



## ALBUQUERQUE WILDLIFE FEDERATION

Founded by Aldo Leopold in 1914 to protect and perpetuate our wildlife and natural resources

# AWF Newsletter

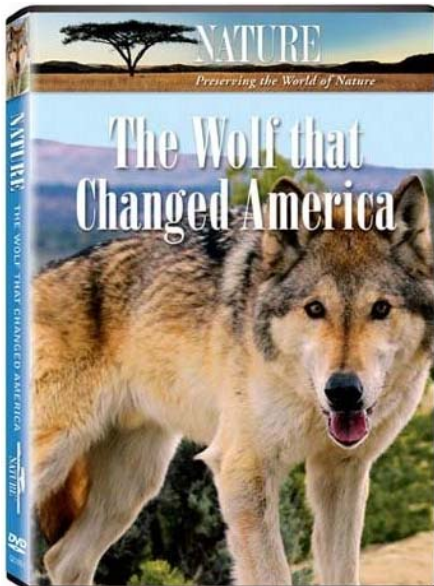
JUNE 2010

## MONTHLY MEETING

Thursday, June 10, 2010 — 7:30 pm  
Manzano Mesa Center (map p4)

### Movie Night!

## The Wolf that Changed America



For our June meeting we had planned a presentation by Adrian Oglesby from The Nature Conservancy, but circumstances have changed and Adrian isn't able to join us. So instead we offer "The Wolf that Changed America," a 2008 film inspired by actual journal entries of trapper, naturalist and author Ernest Thompson Seton. Set in New Mexico and narrated by F. Murray Abraham—and featuring some truly stunning nature photography—the story unfolds through dramatic reenactments, vintage photos, and expert interviews with historians and wolf biologists.

In 1893, New Mexico ranchers were fed up with losing livestock to wolves so they hired Seton to be a kind of "wolf bounty hunter." The animal in question was wily, elusive Lobo, one of the last of the wolves in the Old West, and Seton predicted his task to track and kill Lobo would take two weeks at most. What followed was a months-long showdown, with Lobo outwitting Seton at every turn until Seton became nearly obsessed with killing what he called the "demon wolf." He resorted to tactics that today's animal lovers would find both heartrending and horrific, until a shocking chain of events jolted Seton's conscience and made him finally question who, in this battle, was the Hero and who was the Villain.

Seton wrote of his profound regret over the war he waged against Lobo in a book called *Wild Animals I Have Known*, and it became a worldwide success. He devoted the rest of his life to spreading the word about preserving land and animal species for future generations. Seton's mission helped inspire what is now the modern-day conservation movement.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Come out and watch a great movie next week at our June meeting. We'll get to show off our new digital projector with its built-in DVD player...it should be a quality viewing experience! Popcorn provided, too (and other refreshments as well).

This month's project is at Rio de las Vacas, where we continue our efforts to mitigate headcuts, redirect the watercourse, and plant willows to improve fish and wildlife habitat. We'll miss Gene Tatum and Pat Hester, who'll be in Portland, OR, for daughter Rachel's wedding, but the rest of the Projects Committee will do our best to make good things happen during the weekend. Hope to see you there!

Glenda Muirhead

*Jim Hubert's*

### Notable Quote

*of the month*

*"The charm of fishing is that it is the pursuit of what is elusive but attainable, a perpetual series of occasions for hope."*

— John Buchan  
(Passed on by Rich Leonard)

## Volunteer Project #5

## RIO DE LAS VACAS — SE of Cuba, NM Weekend Project: June 18-20, 2010

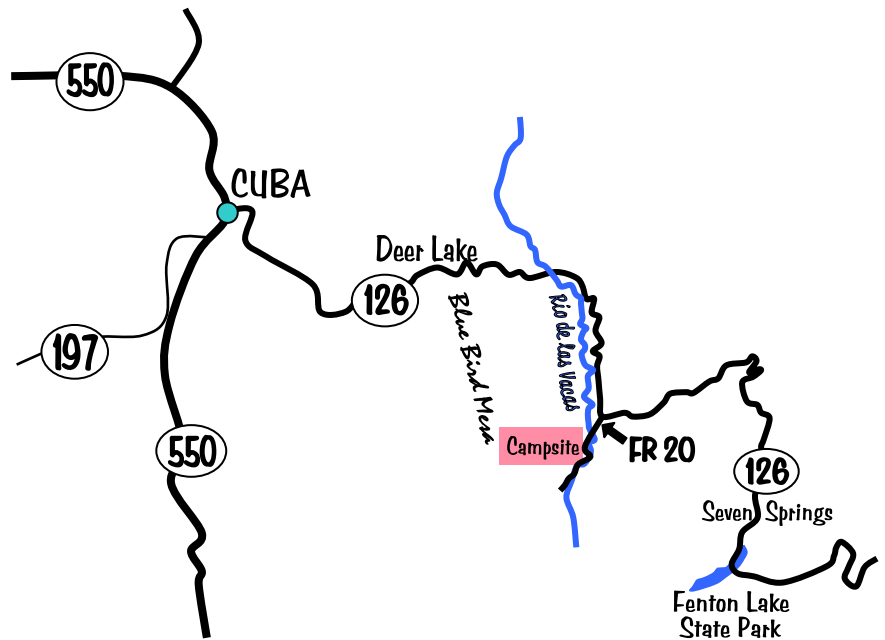
The next project of AWF's 2010 Season is at Rio de las Vacas in the Santa Fe National Forest, southeast of Cuba.

**THE PROJECT:** This is a family- and kid-friendly event led by Bill Zeedyk. We will plant willows, build rock structures, and repair enclosure fencing as needed.

**FOOD:** Please provide your own meals for Friday dinner, Saturday lunch, and Sunday breakfast and lunch.

As usual we'll have **COFFEE** and **BREAKFAST BURRITOS** for everyone on **SATURDAY MORNING**, and there will be snacks and drinks during the project day. **SATURDAY EVENING** we'll have a **POT LUCK MEAL**—AWF will grill burgers and sausage (veggie options too), so bring along something to share with the group...appetizer, salad, vegetable, dessert. Sunday morning, enjoy coffee and leftovers.

**DRIVING TIME:**  
2½ to 3 hours from ABQ



### TO SIGN UP: Contact

Glenda Muirhead — 505-281-2925 or [g.muirhead@usfamily.net](mailto:g.muirhead@usfamily.net)  
Additional details will be provided during the week before the project.

## Camping With Us? Here's What to Bring

- ✓ Gear for camping ( tent / trailer / vehicle )
- ✓ Warm bedding and clothing
- ✓ Rain gear
- ✓ Sturdy work/waterproof BOOTS and work GLOVES
- ✓ HAT and SUNSCREEN
- ✓ BACKPACK or daypack for your stuff
- ✓ Clothing and footwear changes (*it may rain*)
- ✓ FOOD for yourself for Friday dinner, a Saturday bag lunch, and your meals for Sunday
- ✓ DISH TO SHARE at Saturday night meal
- ✓ WATER adequate for your needs + 1-2 gallons to share for dishwashing station
- ✓ YOUR OWN PLATE, bowl, flatware, & coffee cup
- ✓ Towel to dry your own dishes
- ✓ CAMP CHAIR and HEAD LAMP or flashlight

## 2010 PROJECT SCHEDULE

February 20	Tree Planting at Aldo Leopold Forest (Albuquerque Bosque)
March 20	[ Cedro Creek — CANCELLED DUE TO WEATHER ]
April 16-18	Cebolla Canyon I
May 14-16	Limestone Canyon (San Mateo Mountains)
June 18-20	Rio de las Vacas
July 16-18	Valle Vidal
August 20-22	Valles Caldera National Preserve
September 17-19	Cebolla Canyon II
October 16	Cedro Creek (East Mountains) and End of Year Celebration

To sign up for any of these projects, please contact Glenda Muirhead at 505-281-2925 or [g.muirhead@usfamily.net](mailto:g.muirhead@usfamily.net) by Monday prior to the project weekend.



Here's one of our previous one-rock dams operating just as designed: sediment has accumulated upstream of the structure, slowing water flow and raising the channel level.



Several of this year's crew accumulate rocks and build another structure. It was a treat to have water actually running in the creek this year.

## Project Recap **LIMESTONE CANYON** in May

This was our fourth year returning to the Limestone Canyon project area with Dave Heft, Magdalena Ranger District Wildlife Biologist. Most of our participants had previously worked at this location, so when Dave showed matched pairs of photographs which illustrated the success of prior work, we were amazed and pleased with the effectiveness of our rock structures. The structures are slowing flow, finer-grain sediments are being deposited, stream gradient is lowering, and meander patterns are starting to emerge. This year the creek was flowing during the project. To me, without doubt this has been the most gratifying project... it is nice to get the feet wet.

Of course, another source of gratification is the group that comes out to work. Most of the participants were our regulars who attend the majority of our projects. A lot of rock had to be dug and transported to build the 33 structures completed this year.

In addition to their labor and commitment, these folks donated their Forest Service vehicle mileage reimbursement to AWF. These donations are critical: without them we would not have the resources to operate our service projects with the same amenities. OK, the word "amenity" may be a stretch, but compared to what we were able to provide two years ago, there has been a remarkable improvement.

Hopefully, we can plan to reinvest a portion of the donations to improve our projects. If you have suggestions, please inform Glenda, Scial or me.

— Gene Tatum



PHOTOS BY DENNIS MUIRHEAD

### LIMESTONE CANYON Participants

- |                    |                     |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| Gail Baker         | Laurie Marnell      |
| Floy Barrett       | Isaac Mitchell      |
| Shannon Batten     | Dennis Muirhead     |
| Don Birnbaum       | Glenda Muirhead     |
| Janet Birnbaum     | Toby Rosenblatt     |
| Stephen Bohannon   | Michael Scialdone   |
| John Canaris       | Marilynn Szydlowski |
| Nathan Canaris     | Gene Tatum          |
| Phil Carter        | Hamish Thomson      |
| Tanya Critchfield  | Bob Tilley          |
| Kristina G. Fisher | Scott White         |
| Dave Heft, USFS    | Adam Zipkin         |
| Patricia Hester    | Storm—NMDGF         |



Early risers enjoy Saturday morning coffee, bundled up against the cool air.

The white peaked canopy in the back is AWF's new purchase...it worked well in the beautiful weather we experienced over the week-end. The true test will be when wind and rain inevitably assault us during upcoming projects!

*Notes from the Projects Chair* Fourth in a series by Gene Tatum, AWF Vice President

## Bureau of Land Management: Formed from Political Conflict

As noted in the preceding articles in this series, the involvement of the Western ranching community was essential in implementation of the Taylor Act. Preventing overgrazing was one of the primary reasons for passage of the Taylor Act. Rancher influence on the western vacant lands was obvious. Their participation in the decisions to establish areas and numbers of livestock permitted was also essential to a fledging agency like the Division of Grazing and its predecessor, the Grazing Service. Western ranchers were also very influential in national politics, particularly regarding public lands.

To provide funds to meet rising administrative costs, the newly formed Grazing Service was requesting a grazing fee increase. Most ranchers opposed fee increases, and voiced their opposition through the grazing district advisory boards. Many believed that the Taylor Lands were only good for livestock grazing, and furthermore, the Act was only an interim measure until the vacant lands were disposed. A conflict of interests started to develop as WWII began.

In 1941, the Grazing Service wanted funds to institute range studies and range improvement projects. The monthly fee of five cents for each cow and unweaned calf (Animal Unit Month or AUM) was considerably lower than on private and state lands. The Service's grazing fee was also one-sixth that charged by the National Forest. As a consequence, a fee increase from 5 to 15 cents per AUM was

proposed. Grazing permittees were strongly opposed to the fee change. Sentiment was already strong in Nevada, where ranchers had recently lost a Supreme Court suit restraining the Grazing Service from interfering with their free use of the public range. Interior Secretary Ickes, under extreme political pressure, withdrew the proposed fee increase.

In 1944, newly appointed Grazing Service Director Clarence Forsling resurrected the grazing fee issue. Forsling, a former Forest Service employee, believed that the 1941 proposed fee increase was fair relative to the Forest Service fee. Mr. Forsling sought the approval of the National Advisory Board composed of western ranchers, which was adamantly unsupportive.

The House of Representatives Appropriations Committee wanted the Grazing Service fees to cover most of its expenses. On the other side, strong western Senators like Nevada's Pat McCarran threatened to block any legislation which resulted in grazing fee increases. In response, the House Appropriations Committee reduced the Grazing Service's funding to \$200,000, 1/8th of its funding needs. Senator McCarran, not wanting to destroy the Grazing Service but desiring that it remain subservient, negotiated a budget for the Service of \$800,000. The Grazing Service's response was to cut its staff from 250 to 86 and closed 11 of its 60 District Offices.

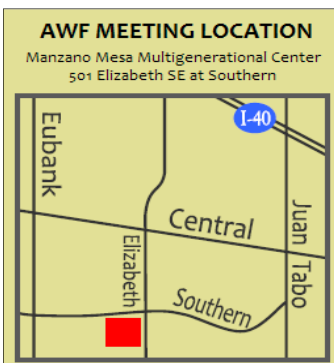
In an attempt to assuage the disagreement, Interior Secretary Ickes in January 1946 recommended a merger of the General Land Office (GLO) and Grazing Service to President Truman. In May 1946, President Truman forwarded to Congress "Reorganization Plan No. 3 of 1946." The merger could only be prevented if both Houses passed non-concurrent resolutions. Not surprisingly, the House voted to block the law but the Senate did not. As a result, in July 1946, the General Land Office and the Grazing Service were merged into the Bureau of Land Management.



Illustration by Ginny Rosenberg, *Sacred Cows at the Public Trough* by Denzel and Nancy Ferguson, Maverick Publications, 1983

### SOURCES FOR THIS ARTICLE:

1. *Opportunity and Challenge—The Story of the BLM and Private Grazing and Public Lands* by Wesley Calef, University of Chicago Press, 1960.
2. *Sacred Cows at the Public Trough* by Denzel and Nancy Ferguson, Maverick Publications, 1983.



### RENEWED MEMBER

Beverly deGruyter

*Thank You!*

## NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION WANTS TO GET KIDS OUTSIDE

American childhood has moved indoors during the last two decades, taking a mental and physical toll on today's kids. Studies show outdoor time helps children to grow strong and lean, enhancing imaginations and attention spans, decreasing aggression, and boosting classroom performance. In addition, children who spend time in nature regularly are shown to become better stewards of the environment.

## GREAT AMERICAN BACKYARD CAMPOUT

On June 26, 2010, thousands of people across the nation will gather in their backyards, neighborhoods, communities, and parks to take part in a one-night event that will provide an experience for all generations to connect with nature. We hope you will join us this year as we

“Open the Door and  
Sleep Under the Stars”

on Saturday, June 26. Here are a couple of ways to participate: (1) Join or host a Campout. If you want to host a campout, please register your own “team” as a Community Partner when prompted to do so, and you will have access to a Community Partner Team Captain Guide and other great resources; and (2) Promote the Great American Backyard Campout to your local schools, and community. For details check out this website: [www.backyardcampout.org](http://www.backyardcampout.org)

## BE OUT THERE®

National Wildlife Federation continues to lead policy campaigns at the federal and state level and we welcome your participation in these efforts. We are excited to announce the introduction of the Moving Outdoors in Nature Act! When this bill passes, it will provide grants to states to develop action plans to connect children with nature.

For more information about Be Out There®, including additional ways to get involved, activities and resources, please visit [www.beoutthere.org](http://www.beoutthere.org). Some say it takes a village to raise a child. NWF says it takes a backyard, a playground, a park. We appreciate your support for the Be Out There® movement. Together we can provide our children a life-long connection to nature!

HERE'S A FUN WAY TO  
GET the KIDS OUTSIDE!

## Come Celebrate the River!

### The Santa Fe River Festival and Fishing Derby



**Saturday June 5, 2010**

**West De Vargas Park, Santa Fe**

(along the river between Guadalupe and Sandoval Streets)

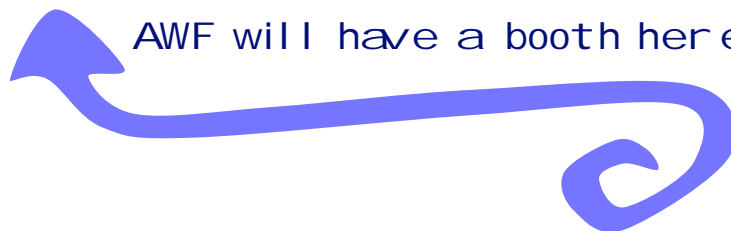
<b>Children's Fishing Derby with Prizes</b>	<b>River Festival &amp; Celebration</b>
<b>6:00 am – 12:00 pm</b>	<b>10:00 am – 2:00 pm</b>

## Water Fun for the Whole Family !

**Hands-On River and Water Demonstrations**  
**Crafts \* Fly Casting \* Native Plants \* Water Bugs**  
**Live Music \* Valet Bike Parking**  
**Bring a picnic lunch or buy food from local vendors**

For more information, call 820-1696 or [www.santafewatershed.org](http://www.santafewatershed.org)

AWF will have a booth here!



## News from New Mexico Wildlife Federation

### VALLES CALDERA HEADING TOWARD NEW MANAGEMENT

**Hunters and anglers got some great news** just as the Memorial Day weekend began — New Mexico's U.S. Senate delegation introduced a bill that would transfer management of Valles Caldera to the National Park Service, as a National Preserve. Hunting and fishing would be guaranteed to continue, according to the bill introduced last Thursday, but with far greater public access than the current management allows. Efforts opposed by hunters to charge \$10,000 or more for the right to hunt elk on our own public land would also end under the new management system, and access to hunting and fishing would be within financial reach for all sportsmen of the state

### ANTELOPE TASK FORCE MEETS

A handful of sportsmen's groups were invited to attend the first Albuquerque meeting of a task force to consider changes to the state's Antelope Private Lands Use System (A-PLUS) program, as well as 19 ranchers enrolled in A-PLUS and representatives of numerous agricultural organizations. The State Game Commission has asked Game and Fish to come up



Photo by Garrett VeneKlasen

with new rules that, among other things, will bring more equity and transparency to the allocation of antelope tags and increase hunting opportunity for residents. The department created the task force in hopes of developing a proposal by late July. The State Game Commission has put the issue on its Sept. 28 agenda.

**But adopting new rules for A-PLUS may be difficult.** Ranchers and outfitters generally like the status quo, for obvious reasons. About two-thirds of all available antelope tags go to landowners enrolled in A-PLUS, who can sell them to hunters or outfitters for thousands of dollars apiece. Because the tags are priced out of the reach of many New Mexicans, or because outfitters market them

out of state, the majority of transferable licenses are sold to nonresidents. Only about one third of the tags are allocated into the big game draw, of which nonresidents and outfitters get 22 percent. That leaves New Mexico resident hunters with less than 25 percent of all available tags in recent years.

### **New Mexico resident hunters strongly support allocating a higher percentage of tags through the big game draw.**

Over time, according to research by NMWF, the percentage of transferable tags allocated to landowners has increased substantially, from approximately 20 percent in the early 1970s to nearly 70 percent today. Since the department has no rules governing how these transferable tags are allocated, it is not known what has led to this shift, but the creation of the transferable authorizations has created a market where some landowners can sell access to the majority of hunting licenses rather than selling access to land.

The A-PLUS task force will continue to meet in June and July, and NMWF is encouraging the department to allow additional sportsmen's groups to participate. The department will present several options to the public for comment this summer. We will keep you posted on this important issue, **but sportsmen will have to speak up if they want the Game Commission to adopt new antelope rules that actually benefit the resident hunters of New Mexico.**

### LAND COMMISSIONER FORUMS A SUCCESS

**Sportsmen's groups including NMWF have helped shine the spotlight** this year on one of the most important statewide offices for sportsmen – Public Lands Commissioner. There were forums with all five candidates (Democrats Sandy Jones, Harry Montoya and Ray Powell and Republicans Bob Cornelius and Matt Rush) in Maxwell, Albuquerque and Las Cruces. The candidates said they appreciated the opportunity to address hunters and anglers, because they know we care about the land and the office. At each event, the five were grilled on their attitudes on topics ranging from access to state Trust Lands to land exchanges to renewable energy development. You can watch YouTube videos of the Albuquerque forum and listen to the candidates by [clicking here](#).

—By Joel Gay, New Mexico Wildlife Federation

## MORE RIVER OTTERS RELEASED *In Upper Rio Grande*

Taos, NM — Populations of a New Mexico native – river otters – once found in streams and rivers throughout the state are now growing with a second transplant and release of six river otters in the Rio Pueblo de Taos on the Taos Pueblo.

The wild otters were trapped from the State of Washington by the U.S. Department of Agriculture -Wildlife Services and transported to New Mexico in an aircraft provided by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) earlier in the week. The work is part of a larger otter reintroduction program organized by Taos Pueblo, the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, the BLM, the New Mexico Friends of River Otters, USDA Wildlife Services, and a coalition of citizens, agencies, and conservation organizations dedicated to restoring otters to the state.

The first river otters were reintroduced in New Mexico in 2008, when 10 otters dove into the Rio Pueblo de Taos, marking the first time otters have lived in New Mexico for a half century. Many of the otters have moved to stretches of the Rio Grande. The Rio Grande and its tributaries are special places. Like a puzzle, the web of life in this area includes many species that are now missing. What the BLM and its partners are doing is focused on putting the pieces of the puzzle back together, as much as possible, by reintroducing river otters to the Upper Rio Grande.

River otters are highly social, playful, semi-aquatic members of the weasel family. They are believed to have once inhabited the Gila, upper and middle Rio Grande, Mora, San Juan and Canadian river systems, and were occasionally mentioned in the journals of early settlers.

Decades of trapping and habitat loss are believed to be two factors in their disappearance. Current regulations require trappers to release any otters caught in traps.

In 2006, the State Game Commission directed the Department of Game and Fish to initiate efforts to restore otters to state waters. A Department study identified several rivers as suitable restoration sites, including the Upper Rio Grande, White Rock Canyon and Middle Rio Chama in the Rio Grande Basin; and the Gila and Lower San Francisco rivers in the Gila River Basin. There will be additional releases this year in the Upper Rio Grande and next year in the Gila.

The New Mexico Friends of River Otters, a coalition of government agencies and conservation organizations, plans to release additional otters. Members include Amigos Bravos, Earth Friends Wild Species Fund, Center for Biological Diversity, Defenders of Wildlife, Four Corners Institute, New Mexico Wildlife Federation, Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club, Upper Gila Watershed Alliance and the U.S. Bureau of Land Management.

### AWF OFFICERS AND BOARD

**PRESIDENT** — Glenda Muirhead  
**VICE PRESIDENT** — Gene Tatum  
**SECRETARY** — Patricia Hester  
**TREASURER** — Dennis Muirhead

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Stephen Bohannon	Linda Patterson
Larry Dwyer	Michael Scialdone
Brian Gleadle	Luke Shelby
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**ALBUQUERQUE WILDLIFE FEDERATION**  
 PO Box 1234 ■ Albuquerque, NM 87103  
<http://abq.nmwildlife.org>

## ALBUQUERQUE WILDLIFE FEDERATION - PO BOX 1234 - ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87103

An affiliate of New Mexico Wildlife Federation

I'd like to belong to AWF ONLY or  I'd like to belong to AWF + NMWF: *Designate NMWF member(s)* \_\_\_\_\_  
 name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 address \_\_\_\_\_  
 city, state, zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 phone \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_

Gift membership from: \_\_\_\_\_

### MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

- Student [under 18] ..... \$10 ← AWF Membership Only
- Individual ..... \$25
- Family ..... \$35
- Sustaining ..... \$50-\$99
- Patron ..... \$100
- Lifetime ..... \$500 ← One-time Payment

**Dues** \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
**Contribution** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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

Membership Application