

THE PINE CONE

Official Newsletter of the Albuquerque Wildlife Federation



Albuquerque
WILDLIFE
Federation

conservationists since 1914

October 2023

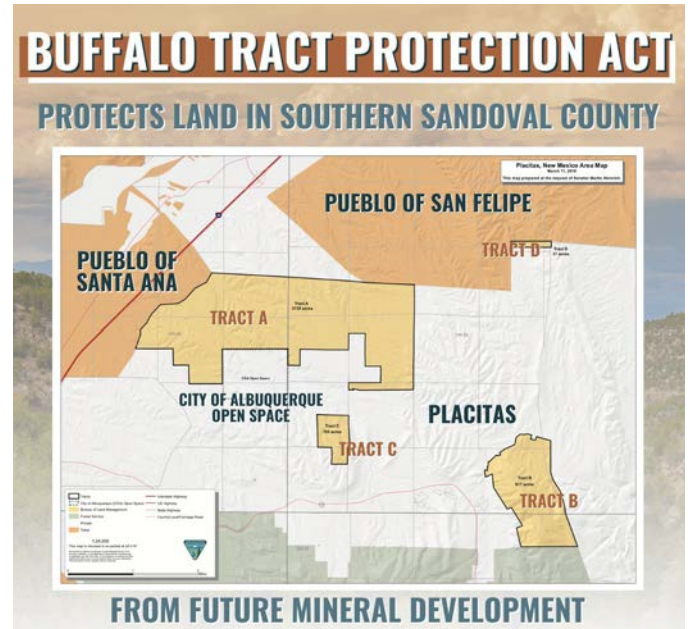
Protecting the Buffalo Tract & Crest of Montezuma

Last month, there was a major development in a long effort to protect a special part of southern Sandoval County.

The Buffalo Tract and Crest of Montezuma consist of four parcels of land (Tracts A, B, C & D in the accompanying map) totaling 4,200 acres. The lands, which are managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), are currently undeveloped and are popular for hiking, camping, and hunting. They also provide an essential wildlife corridor connecting the Sangre de Cristo and Sandia Mountains.

After gravel mining was proposed for the land in 2012, residents of neighboring communities organized to prevent it. The Pueblos of Santa Ana and San Felipe requested that their ancestral lands be safeguarded from extractive development. The pueblos were joined by conservation groups and residents of nearby Placitas and the Merced De Comunidad De San Antonio De Las Huertas land grant. Noting that there are already six gravel mines operating in Sandoval County, the group proposed setting aside the Buffalo Tract and Crest of Montezuma for wildlife and recreation.

In 2016, Senators Udall and Heinrich responded by introducing the Buffalo Tract Protection Act, but it unfortunately failed to pass. Senator Heinrich and Representative Melanie Stansbury reintroduced it earlier



this year, with support from the rest of New Mexico's congressional delegation.

In the meantime, last month the U.S. Department of the Interior proposed to withdraw the Buffalo Tract and Crest of Montezuma from any mining or oil and gas development for the next 50 years. This would ensure that the lands are preserved in their current state while efforts to enact permanent protections continue.

The BLM is now seeking public comment on the proposal. Comments can be submitted [at this link](#) through December 13, 2023, and there will also be a public meeting at the Placitas Community Library from 5:30-7:30 p.m. on November 14. We encourage AWF members who care about these lands to attend and speak up on behalf of the proposed protections.

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Kristina G. Fisher
AWF Secretary

OCTOBER 12, 2023 MEETING: Paid Fallowing: Environmental Water Leasing in the Middle Rio Grande

Date: Thursday, October 12, 2023, 7:30 p.m.

Location: **In Person** at the
Albuquerque Friends Meeting House
1600 5th Street Northwest

Topic: Paid Fallowing in the Middle Rio Grande: A Look at MRGCD's Environmental Water Leasing Program

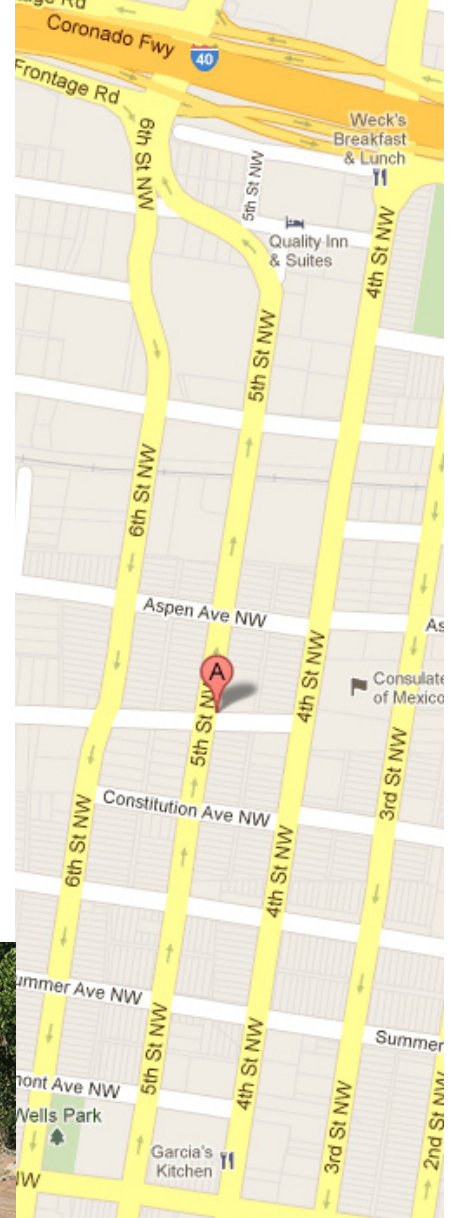
At this month's meeting, Jared Wood will present a revised form of his masters project examining the Environmental Water Leasing Program, in which farmers can get paid to forego their water use and fallow their fields, and that water can be used for the endangered Silvery Minnow. This study relied on conversations with community members and program administrators to gain a holistic understanding of the program. Jared will describe the paid fallowing program, the flexibility it provides, the range of outcomes that can result, and policy recommendations that could help improve it. As these fallowing programs are being scaled up locally and nationally, Jared hopes this research can inform ongoing conversations about adapting to water scarcity in the era of global warming.

Speaker Bio: Jared Wood

Ever since he was hugged by a crying resident of post-fire Paradise, California at a volunteer event, Jared Wood has been a restorationist. He helped establish Ecosystem Restoration Camps California, a group much like AWF, and served as its communications director. In 2023, he graduated with masters degrees from UNM's dual Water Resources and Community and Regional Planning programs to complement his background in solidarity economy, communications, and small business consulting. Currently Jared works on restoration planning in the Surface Water Quality Bureau of New Mexico's Environment Department.

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 20-22, 2022 SERVICE PROJECT: Gutierrez Ranch

LOCATION: Gutierrez Family Ranch, near the Sabinoso Wilderness

THE PROJECT: This month, AWF will be returning to the Gutierrez family ranch east of Las Vegas, NM. This ranch has been in the family of Patrick Gutierrez, whom we have partnered with at the Hermit’s Peak Watershed Alliance, since the 1700s. Our activities will include building rock structures to address erosion, thinning vegetation, and putting up protective fencing around a spring.

SCHEDULE: Friday, October 20 – Sunday, October 22
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 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. Rain gear, layers, warm clothes for the evenings, and plenty of water are essential.

FOOD: AWF will provide coffee and 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
Directions and further details will be sent to you once you sign up.



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 6-8.....Return to Manuelitas Creek
 October 20-22.....Gutierrez Family Ranch
 November 4.....Rio Grande Bosque, Albuquerque

AWF BOARD 2023

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Bill Zeedyk - Director Emeritus

NOVEMBER 4, 2023 SERVICE PROJECT: Bosque Clean-Up Day

LOCATION: Albuquerque bosque

THE PROJECT: For our final volunteer restoration service project of the year, we will be working to remove trash and invasive plants from open space areas in the Albuquerque bosque.

This project is organized by Jaguars for Positive Change, a high school community service club at Atrisco Heritage Academy High School that is sponsored by AWF volunteer Tanya Critchfield, who teaches at the school.

The Jaguars for Positive Change are teaming up with Albuquerque City Open Space and other partners to host Take Back the Bosque Day on Saturday, November 4, and AWF is proud to be part of this effort. The project's main focus will be to remove non-native/invasive plants, especially Ravenna grass. There will also be clean-up of tumbleweeds and litter, and likely some other activities. When the work is done, we will enjoy a picnic lunch. Further details will be provided when you sign up.

SCHEDULE: Saturday, November 4, 9:00-1:00

GEAR: Dress in layers to be prepared for New Mexico's variable weather. Besides plenty of water, please bring work gloves, hat, long sleeves, long pants, sturdy boots, sunglasses, and sunscreen.

FOOD: Lunch may be provided; RSVP for details.

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

Directions and further details will be sent to you once you sign up.



RECAP OF SEPTEMBER 15-17, 2023 PROJECT: CEBOLLA CANYON

Thanks, Volunteers!

Abe Aufdermaur
Steve Carson
Phil Carter
Steve Del Favero
Candace Duran
Russ Duran
Roderick Flores
Kristina G. Fisher
Tera Gambill
J. Mark Grazier
Lia Griesser
Finn Gregor
Bob Hymar
Zayne Khouja
Brad Lancaster
Sharon Lacy
Yin-May Lee
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Quintin Muhlenkamp
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Miranda Rivera
Toby Rosenblatt
Barbara Rosensimon
Jonathan Taris
Hamish Thomson
Bob Tilley
Cameron Weber
Gael Whetnall
Jared Wood
Bill Zeedyk

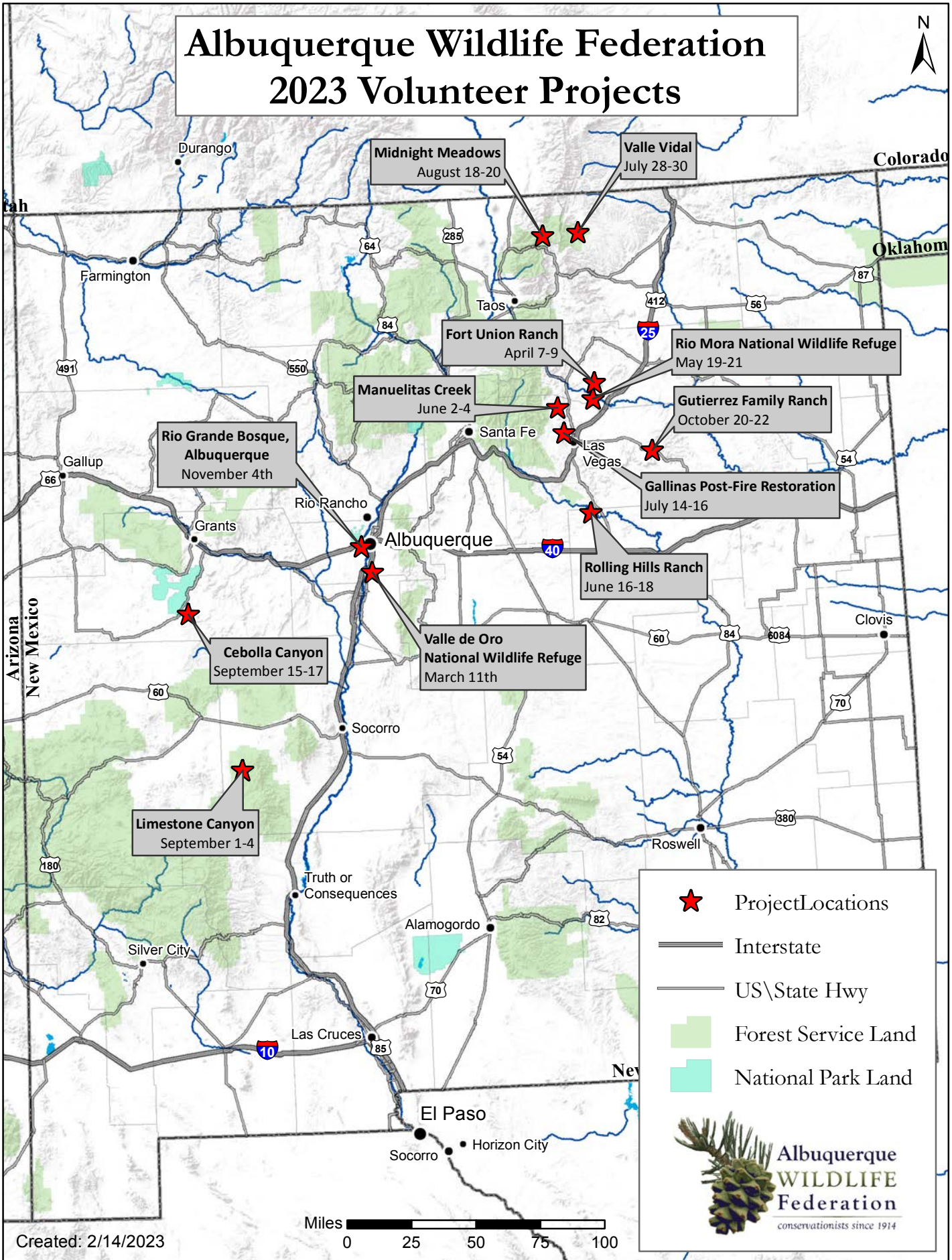


In mid-September, a terrific crew of first-time and experienced volunteers returned to AWF's legacy site in Cebolla Canyon in El Malpais National Conservation Area to continue the restoration efforts we have been engaged in for over two decades. A century ago, Cebolla Canyon was a series of wet meadows, fed by a perennial spring. During the Dustbowl and Great Depression, the land was homesteaded and intensively farmed, and when the farming stopped, abandoned roads and irrigation ditches captured the flow of water and eroded deep gullies, drying out the meadows. AWF, along with numerous agency and nonprofit partners, has been implementing restoration structures to halt the downcutting, and begin gradually expanding the wet meadows and wetlands once again.

We especially appreciate our agency partners at the Bureau of Land Management, New Mexico Environment Department, New Mexico Game and Fish Department, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services for joining us at Cebolla on Friday for a tour of past restoration work and a discussion of how we can build on this progress in the future. We are excited about the potential for this work to put the pieces of a damaged ecosystem back together, healing Cebolla Canyon so that future generations will again benefit from its rare wetlands and the wildlife they support.



Albuquerque Wildlife Federation 2023 Volunteer Projects



Created: 2/14/2023



UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST

Fall Red Canyon Reserve Gathering

OCTOBER 6-8

QUIVIRA COALITION

Join The Quivira Coalition for educational presentations as well as volunteer opportunities to maintain the well-being of Red Canyon infrastructure. For more info and to sign up:

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

Annular Eclipse Viewing Party

OCTOBER 14, Valle de Oro Wildlife Refuge

Head over to Valle de Oro for a free community solar eclipse viewing party! There will be food, art activities, performances, free solar eclipse viewing glasses, and astronomers on site to help you learn about this amazing astronomical event!

For more info: <https://www.facebook.com/events/945457919777915>



Manzano Mountain Wilderness Sign Installation

OCTOBER 14, 9:00-4:00, Manzano Mountain Wilderness

NEW MEXICO WILD

New Mexico Wild is conducting a quick, one-day sign installation project, heading to various locations around the Manzano Mountain wilderness. This will help to keep the public informed about where the Wilderness area begins and ends along the major trails. For more info and to sign up:

<https://www.nmwild.org/event/manzano-mountain-wilderness-sign-installation-day/>



Gila Centennial Loop Kiosk Installation

OCTOBER 15, 28, & 29, Gila Wilderness

NEW MEXICO WILD

In preparation for the 100th anniversary of the Gila being designated as America's first Wilderness and the start of the National Wilderness Preservation System, New Mexico Wild is calling on volunteers to help install new interpretive signage and maps at 5 key trailheads around the Gila Wilderness. These 5 locations are major gateways to the newly defined "Centennial Loop Trail" which will be a 100-mile loop through the heart of the

Gila Wilderness. Sign up to join one or more of these day projects: <https://www.nmwild.org/events/>

Environmental Justice Speaker Series:

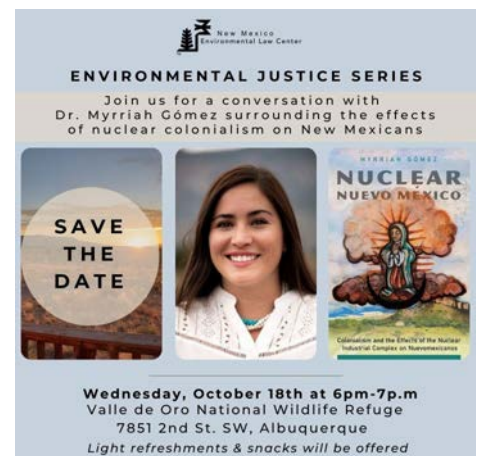
Nuclear Nuevo Mexico

OCTOBER 18, 6:00-7:00 p.m., Valle de Oro Wildlife Refuge

NEW MEXICO ENVIRONMENTAL LAW CENTER

Dr. Myrriah Gomez will read from her book Nuclear Nuevo México, which focuses on the testimonios that have been systematically excluded in the telling of nuclear history in New Mexico, and will engage the audience in a conversation on the effects of nuclear colonialism. Light refreshments and snacks will be offered. For more info and to RSVP:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSex-Mhxiqti-_LhgodosA47V-ltkwwx1EKpUpRRVIAYQ3vO0z0g/viewform



UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST *continued*

Carlsbad Caverns National Park Centennial

OCTOBER 25

Carlsbad Caverns National Park was established on October 23, 1923, and it is marking its centennial with an all-day celebration of events. Earlier in the month there will be astronomy star parties (Oct 13-14), solar eclipse viewing (Oct 14), and night hikes (Oct 27-28). For more info and the full events schedule: <https://www.facebook.com/CarlsbadCavernsNPS/>



Outdoor Economics CONFERENCE

SANTA FE | OCT 23-25

Centennial Celebration	
Wednesday, October 25th	
7:30-8:30 am	Wake Up the Cavern: Be the first to enter Carlsbad Cavern for the day! Walk one of the cavern trails (Main Corridor or Big Room) with a park ranger as they turn on the cavern lights. Limit of 12 visitors per trail. Participants must sign up at the information desk in the visitor center the day before.
8:00 am	Visitor Center Opens: Entrance tickets become available.
8:15-9:30 am	Coffee with a Ranger: Enjoy a cup of coffee and conversation with a park ranger prior to entry into the cavern. Location: Visitor Center Front Doors.
8:30 am	Cavern Access Opens: Self-guided entry via the Natural Entrance or elevator available to visitors with an entrance ticket until 2:30 pm.
9:30 am	Centennial Reception: Join National Park Service staff in a public recognition of our centennial and community partners. Location: Visitor Center Theater.
10:00-11:00 am 12:00-1:00 pm	Where in the World is Carl S. Bat? As part of our year-long centennial celebration, we sent our resident bat mascot, Carl S. Bat, on a worldwide tour! A park ranger will talk about Carl's adventures to other national parks and World Heritage Sites. Location: Visitor Center Exhibit Hall.
10:45 am	Cake Cutting: Celebrate the 100th birthday of Carlsbad Caverns National Park by enjoying cake and cupcakes courtesy of Western National Parks Association. Location: Visitor Center Theater.
1:00 pm	Bat Discovery Station Opens: Celebrate Bat Week by hearing about the fascinating lives of the bats of Carlsbad Caverns National Park. Bat Biologist Junior Ranger booklets will be available. Location: Theater 2.
2:00 pm	Descent Through Time: A Guided Geology Walk Down the Main Corridor: This 2-hour walk led by Ranger Mack will take you on a journey to when the history of the park began, 265 million years ago. Limit of 12 visitors. Participants must sign up at the information desk in the visitor center in advance and have an entrance ticket into the cavern. Meet at the 3-D model in the Exhibit Hall.
2:30 pm	Cavern Access Closes.
2:45-4:45 pm	Vertical Caving Demonstrations: Park Rangers will demonstrate how cavers safely navigate vertical obstacles by ascending and descending a rope in the exhibit hall.
4:00 pm	Bat Discovery Station Closes.
4:00 pm	Nature Hike: Explore the surface ecosystem with a park ranger on a guided walk of the Chihuahuan Desert Nature Trail. Meet at the 3-D model in the exhibit hall.
5:00 pm*	Bat Watch: Watch the Brazilian free-tailed bats exit the Natural Entrance of Carlsbad Cavern as they begin their nightly search for food and water. <small>*Bat Watch Program time subject to change based on previous flight times. Check with the information desk in the visitor center for confirmation.</small>

New Mexico Outdoor Economics Conference

OCTOBER 23-25, Santa Fe, NM

Attend the New Mexico Outdoor Economics Conference to help advance economic development strategies and opportunities connected to protected public lands. This conference will highlight successful community economic development efforts within and outside of New Mexico that are connected to protected lands and focus on the development of governmental policies and local entrepreneurship connected to these opportunities. For more info and to register: <https://www.outdooreconomics.com/>

Regenerate 2023

NOVEMBER 1-3, Santa Fe, NM

QUIVIRA COALITION

Attend the Quivira Coalition's annual gathering to explore regenerative agriculture at every scale — from microbial soil communities, to social relationships and markets, to our changing climate, and everything in between. For more info and to sign up: <https://regenerateconference.com/>

Society for Ecological Restoration Southwest Conference

NOVEMBER 16-18, 2023, Santa Fe, NM

This conference is an exciting opportunity to share knowledge among practitioners and researchers in the field of ecological restoration. Scholarships available for students. For more info and to register: <https://sersw2019.wixsite.com/conference2023/register>

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 _____ \$10
- Individual _____ \$25
- Family _____ \$35
- Sustaining _____ \$50-99
- Patron _____ \$100
- Lifetime _____ \$500 (one-time payment)

Dues: \$ _____
 Extra Contribution: \$ _____
TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ _____