

THE PINE CONE

Official Newsletter of the Albuquerque Wildlife Federation



Albuquerque
WILDLIFE
Federation

conservationists since 1914

March 2022

Time to Weigh in on New Mexico's Wildlife Corridors Action Plan

This year's legislative session was a bust for conservation legislation – none of the bills we highlighted in the last two newsletters made it through the process, and very few other environmental bills did either.

However, a bill that passed three years ago is coming to fruition: the New Mexico Wildlife Corridors Act.

This law was passed in 2019 to begin the process of protecting key wildlife corridors in New Mexico, many of which are severed and fragmented by state highways. Keeping these migratory paths open is more important than ever as climate change alters ecosystems and forces animals to move to find suitable habitat.

The Wildlife Corridors Act directed the New Mexico Departments of Transportation and Game and Fish to collaborate on a plan to identify priority projects to improve wildlife road crossings, with a goal of reducing the risk of vehicle collisions and protecting both people and migrating animals..

The draft Wildlife Corridors Action Plan was released earlier this year. It focuses on preventing vehicle collisions with six species – mule deer, elk, pronghorn, bighorn sheep, black bear, and cougar – although other vulnerable species, including Mexican gray wolves and jaguars, were also considered. Project priority locations range from pronghorn crossings south of Raton to bighorn territory near Questa, the Peloncillo Mountains in the southwestern bootheel to Glorieta pass outside



Santa Fe. The Sandia-Jemez corridor along Highway 550 and I-25 is also addressed. [Read the full plan and list of priority projects here.](#)

Once the plan is approved, the big challenge is funding it. The cost of completing each of these projects – which involve fences, underpasses, and other wildlife crossing infrastructure – ranges from \$17 million to \$50 million. The federal government recently passed the Wildlife Crossings Pilot Program, which will make \$350 million available to fund construction of wildlife crossings, but that is only a small start, and the state will have to put up some funding, too.

The next step is for the public to weigh in on the draft plan. If many New Mexicans speak up in favor of implementing this plan, that will help build momentum for the funding that will be needed to implement it.

New Mexico Wild has a form on their website ([click here](#)) that you can use to submit your comments, but note that they strongly encourage commenters to add your own personalized feedback rather than just submitting the form email they have drafted.

Comments are due by March 12. Please take a few minutes to encourage state officials to prioritize connecting wildlife corridors so that species can safely migrate.

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Kristina G. Fisher
AWF Secretary

APRIL 1-3, 2022 SERVICE PROJECT: Ft. Union Ranch

LOCATION: Ft. Union Ranch near Watrous, NM

THE PROJECT: Join us for AWF’s first camping restoration project of the season, where we will continue our work restoring Higgins Canyon on Fort Union Ranch in partnership with the Hermit’s Peak Watershed Alliance. Our restoration activities are part of a larger, landscape-scale conservation effort that includes the nearby Rio Mora National Wildlife Refuge. During this project, volunteers will hand-build rock restoration structures designed by Bill Zeedyk to help heal a gully created by the old wagon highway to Mora.

SCHEDULE: Friday, April 1 – Sunday, April 3

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

[Click here to review AWF’s current COVID-19 safety protocols.](#)



2022 SERVICE PROJECTS CALENDAR

- March 5 & 6.....Valle de Oro Wildlife Refuge
- April 1-3.....Ft. Union Ranch
- April 22-24.....Red Canyon Ranch
- May 20-22.....Ft. Union/Rio Mora Wildlife Refuge
- June 10-12.....Gutierrez Family Ranch
- July 22-24.....Valle Vidal
- August 12-14.....Midnight Meadows near Questa, NM
- September 2-5.....Limestone Canyon, San Mateo Mtns
- October 7-9.....Cebolla Canyon
- October 28-30.....Rolling Hills Ranch
- November 5.....Day project at Cedro Creek

AWF BOARD 2022

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ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST

Job Posting: Executive Director of PEEC

APPLICATIONS REQUESTED BY MARCH 14, 2022

After many years, AWF friend and volunteer Katie Bruell is stepping down from her role as Executive Director of the Pajarito Environmental Education Center, so PEEC is seeking a dynamic, visionary leader to be their next Executive Director. The full job description, including benefits and salary range, is available at:

<https://peecnature.org/peeced/>



Leopold Week: Explore Your Sense of Place

MARCH 4-MARCH 11, events held online

Join the Aldo Leopold Foundation for a week of virtual programming! Each year around the first week and weekend of March, organizations and individuals across the country come together to celebrate Aldo Leopold and a land ethic through community readings, film screenings, outdoor activities, and more. Leopold Week has been going strong for over 20 years now, bringing people from every corner of the United States and across the globe together in celebration of Aldo Leopold's lasting legacy. For more info and to register to participate in virtual events: <https://www.aldoleopold.org/news-events/leopold-week/>

Banff Mountain Film Festival

THURSDAY, MARCH 10 & FRIDAY, MARCH 11, 7:00 p.m.

SANTA FE CONSERVATION TRUST

The Santa Fe Conservation Trust once again brings the spirit of outdoor adventure and mountain culture to Santa Fe. The 2021/2022 Banff Centre Mountain Film Festival World Tour is an exhilarating and provocative exploration of the mountain world, traveling to exotic landscapes and remote cultures, and bringing you up-close and personal with adrenaline-packed action sports. Different films are shown each night, so don't miss it! For tickets: <https://lensic.org/events/banff-centre-mountain-film-festival/>



East Pecos Acequia Cleaning Project

SATURDAY, MARCH 19, 8:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

NEW MEXICO WILD

Come learn about and assist in one of the oldest and most important contributions to our traditional communities. Volunteers will be assisting with a 400-year-old tradition of cleaning an acequia while learning why acequias are an important part of New Mexico's food system and contributors to environmental health. To sign up to participate: <https://www.nmwild.org/event/east-pecos-acequia-cleaning-project-2/>

Join New Mexico Healthy Soil Advocates!

New Mexico Healthy Soil Advocates is seeking volunteers! What does this mean? This means that you will be part of a volunteer group that gets their hands dirty, employs their skills, and continues to learn how to be an effective advocate. You will also be part of a family that cares deeply for the health of their community's soil in order to increase social, environmental, and economic prosperity. For more info:

<https://www.nmhealthysoil.org/2022/02/23/launching-new-mexico-healthy-soil-advocates/>

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: \$ _____