcia, followed by a discussion of the effort to secure Wild and Scenic protections for the Gila. For more info and tickets:

Albuquerque: <https://www.facebook.com/events/2271459276400305/>

Taos: <https://www.facebook.com/events/799843253711293/>

Santa Fe: <https://www.facebook.com/events/2203947349692722/>



UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST *continued*

Red Canyon Spring Land Health Workshop

FRIDAY MAY 10 - SUNDAY 12

QUIVIRA COALITION

Join the Quivira Coalition for two great days of landscape assessment, monitoring, and restoration at Red Canyon Reserve. This workshop is perfect for ranchers, land managers, students, or anyone looking to learn these methods. For more info and to sign up to attend: <https://quiviracoalition.org/rcrspringworkshop-2019/>




World Migratory Bird Day
at
New Mexico Wildlife Center

SAVE the DATE

WHEN: Saturday, May 11, 11:00 – 3:00
WHERE: NMWC, 19 Wheat St, Espanola, NM

Join us for a fun-filled day of activities, live bird demonstrations, and programs about birds. Stay long enough to tour our grounds and enjoy nachos at our nacho bar. Admission rates are reduced for the day: \$2 for adults, children 12 and under are free.

Call for more details: 505-753-9505

World Migratory Bird Day at New Mexico Wildlife Center

SATURDAY, MAY 11, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

NEW MEXICO WILDLIFE CENTER, 19 Wheat St., Espanola, NM

This fun-for-all-ages event happens only once a year and is a great way to learn about and celebrate the birds all around us. Come to NMWC on May 11 for fun activities, live bird presentations, meet raptors and other birds up close, and learn from people who study and work with wild birds. Reduced entry fee and free for kids under 12. For more info: <https://www.facebook.com/events/392339131548426/>

Abrazos: Community Celebration of Environmental Justice

SATURDAY, MAY 18, 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Valle de Oro

All are invited to join this free celebration of our community's accomplishments. There will be children's activities, music, and performances, tours of the neighborhood and refuge and FREE food. For more info: <https://www.facebook.com/events/463335307743283/>



ABRAZOS:
A Community Celebration
of Environmental Justice

Saturday May 18th
11am to 2pm
at Valle de Oro
7851 2nd St SW
FREE



WILD & SCENIC FILM FESTIVAL
WHERE ACTIVISM GETS INSPIRED

MAY 18th 2019 7pm
THE SCREEN AT MIDTOWN CAMPUS
SANTA FE, NM

A BENEFIT FOR
SANTA FE WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

Wild & Scenic Film Festival

SATURDAY, MAY 18, 7:00 p.m. at The Screen, Santa Fe

The Wild and Scenic Film Festival is the largest film festival of its kind, showcasing the best in environmental and adventure films. The Santa Fe Watershed Association is proud to have been selected as a host for 2019 and will be presenting an exciting line-up of films. For more info and to purchase tickets:

<https://www.santafewatershed.org/event/wild-scenic-film-festival/>



Send your event information to: [abqwildlifefederation@gmail.com!](mailto: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: \$ _____