

THE PINE CONE

Official Newsletter of the Albuquerque Wildlife Federation



Albuquerque
WILDLIFE
Federation

conservationists since 1914

March 2021

Conservation Bills Face a Challenging Legislative Session

This year's legislative session started off with high hopes and the introduction of a flurry of bills aimed at protecting New Mexico's wildlife, water, and wild lands. Unfortunately, many of the highest profile conservation initiatives have run into a wall of opposition from polluting industries, and it will take a major effort for them to prevail in the three weeks left before the session adjourns on March 20.

The good news is that it is easier than ever to get involved! Due to the pandemic, the 2021 legislative session is being held almost entirely remotely, with public participation via zoom. This means that anyone can log on and testify for or against a bill without having to trek to the Roundhouse. (Quick primer: for a bill to become a law in New Mexico, it must be introduced in one chamber – either the House or Senate, pass committees in that chamber, pass a full vote of that chamber, then go to the other chamber and repeat the process, then be signed by the governor.)

If you are interested in commenting on a bill, go to nmlegis.gov and look up the bill to see when and where it is scheduled to be heard. The House and Senate committee schedules (which can be found under "What's Happening") include instructions on how to join the zoom meetings for each committee.

If a bill isn't yet scheduled to be heard in its next committee, one good approach is to look up the members of that committee on the nmlegis.gov website and



email them or call their offices and urge the committee to hear the bill. Committee chairs have total discretion over whether to schedule a bill to be heard and voted on, or let it die without ever having a hearing. Several of the bills listed below are in danger of dying simply because a committee has not scheduled them for a hearing.

First up, the "Green Amendment," **Senate Joint Resolution 3**, which AWF is officially supporting. This is a constitutional amendment that would go to New Mexico's voters for approval if it passes the legislature. and if approved, would provide New Mexicans with a constitutional right to clean air, land, and water. SJR 3 passed its first committee, Senate Rules, but has not been scheduled in its second committee, Senate Judiciary.

A similar fate has befallen **Senate Bill 32**, which would ban tapping on public lands. It passed the Senate Conservation Committee at the beginning of February, but has also not been scheduled for a hearing in Senate Judiciary.

Senate Bill 312 would rename the Department of Game and Fish the "Department of Wildlife Conservation" and the State Game Commission the "State Wildlife Conservation Commission." It would broaden the focus of these bodies from protection of game species to protection of all of New Mexico's wildlife. Unfortu-

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MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THIS YEAR'S VOLUNTEER ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION SERVICE PROJECTS!

2021 SERVICE PROJECTS CALENDAR	
April 16-18.....	Rio Mora Wildlife Refuge
April 23-25.....	Rio Mora Wildlife Refuge
May 14-16.....	Ft. Union Ranch
June 4-6.....	Valles Caldera
June 25-27.....	Polvadera Creek, Jemez Mountains
July 16-18.....	Valle Vidal
August 13-15.....	Midnight Meadows near Questa, NM
September 10-12.....	Limestone Canyon, San Mateo Mtns
September 24-26.....	Rio en Medio, near Santa Fe, NM
October 23.....	Day project at Cedro Creek

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nately, it failed to pass the Senate Conservation Committee so it is likely dead for this year.

Other conservation bills that are still under consideration by the legislature include:

House Bill 9, the Climate Solutions Act, would create a framework for New Mexico to get to net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. It passed its first House committee and is awaiting a vote in its second committee.

House Bill 57, which would make it easier for private landowners to use prescribed burns, passed the House unanimously and is waiting to be heard in the Senate Conservation Committee.

House Bill 265 would allow the state to acquire ecologically significant lands and would also fund conservation projects. It passed its first House committee and is scheduled to be heard in its second committee today.

Senate Bill 8 would allow New Mexico to enact air quality regulations that are more stringent than federal

law. It is scheduled to be heard in its final Senate committee today.

Senate Bill 296 would increase the penalties for violating New Mexico’s environmental laws. It passed Senate Conservation and is awaiting a hearing in Senate Judiciary.

Senate Memorial 10 urges New Mexico’s congressional delegation to restore ecosystems and wildlife corridors harmed by the border wall. It needs to pass both the Senate Rules and Conservation committees and then the full Senate, but because it is a memorial rather than a bill, it does not need to be heard in the House.

It’s disheartening that after last year’s elections brought a wave of new progressive legislators to the Roundhouse, bills impacting New Mexico’s wildlife and the ecosystems that are our life support systems still struggle to be heard. The only way that will change is if we raise our voices and demand that these bills be treated as the urgent priorities that they are.

Kristina G. Fisher
AWF Secretary

UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST



Lessons in Wildlife Tracking

TUESDAY, MARCH 2, 7:00 p.m., online

PAJARITO ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER

Join PEEC's Field Science Specialist Mariana Rivera Freeman for a presentation on identifying the tracks and signs of northern New Mexico wildlife, putting clues together to tell a story, and what tracking wildlife can teach us about animal behavior, ecosystems, and life. For more info: <https://peechnature.org/events/details/?id=36698>

Bonus: catch up on past PEEC presentations at: <https://peechnature.org/learn/videos/>

Outdoor Recreation Webinars from the NM Economic Development Department

FRIDAY, MARCH 5, 10:00 a.m., online

Using ORR's Rural Development Toolbox for Outdoor Recreation

Register: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/6304774909052799248>

THURSDAY, MARCH 11, 3:00 p.m.

Emerging Business Trends - The Outdoor Recreation Economy in NM

Register:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/emerging-business-trends-the-outdoor-recreation-economy-in-new-mexico-tickets-135737613857?aff=erellivmlt>

SATUDAY, MARCH 13, 10:00 a.m.

What Is Outdoor Recreation 1.0

Register: <https://www.wesst.org/training-event/what-is-outdoor-recreation-1-0/>

TUESDAY, MARCH 30, 1:00 p.m.

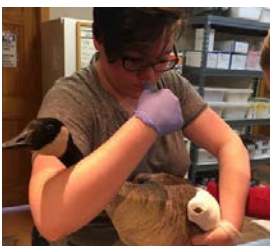
Dispatches from New Mexico: Wilderness First Aid: 101

Register: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/243563129504545551>

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 31, 2:00 p.m.

Resources for Your New Mexico Outdoor Recreation Business & Community

Register: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/4194439360975272205>



A Day in the Life of a Wildlife Rehabilitator

TUESDAY, MARCH 30, 7:00 p.m., online

PAJARITO ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER

Join staff from the New Mexico Wildlife Center (NMWC) to learn what goes into rehabilitating wildlife at NMWC. After learning how wildlife rehabilitators spend their days, we will review what to do if you find a wild animal that may be injured or orphaned. Participants will also meet one of the non-releasable Animal Ambassadors that came through the Wildlife Hospital. For more info: <https://peechnature.org/events/details/?id=36663>

New Mexico Beaver Summit

If you missed out on the beaver summit last October-November, you can see videos of all the sessions at:

<https://nmbeaversummit.org/sessions/>

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: \$ _____