

# THE PINE CONE

Official Newsletter of the Albuquerque Wildlife Federation



Albuquerque  
WILDLIFE  
Federation

conservationists since 1914

October 2018

## Putting the Puzzle Back Together

The October 22, 1930 edition of the *Roswell Daily Record* included a small blurb reading: “The [game] commission will make a further investigation of the request of the Albuquerque Game Protective Association that mountain sheep be transferred from the Big Hatchet mountains and planted in the Sandia range.”

According to Elliott Barker, who worked under Aldo Leopold in the Forest Service and went on to serve as New Mexico’s first State Game Warden, the last Rocky Mountain bighorn in New Mexico was killed in 1902 near Lake Katherine in the Pecos Wilderness. Hunting and diseases brought by domestic sheep had wiped out the population of this once abundant native species.

As an active member of the New Mexico Game Protective Association (later renamed the New Mexico Wildlife Federation, just as the Albuquerque Game Protective Association became AWF), Barker made it his first order of business to try to bring wild bighorns back to New Mexico.

The project was challenging. Barker managed to acquire two rams and four ewes from Banff National Park in Alberta, Canada and released them in the Truchas Peaks area in 1932. They lived for several years, but then disappeared. In 1941, another small herd of bighorn was released in the Sandia Mountains, and their numbers grew to more than 100 animals by the late 1950s. Unfortunately, by the 1970s the herd had succumbed to pressure from poaching, feral dogs, and urban encroachment.



However, in 1965 some of the bighorn sheep from the Sandias had been transplanted to the Pecos wilderness, where they thrived. The Pecos herd grew large enough that it became the source of bighorns that were used to repopulate the Wheeler Peak and Latir areas, the Manzano Mountains, and the Gila National Forest.

In 2007, with their statewide population back up to around 1,000, bighorns were reintroduced on Taos Pueblo Lands and in the Rio Grande Gorge, returning to the lands where the ancestral puebloan people carved their images as petroglyphs.

“They belong here. They’re part of the diversity, part of that whole mix, that whole web of life coming together,” explained Sam DesGeorges, head of the U.S. Bureau of Land Management’s field office in Taos, about the reintroduction of the bighorns to the gorge. “Having the habitat and the animals that occupy that habitat is very important biologically.”

The work of species restoration continues: this month, the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish plans to relocate 40-60 desert bighorn sheep (cousin of the Rocky Mountain variety) to the Sacramento Mountains, where the species has been missing for nearly a century. Desert

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## OCTOBER 11, 2018 MEETING: Sacred Land, Sacred Water

**Thursday, October 11, 2018, 7:30 pm**  
**Albuquerque Friends Meeting House**  
**1600 5th Street Northwest**

### **Sacred Land, Sacred Water:** **Confluences in the Rio Grande Valley**

At this month's meeting, we will present a 48-minute documentary produced by filmmakers Lewis Jacobs and Craig Barth with geologist Don Phillips. It tells the story of the imminent threat posed by the expansion of hydraulic fracturing into unincorporated areas along the Rio Grande like Placitas, Rio Rancho, Algodones, and Pena Blanca. The New Mexico oil and gas industry is seeking to pass an ordinance in Sandoval County to open up these areas to fracking for the first time.

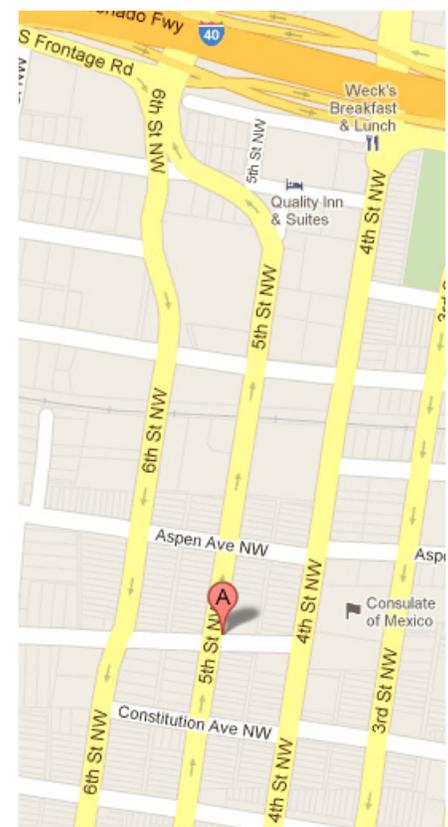
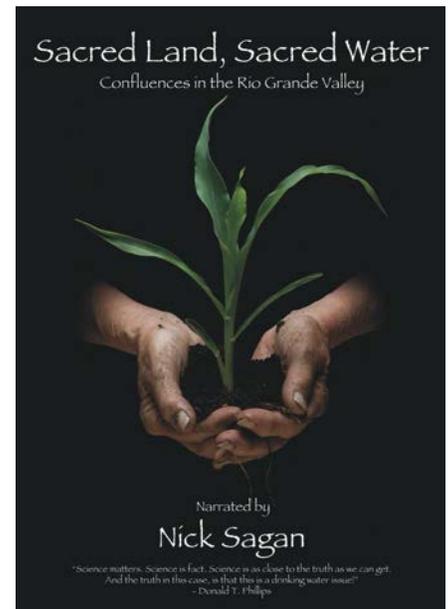
The filmmakers, with the support of local grassroots groups, have created a documentary that highlights the dangers that fracking poses to the continuous aquifer which underlies the entire Albuquerque Basin. This aquifer provides 85% of the drinking water for the 800,000 residents in Albuquerque's metro area.

After Sandoval County Commissioners voted down the first ordinance proposed by the oil and gas lobby in December 2017, this past summer the oil and gas industry introduced a new industry-friendly ordinance to the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission, where it is currently under review. The oil and gas lobby is exerting all its powers to expedite passage of this ordinance and has also initiated an ad campaign with TV spots in an attempt to convince the public of the safety of fracking.

The documentary seeks to educate New Mexicans about the dangers of fracking in the Albuquerque Basin and show how citizen can raise their voices to protect our water!

### **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.



# OCTOBER 20, 2018 RESTORATION SERVICE PROJECT: Cedro Creek

**LOCATION:** Cedro Creek in the Sandia Mountains, near Tijeras, NM

**THE PROJECT:** For our final volunteer restoration service project of the year, we will be returning to one of our longtime legacy sites, Cedro Creek in the Sandia Mountains. This year, we will be working in the same area we were last fall, seeing how well our existing restoration structures are holding water, gathering sediment, and growing vegetation. We will repair and add to those rock structures to prevent the stream from downcutting and to stabilize the channel.

After we finish up our work, we'll gather at the nearby Pine Flat day use area for a late lunch potluck to celebrate all the great restoration work accomplished by AWF volunteers during the 2018 season!

**SCHEDULE:** Saturday, October 20, 9:00-4:00

**GEAR:** Bring everything you need for a day of outdoor work, including gloves, hat, long sleeves, long pants, sturdy boots, sunglasses, and sunscreen. Dress in layers to be prepared for New Mexico's variable weather.

**FOOD:** AWF will provide bison or veggie burgers for the afternoon potluck. Please bring a dish to share along with snacks and water for the work day.

**TO SIGN UP:**

Contact Scial at [rioscial@gmail.com](mailto:rioscial@gmail.com) or 505-480-2906.  
*Directions and further details will be sent to you after you sign up.*



## 2018 SERVICE PROJECTS CALENDAR

March 17.....Day project at Valle de Oro  
April 6-8.....Wolf Creek, Ft. Union, NM  
May 4-6.....Red Canyon Reserve  
May 18-20.....Rio Mora Wildlife Refuge  
June 22-24.....Midnight Meadows near Questa, NM  
August 10-12.....Midnight Meadows near Questa, NM  
Aug 31-Sept 2.....Limestone Canyon, San Mateo Mtns  
October 20.....Day project at Cedro Creek

## AWF BOARD 2018

**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*

## EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Quivira Coalition Workshop at Red Canyon Reserve

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 5-SUNDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2018**

Join the Quivira Coalition for two days of landscape assessment, monitoring, and seed collecting at Red Canyon Reserve. This workshop is perfect for ranchers, land managers, students, or anyone looking to learn these methods. More info: <https://quiviracoalition.org/rcrfallworkshop-2018/>



### New Mexico Wildlife Center Open House

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6 & SUNDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2018, 11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.**

**NEW MEXICO WILDLIFE CENTER, 19 Wheat Street, Espanola, New Mexico 87532**

Both open house days include live ambassador animal demonstrations, family friendly activities, refreshments and more!

More info: <https://www.facebook.com/events/348274512328749/>

### 50 Years of Trails and Rivers in New Mexico Festival

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2018, 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.**

**National Hispanic Cultural Center, 1701 4th St SW, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87102**

This free celebration marks the 50th anniversary of the Wild and Scenic Rivers and National Trail System Acts. For more info: <https://www.facebook.com/events/2169886229936469/>

### Geology of Cibola Canyon

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2018, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.**

**AMIGOS DE LA SEVILLETA**

Take in the awe-inspiring geology of Cibola Canyon in the Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge. For more info: <https://www.facebook.com/events/273016280178430/>

### Gila Cliff Dwellings Seed Collection and Invasives Removal

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 18-SUNDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2018**

**SKY ISLAND ALLIANCE**

The Sky Island Alliance is teaming up with the National Park Service and Borderlands Restoration to restore a recently-burned slope near the main ruin loop at the Gila Cliff Dwellings Monument. Volunteers will be removing invasive plants that have moved into the site, and collecting new seed that can be grown out for future plantings in the park. For more info:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/gila-cliff-dwellings-seed-collection-and-invasives-removal-tickets-49118151714>



### Geologic Tour to Shiprock and El Malpais

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27-SUNDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2018**

**PAJARITO ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER**

Join Fraser and Cathy Goff on a two-day geologic field trip to Shiprock and El Malpais this October! For more info: <https://peecnature.org/events/details/?id=26494>

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

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bighorns were listed as endangered in 1980, but removed from the Endangered Species List in 2011 after three decades of work to bring their populations back. There are now 1,200-1,400 desert bighorns living in New Mexico.

As AWF volunteers know well, it is far easier to pull apart an ecosystem than to put it back together. Yet this restoration can be accomplished, and the perseverance of those who reintroduced bighorns to New Mexico despite years of difficulties and setbacks shows us how.

We can do the same with all sorts of smaller and less charismatic wildlife, from meadow jumping mice to Chiricahua leopard frogs. As anyone who has felt the thrill of seeing a bighorn in the New Mexico landscape knows, there are few things more satisfying in this world than to right a past wrong, and return a wild creature to its native home.

*Kristina G. Fisher*  
AWF President



# 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: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ \_\_\_\_\_**