

# THE PINE CONE

Official Newsletter of the Albuquerque Wildlife Federation



Albuquerque  
WILDLIFE  
Federation

conservationists since 1914

May 2023

## The 25th Anniversary of the Reintroduction of the Lobo

One of Aldo Leopold's most famous quotes is about his memory of killing a wolf in the Gila wilderness, and watching the "fierce green fire dying in her eyes." He marked that moment as a vital one in the development of his land ethic and ecological consciousness.

We know now that the wolf that Leopold shot that day was a lobo, a Mexican gray wolf. By 1927, lobos had been exterminated from New Mexico, and 50 years later, none were known to survive in the wild anywhere in the U.S. In 1976, the species was added to the recently created Endangered Species List, and the final five lobos located in Mexico were brought into captivity to start a captive breeding program. When AWF was founded, its motto was "remember the buffalo" – which had been driven to near-extinction – but it might just as easily have been "remember the lobo."

Until 1998. On March 29 of that year, 11 lobos from the captive breeding program were released into the wild in Arizona and New Mexico. For the last 25 years, the recovery of this keystone species has been a precarious journey of halting progress and frequent setbacks as the number of lobos surviving in the wild inches upwards and then falls back.

This year brought some exciting news: for the first time since reintroduction began, there are more than 200 wild lobos roaming our landscapes – 241 according to the most recent annual count, split between Arizona and New Mexico.



Yet opposition to the return of the lobo remains fervent in many rural communities, and illegal killings of lobos are sadly regular occurrences. The USFWS recently rejected a proposed rule to outlaw the killing of coyotes in lobo country, which is unfortunate because people who kill wolves often claim that they mistook them for coyotes. Wolves are also frequently killed or removed by the program managers themselves when they depredate cattle.

In addition, lobos are tightly geographically constrained: under the federal management plan, lobos are only allowed to exist in the wild south of I-40. Earlier this year, one crossed that boundary and made her way north to just outside Angel Fire before she was captured and transferred to Mexico. She had been named Asha, the Sanskrit word for hope, in an annual pup-naming contest for children. Long-term hope for her species will require granting them more space to migrate, especially as climate change alters habitat and the range of prey populations.

Another famous Leopold quote goes: "To keep every cog and wheel is the first precaution of intelligent tinkering." As the last quarter-century of work to bring back the lobo has shown, it is far easier to prevent the harm caused by the loss of a species than it is to try to heal the damage after the fact. Here's hoping we can be more intelligent tinkers this time around.

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*Kristina G. Fisher*  
AWF Secretary

## MAY 19-21, 2023 SERVICE PROJECT: Rio Mora Wildlife Refuge

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

**THE PROJECT:** This month, AWF is excited to be returning 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 many years. 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 19 – Sunday, May 21

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 to 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:** 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:** Email Kristina at [abqwildlifefederation@gmail.com](mailto:abqwildlifefederation@gmail.com)  
Directions and further details will be sent to you once you sign up.



## JUNE 2-4, 2023 SERVICE PROJECT: Manuelitas Creek

**NOTE:** *The number of volunteers for this project is capped at 25. Please RSVP promptly if you would like to participate!*

**LOCATION:** Bill Zeedyk & Mary Maulsby's property along Manuelitas Creek, in the Sapello Watershed

**THE PROJECT:** Join us for a very special project in which we will be working to address post-fire flooding and related impacts on the wetland habitat that Bill Zeedyk has been cultivating for many years. We will build one-rock dams, baffles, media lunas, and Zuni bowls; construct beaver dam analogs; erect three raptor perches; and more! We will be camping on Bill and Mary's land near the work area.

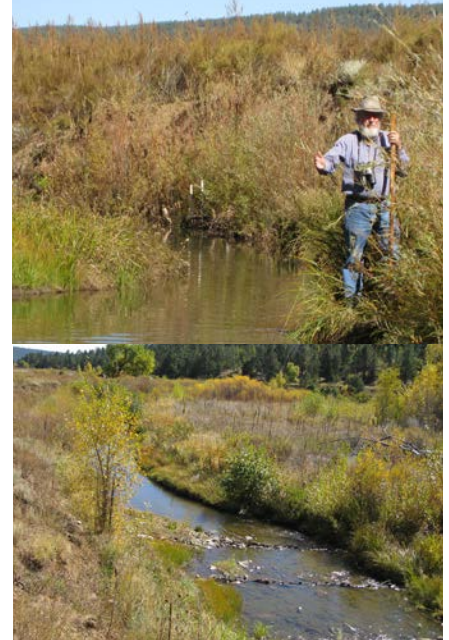
**SCHEDULE:** Friday, June 2 – Sunday, June 4

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 to 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.

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### 2023 SERVICE PROJECTS CALENDAR

March 11.....Valle de Oro Wildlife Refuge  
April 7-9.....Ft. Union Ranch  
May 19-21.....Rio Mora Wildlife Refuge  
June 2-4.....Manuelitas Creek  
June 16-18.....Rolling Hills Ranch  
July 14-16.....Gallinas Post-Fire Restoration  
July 28-30.....Valle Vidal  
August 18-20.....Midnight Meadows near Questa, NM  
September 1-4.....Limestone Canyon, San Mateo Mtns  
September 15-17.....Cebolla Canyon, El Malpais  
October 20-22.....Gutierrez Family Ranch  
November 4.....Rio Grande Bosque, Albuquerque

### AWF BOARD 2023

#### OFFICERS

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Vice President – Phil Carter  
Treasurer – Laurie Marnell  
Secretary – Kristina G. Fisher*

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Lia Griesser  
Toby Rosenblatt  
Barbara Rosensimon  
Michael "Scial" Scialdone  
Sean Solowiej  
Hamish Thomson  
Bob Tilley  
Bill Zeedyk - Director Emeritus*

## RECAP OF APRIL 7-9, 2023 PROJECT: FT. UNION RANCH

*Thanks, Volunteers!*

Abe Aufdermauer  
Shawn Blaisdell  
Kate Brown  
Phil Carter  
Cynthia DelBello  
Steven del Favero  
Candace Duran  
Russ Duran  
Roderick Flores  
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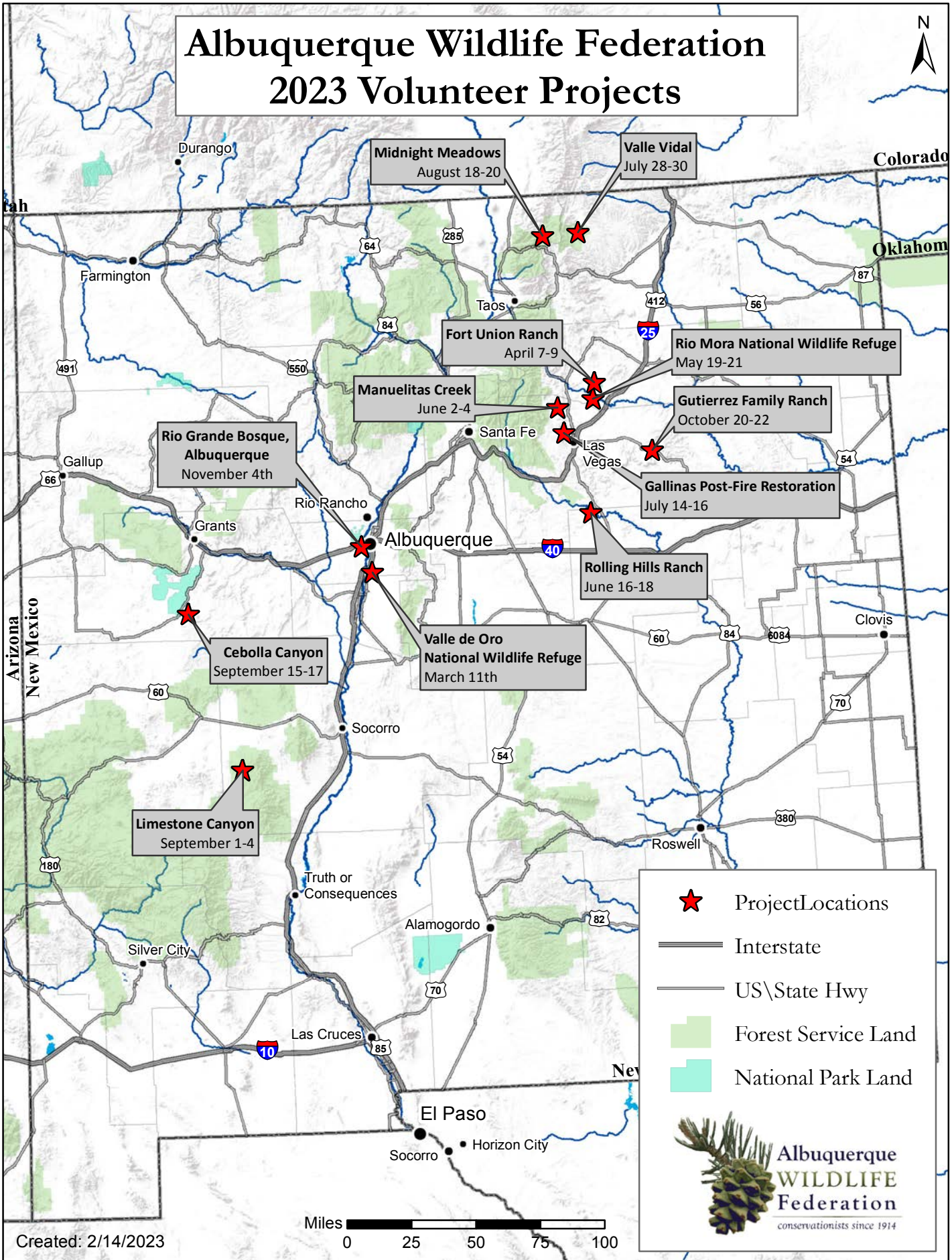


On a beautiful weekend in early April, AWF volunteers returned to Ft. Union Ranch to continue the restoration work we have been undertaking there for the past five years. For this project, the volunteer crew split into three teams. A small group headed over to Dog Creek, on the east side of the ranch, to plant cottonwood poles, and another several volunteers went over to the nearby Rio Mora National Wildlife Refuge to plant more cottonwood poles and to work on an enclosure to protect the new trees from local beavers until they get established.

Meanwhile, the rest of the volunteers caravanned several miles up Higgins Canyon to continue building rock structures to heal the damage caused by heavy wagon traffic between Ft. Union and Mora when the fort was active in the mid-1800s. Our ambitious volunteers completed an impressive set of structures, including massive one-rock dams and a sizeable Zuni bowl to protect a lush meadow. It was exciting to see how the structures we have built in past years throughout the canyon are collecting sediment, raising the streambed, and nurturing the growth of willows and grasses, and we are eager to see what this year's structures look like in a year or two!



# Albuquerque Wildlife Federation 2023 Volunteer Projects



## UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST

### Love Your Watershed Day

**SATURDAY, MAY 6, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Alto Park, Santa Fe, NM**

#### SANTA FE WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

Join the Santa Fe Watershed Association for Love Your Watershed Day, celebrating the legacy of our Adopt-the-River and Adopt-an-Arroyo programs and the official launch of their next holistic and streamlined incarnation, Adopt Your Watershed! Love Your Watershed Day will launch a week of watershed-wide stewardship activities, especially trash cleanup. This spring cleaning can be further inspired by the deep traditions in our watershed, such as the cleaning of our Acequias and the San Ysidro River Blessing on May 15. It is an important reminder that we're all connected through water! Stop by the SFWA station to pick up trash bags for your cleanup, as well as our new QR code stickers that link to the trash pickup forms. This enables us to better track how much trash our volunteers are collecting. For event schedule and more info:

<https://www.santafewatershed.org/event/love-your-watershed-day/>



### Red Canyon Spring Gathering

**MAY 6-7, Red Canyon Reserve near Magdalena, NM**

#### QUIVIRA COALITION

Join the Quivira Coalition's annual spring gathering at the beautiful Red Canyon Reserve! This will be a casual camp-out event with a couple fun activities including a plant ID walk on Sunday morning led by Missy Bacigalupa (Ecology Master's student at UNM and Plant Populations Technician, Sevilleta Long Term Ecological Research Program), and optional opportunities for annual monitoring and a canyon walk. We'll have a potluck on Saturday night, and Quivira will provide breakfast on Sunday morning (vegetarian and omnivorous options). This event is more of a meet-up than a workshop with a fairly loose schedule – we hope you can come and hang out! For more info and to RSVP:

<https://quiviracoalition.org/events/red-canyon-spring-gathering/>

### Hands-on Erosion Control Workshop in Piñon-Juniper Woodlands near Dixon

**SATURDAY, MAY 13, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., Cañoncito-Dixon area, NM**

#### ECOTONE LANDSCAPE PLANNING

Volunteers will spend the day learning how to build erosion control structures with local rock and wood material. Please bring work gloves, sun protection, a sack lunch, and enough water to get you through the day. Be prepared for a short hike in to the work area. For more info and to sign up:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdq5EVp1in8HYDct37aYOq918fKhAEWhhh2Kn6EvJoSKkiw9Q/viewform>

### Bosque Restoration Field Day

**SATURDAY, MAY 13, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.**

#### YERBA MANSA PROJECT

Help us restore Bosque habitat, Yerba Mansa, and other native plants. Our restoration work includes the removal of invasive non-native Ravenna Grass from the understory along with the replanting and reseeding of native grasses, herbs, and shrubs. These events are open to all members of the community so bring your family and friends. To sign up: <https://yerbamansaproject.org/events/>

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: \$ \_\_\_\_\_**