

Rio Grande Sierran



NEWS OF THE RIO GRANDE CHAPTER OF THE SIERRA CLUB

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2008

Sixth-Graders Look at Our Future in the Year 2030

During the past school year, the Sierra Club gave presentations on the future of energy in the elementary schools in Santa Fe. A compact fluorescent light (CFL) exchange, sponsored by PNM, was conducted at each school, with families receiving four of the new CFL bulbs for free. The program sparked many insightful questions, with some classes showing great interest in looking deeper into questions of energy and broader issues important to the next generation. Mrs. Joyce Sanchez's sixth-grade class at Salazar Elementary has

by Teresa Seamster

been studying "The Future," and she asked me to come and be interviewed by some of her students. This was followed up by my interviewing her class on the same set of questions created by her class.

We started by sitting together and looking at the questions written on the board. I asked the students to pick their three favorite questions to answer, starting with their views on climate change by the year 2030.

Their thought-provoking answers prompted this article and this thought: The "future" – 22 years from today – holds global consequences for this generation of 12-year-olds. They will be 34-year-olds raising families and pursuing careers. How will decisions made now change that future?

Here are some selected responses to "How will climate change affect the world's future?"

Daniel Wallace: "I think the world is going to be different because of global warming. Global warming is a big concern because it affects everything in the world: people, animals, habitats. Those are things that will be affected."

Jose Quintana: "I think if the climate does change it will either be like a desert, all dirt, or like the winter, all snow and ice."

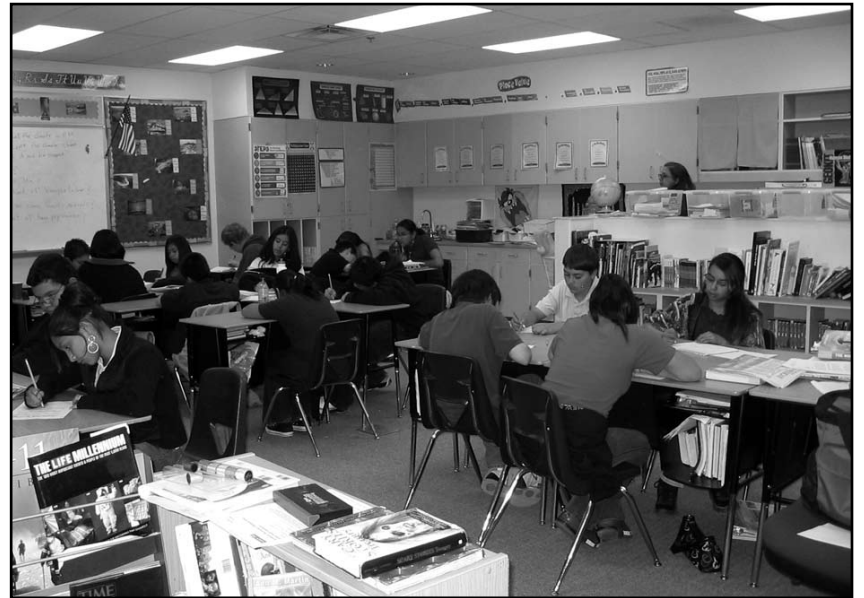
Shai Rae Swicegood: "Since we have so much pollution there is no doubt that we will have changes in our temperatures. It could be possible for us to stop climate change but we would have to stop pollution. We are already trying to find solutions to our problems with gasoline. We need to make cars that use very very little gas, or none."

Devin Barela: "I think it will be hotter because of global warming, and there will be less land."

Antonio Lopez: "The pollution is going to go into the atmosphere and blacken the clouds. When it snows, instead of reflecting sunlight, the snow will absorb it."

Louie Tapia: "Climate will be changed because the poles are getting dark and the poles are going to melt because the sun is going to melt them. In the future, I think we will run on water power, solar power, and anti-gravity power."

Luke Martinez: "Because of all the melting ice,



Salazar Elementary teacher Joyce Sanchez's sixth-graders write down their vision of the future in 2030. (Photo by Teresa Seamster)

the dark ocean absorbs more sunlight. If ships keep going through the ice and exposing the ocean, it'll get worse. If we don't do something everything is going to die. I do not think we can live on other planets because there is no water, no oxygen, no gravity. We'd have to make a big mothership that has all of that in order to live there."

Nadia Sandoval: "I think the world will be more populated and more polluted. Climate change can be stopped if we stop polluting the earth."

Mrs. Sanchez's students study the newspapers, journals, and magazines every week for articles that address their concerns for the future. Textbooks cannot keep pace with the flood of new discoveries and research. Asking and answering questions is the process required to find solutions. By 2030, these students may have some vital solutions in hand.

The Sierra Club will be visiting schools again in the 2008-2009 academic year. For more info, contact Shrayas Jatkar (505/243-7767, shrayas.jatkar@sierraclub.org) or Teresa Seamster of Cool Cities – Santa Fe School Program (tcseam@qwest.net).

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Explore, enjoy, and protect the planet



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SIERRAN (SEE ALSO PAGE 15)

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Rio Grande Chapter Official Ballot

Voting in the Chapter election is for Sierra Club members only. Please use this ballot with the Club member label information intact on the reverse side. Two-member households can each vote, using both boxes. Vote only for candidates in your Group. *Note: The El Paso Group's ballots and candidate statements will be mailed separately.* Mail your completed ballot to: John Buchser, Sierra Club, 369 Montezuma #575, Santa Fe, NM 87501. **Ballots must be postmarked by December 10, 2008.**

Rio Grande Chapter Executive Committee

There are three positions open. Do not vote for more than three.

- Mark Jones
 Susan Martin
 David Van Winkle

Write-in: _____

Northern Group Executive Committee

There are four positions up for election.

- Dexter Coolidge
 Tom Gorman
 David Van Winkle
 Jean Watts

Write-in: _____

Pajarito Group Executive Committee

There are three positions up for election.

- Michael Di Rosa
 James Thrasher

Write-in: _____

Central Group Executive Committee

There are four positions up for election.

- Michael Mudd
 Eva Thaddeus
 David Ther

Write-in: _____

Southern Group Executive Committee

There are four positions up for election.

- Cheryll Blevins
 Glenn Landers
 Mary Katherine Ray
 Margot Wilson

Write-in: _____

Save Trees and Money: Opt to Read the *Sierran* Online

If you wish to opt out of the mailed copy of this newsletter and read it online, please contact our volunteer Ishwari Sollohub in Santa Fe (505/474-3945, ishwarisollohub@yahoo.com) and tell her you want to be on the opt-out list. Be sure and put the title SIERRA CLUB on the subject line of your email, or your message will not get through. Once your name is so marked on our membership database, you will receive an email from Ishwari each time our bimonthly paper has been put up on our website, so you can read it on your computer. We can save a few trees as well money this way, as it will cost the Rio Grande Chapter less for printing and mailing.

Webmaster Wanted

The Rio Grande Chapter needs an experienced web volunteer to oversee our Chapter website and ensure that it is inviting, informative, and up to date. Contact Steve Markowitz (stephenmarkowitz@gmail.com).

Quarterly Meetings

The Chapter's Conservation and Executive Committee meetings will be held Saturday-Sunday, January 10-11, 2009, at Sevilleta Wildlife Refuge near Socorro. Contact Conservation Chair Ken Hughes or Chapter Chair Susan Martin (see masthead, page 2) for more information. Carpooling is encouraged.

Chapter Needs Treasurer

Oversees the financial records of the Chapter, reports its financial status to the Executive Committee quarterly, prepares annual budget, adheres to all Sierra Club policies, and manages bank accounts. Starts January 1, 2009. Contact Susan Martin (smartin31@comcast.net) if you are interested in this critical volunteer job. Financial records are in QuickBooks format. Prior experience with a nonprofit useful.

Chapter and Group Election Process

In this issue of the *Sierran*, you will find the ballot (page 2) and candidate statements (pages 4-5) for the Rio Grande Chapter and Group Executive Committee elections. Here is a summary of the Chapter and Group election rules and process. To find out your Group, visit http://riogrande.sierraclub.org/club_struct/club_struct.htm. All terms begin in first meeting of named entity in January of 2009.

Rio Grande Chapter

- Term: 3 years
- Open seats: 3
- Candidates: Susan Martin (incumbent), David Van Winkle, Mark Jones
- Overall composition: 14 positions: 9 elected, 5 appointed, one from each group

Northern Group

- Term: 2 years
- Open seats: 4
- Candidates: Jean Watts (incumbent), Dexter Coolidge (incumbent), Tom Gorman, David Van Winkle
- Overall composition: 9 positions, all elected. Open seats alternate, 5 one year, 4 the next.

Central Group

- Term: 2 years
- Open seats: 4
- Candidates: David Ther (incumbent), Eva Thaddeus (incumbent), Michal Mudd (incumbent)
- Overall composition: 7 positions, all elected. Open seats alternate, 4 one year, 3 the next.

Southern Group

- Term: 2 years
- Open seats: 4
- Candidates: Glenn Landers (incumbent), Margot Wilson (incumbent), Cheryl Blevins (incumbent), Mary Katherine Ray (incumbent)
- Overall composition: 7 positions, all elected. Open seats alternate, 4 one year, 3 the next.

Pajarito Group

- Term: 2 years
- Open seats: 3
- Candidates: James Thrasher (incumbent), Michael Di Rosa (incumbent)
- Overall composition: 7 positions, all elected. Open seats alternate, 4 one year, 3 the next.

El Paso Group

Ballot for election is being distributed in the El Paso Group's *Lorax*.

Election Committee

- John Buchser, chair
- Eleanor Eisenmenger
- David Gemeinhart

Ballot Deadline

Ballots must be postmarked by December 10.

Ballot Address

John Buchser, Election Chair
Sierra Club
369 Montezuma #575
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Ballot Counting

Ballots will be counted at the Northern Group office, 1807 2nd St. #45, Santa Fe, on Wednesday, December 17, at 7:00 p.m. Any Sierra Club member or candidate is welcome to be present for ballot counting. In the case of severe inclement weather, please contact any Election Committee member to verify time and place of ballot counting. In the case of duplicate submissions, the ballot with a mailing label will take precedence.

Members Not Receiving a Paper Copy of *Sierran* and Lost *Sierran* Ballots

Please print page 2 of the *Sierran* (see PDF on <http://riogrande.sierraclub.org>) and note your membership number, name, and address on the reverse side of the page to insure ability to validate ballot.

For lost *Sierran* ballot, the same process applies.

—John Buchser

Thanks and Farewell, Marty Peale!



(Photo by Roshi Joan Halifax)

With heartfelt gratitude, we bid farewell to Marty Peale. For almost three years, Marty was the managing editor of the *Rio Grande Sierran*. Prior to that, she edited and designed the newsletter for four years.

In addition to her fantastic work on the *Sierran*, Marty has been involved with the now-defunct Valles Caldera Coalition and the Santa Fe Watershed Association. She is now caretaking at the 50-acre Prajna Mountain Forest Refuge, founded by Roshi Joan Halifax, at the foot of the north Truchas Peaks, about 50 miles north of Santa Fe.

We all will miss Marty's intellect, insight, creativity, dedication, careful eye, and high journalistic standards. On a personal note, as the current editor, I wish to acknowledge and thank Marty for her unwavering support and wise counsel – and for her sharp proofreading skills! It has been a true pleasure learning from and working with her. Along with the entire Rio Grande Chapter, I wish her much happiness in her new adventure.

—Ellen Cavalli

Rio Grande Chapter Executive Committee Candidates

Mark Jones

I believe we have a moral obligation to pass on to our children and grandchildren a healthy global environment. This can only happen if we exercise much better stewardship of the earth than we have in recent decades. The Sierra Club's work on global warming, as well as on many other environmental issues, is critical in helping us fulfill this obligation. But the Club can only be effective if we are willing to volunteer our time, energy, and skills. I have been heavily engaged in this effort in recent years, and hope to continue being active at the Chapter level.

I am now on the executive committee of the Pajarito Group and am the group representative to the Chapter. I have been involved in the lobbying efforts for issues before the New Mexico legislature, am a member of the personnel committee, and am on the special projects committee, which is responsible for overseeing the distribution of the several hundred thousand dollar bequest the Chapter recently received. I have also recently been appointed to the Los Alamos County Environmental Sustainability Board. I request your vote to enable me to continue my work on Chapter activities.

Susan Martin

As this candidate statement is written, we don't yet know who will be the next president.

No matter the outcome of the election, the Rio Grande Chapter faces environmental threats and opportunities. Developers still plan to build the coal burning Desert Rock power plant on Navajo lands. The amount of pollutants spewed by this plant will cancel out any greenhouse gas reductions resulting from state government efforts. Our abundance of wind and solar resources makes our region an ideal producer of renewable energy. As Congressman Tom Udall says, "New Mexico is the Saudi Arabia of solar energy."

Our Chapter gained a reputation in the 2008 elections as an organization of dedicated members who volunteered their time to elect environmentally responsive officeholders. These representatives would place a priority on fighting pollution locally and globally and bringing "green" jobs to our region.

A Sierra Club member since 1974, I've served as chair of the Rio Grande Chapter since 2005 and am co chair of the Northern Group political Committee and delegate to the council of Club Leaders. It would be an honor to continue to serve on the Executive Committee of the Chapter.

David Van Winkle

I am an active member of the Northern New Mexico Sierra Club and I am seeking election to the Executive Committee so I may contribute my professional organizational skills, leadership experiences and passion for conservation to our leadership team. I currently serve as chair of the Santa Fe Cool Cities program, which is working with the city to 1) implement a world-class residential green building code, 2) educate citizens about climate change including distribution of 20,000 CFLs, 3) motivate and educate small businesses to operate more sustainably, 4) define clean energy approaches for the Buckman water project. I am also an outings leader for NNM and National. I have previously served as ex-com member, green building chair, global warming/energy chair, and outings chair for the Dallas group. My goal for 2009 beyond my Cool Cities role is to expand the influence of the Sierra Club at the local and state level so that we can protect the natural spaces of New Mexico. This would include 1) reducing our dependence upon coal for electricity, 2) increasing wind and solar power, 3) expanding protection for our public lands. I would appreciate your vote.

Pajarito Group Executive Committee Candidates

Michael Di Rosa

I joined the Sierra Club shortly after moving to New Mexico and Los Alamos nearly seven years ago, and hiked with the local Outings program for an introduction to the hidden gems and glorious vistas of Northern New Mexico. Today, I repay the favor as a Sierra Club Outings leader by sharing hikes to places new and familiar, with faces new and familiar, as I've done for the past five years. Leading and sharing hikes is a quiet form of activism, an implied advocacy for wild, wide-open spaces and sensible environmental policy. An ExCom membership will lead me to direct these sentiments in not so silent ways into local issues that, in whatever small way, help preserve the larger landscape we all enjoy.

James Thrasher

Hello fellow members! I have been a member of the Pajarito Group of the Sierra Club since 2004 and I am deeply committed to the Club's motto "Explore, enjoy, and protect the planet." As an Eagle Scout and National Outdoors Leadership School graduate, I have a lifetime of formal education in the outdoors and a strong desire to share the outdoors with others. I have also studied organizational leadership and entrepreneurship as part of my graduate studies at Stanford. For the past 7 years, I have enjoyed climbing, biking, rafting, hiking and windsurfing scenic New Mexico. Now, it is time for me (and all of us) to do more to protect the places we love. Personally, I want to further develop our community's outreach to underserved youth. A position on the Executive Committee will give me greater access to the club's resources, so together, we can achieve our club's goals of conservation through education. I strongly believe that once people learn to value something, protecting it comes instinctively. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me at james_thrasher@hotmail.com.

Central Group Executive Committee Candidates

Michal Mudd

As group chair until stepping back recently, I'm concerned about member participation. Our group has had an amazing impact through the hard work of others on the ExCom, particularly through the efforts of the Cool Cities Team, which I cannot applaud too much.

I'd like to continue as part of the Central group ExCom and further explore how we might seek new venues and means of involving, educating, exciting and lighting a fire under members and potential members alike, combining action with fun. One idea might be to explore issue outings as active general meeting program substitutes. Whether through outings, socials, educational means or participatory democracy, I'd like to see us remain in the forefront of engaging people's inclinations to protect our environment/ecology.

My interests also include recycling/waste and a recharged intent to catalyze local interest in ocean/shore protection (everything being connected) and a push for the fulfillment of alternative energy promises, especially in the wake of "drill, baby, drill." Beyond your vote, I'd like to solicit ideas from members, including recent transfers, on how to pique your interest & persuade you to come out and engage with us. Thank you.

Eva Thaddeus

Eva Thaddeus served for 3 years as the Global Warming Issue Chair for the Chapter and has been on the Central Group ex-com for two years. She started and has coordinated the Albuquerque Cool Cities campaign and presently serves on a city task force that examines how the city can reduce greenhouse gas emissions. She would like to continue supporting the Central Group ex-com in her role as secretary and in her local work on energy issues.

David Ther

I have been a Sierra Club member since 1979. My experience with the Sierra Club includes having served two previous terms on the Central Group ExCom. I am presently the Outings Chair for this Group because I believe our core values as conservationists are grounded in our experiences in the natural world. Outings are also one of our best opportunities to meet and network with our members. My conservation interests include wilderness preservation and endangered species protection. I realize that population and climate change must be addressed or ultimately the earth as we know it will not survive.

CHAPTER TREASURER NEEDED

Oversees the financial records of the Chapter, reports its financial status to the Executive Committee quarterly, prepares annual budget, adheres to all Sierra Club policies, and manages bank accounts. Starts January 1, 2009. Contact Susan Martin (smartin31@comcast.net) if you are interested in this critical volunteer job. Financial records are in QuickBooks format. Prior experience with a nonprofit useful.

Northern Group Executive Committee Candidates

Dexter Coolidge

As a member of the Northern Group Executive Committee for the last four years, I have focused primarily on increasing the number of our members who are active volunteers, in order to increase our effectiveness as an organization. I believe I have been successful in this, in that we have at least three times as many active volunteers as we had four years ago. I have also chaired the Conservation committee and the Chapter Membership committee, and been active on the Group Political committee.

While the Northern Group has been remarkably effective for many years, I believe we have just scratched the surface. I ask your support in electing me, so that we can continue to strengthen the Club in Northern New Mexico.

David Van Winkle

I am an active member of the Northern New Mexico Sierra Club and I am seeking election to the Executive Committee so I may contribute my professional organizational skills, leadership experiences and passion for conservation to our leadership team. I currently serve as chair of the Santa Fe Cool Cities program, which is working with the City to 1) implement a world-class residential green building code, 2) educate citizens about climate change including distribution of 20,000 CFLs, 3) motivate and educate small businesses to operate more sustainably, 4) define clean energy approaches for the Buckman water project. I am also an outings leader for NNM and National. I have previously served as ex-com member, green building chair, global warming/energy chair, and outings chair for the Dallas group. My goal for 2009 beyond my Cool Cities role is to expand the influence of the Sierra Club at the local and state level so that we can protect the natural spaces of New Mexico. This would include 1) reducing our dependence upon coal for electricity, 2) increasing wind and solar power, 3) expanding protection for our public lands. I would appreciate your vote.

ELECTION REMINDER!
The ballot for the Chapter and Group Executive Committee elections is on page 2. The El Paso Group will mail candidate statements and ballot to members separately. For information on the election process, see page 3. Support the Sierra Club and vote! Ballots are due December 10.

Tom Gorman

I have been a resident of New Mexico for the past sixteen years, after having spent the previous eight years in Colorado. I have enjoyed being out in nature and marveling at the great natural beauty of our natural environment. This has led to a deep belief that we need to do everything possible to protect and preserve this for future generations. For the past three years, I have been actively involved with the Northern Group of the Sierra Club on a wide variety of issues and projects. I've experienced the struggles environmental groups have faced during these past eight years of destructive policies aimed at exploiting our public lands. I've worked hard in the past year to advance the cause of getting environmentally conscious candidates in position to win election this fall and feel real optimism that we will make real progress after the elections. I look forward to serving on the ExCom of the Northern Group and being a part of the effort required to make a real difference in protecting the natural environment in Northern New Mexico.

Jean Watts

My contributions to the Sierra Club over the past 2 years include the following. For the past year I have served on the ExCom as the secretary and, in addition, have participated in helping with the annual potluck dinner, volunteer appreciation parties, and setting up for the monthly program meetings. My background consists of several years as a high school history teacher after graduation from college, and later over 20 years in the real estate and mortgage banking fields. My primary reason for joining the Sierra Club is because of a strong belief in the need for green initiatives to protect the planet.

Become a Chapter Legislative Activist

The 60-day session of the NM Legislature begins in January, but now is the time to start preparing. The Chapter's efforts at the 2009 Legislative Session rely on effective and ongoing oversight by the Chapter Legislative Committee and relentless lobbying by our team of Judith Bunney, Mark Jones, and Dan Lorimier. Just as important, our Legislative Activists regularly communicate with their legislators during the session in support of Chapter legislative priorities. Weekly alerts during the session result in powerful, well-timed calls and emails to key legislators that really move our legislative agenda forward.

Please join our more than 2,000 Legislative Activists. Your participation in this hands-on side of the democratic process makes the Rio Grande Chapter a force to be reckoned with at the Roundhouse. If you don't already receive Legislative Activist Alerts, just contact Dan Lorimier (575/740-2927, daniel.lorimier@sierraclub.org) to become a Rio Grande Chapter Email Activist!

—Dan Lorimier

Southern Group Executive Committee Candidates

Cheryll Blevins

I am a native New Mexican and Sierra Club member for 20 years. Some of the biggest concerns we have in New Mexico is retaining habitat for wildlife, preserving open space, and keeping the public lands for the people. I hope to see more members take advantage of the opportunities to become more involved in the many conservation issues that face our state, as well as nationally and globally.

Glenn Landers

I have been a longtime environmental advocate. Prior to moving to New Mexico four years ago, I was employed by the Sierra Club for nine years in Cleveland, Ohio, working on air and water pollution issues. Since moving to Las Cruces, I have served for three years on the Southern Group Excom and been Southern Group Chair for the past year.

Mary Katherine Ray

Our family moved to New Mexico nearly 20 years ago but we didn't come far, just from El Paso where I grew up. New Mexico has always felt like home. Since I can remember I have experienced the draw of the landscape from the open endless vistas of the desert to the cool green of the tall pines and within those extremes an extraordinary array of wildlife diversity. Southern New Mexico is such a special place and so worthy of protection. Some see our landscape as empty and without redeeming qualities; good only for exploitation. I wasn't expecting to find so many environmental controversies in our own backyard because the natural world here seems so ageless and indestructible. But it is in fact very fragile and there is a never ending parade of schemes that would cause it harm. I feel a deep obligation to insure that the beauty, inspiration, and diversity that surround us are defended not only for today but for those who follow.

I currently serve as chapter wildlife chair and am secretary for the Southern Group ExCom.

Margot Wilson

While I have been a Sierra Club member for over twenty-five years, I became an activist when I moved to southern New Mexico almost twenty years ago. I have been active in the Southern Group for over fifteen years in different positions such as an outings leader, Chapter delegate, and chair of the Warm Springs Section. For the last three years I have served as the Southern Group Chair, Conservation Chair and Chair of Parks and Refuges. I am currently a member of the Chapter Ex-Com.

A new opportunity is on the horizon in Central and Southern New Mexico, a Rio Grande trail, which I am looking forward to working with government agencies to make the trail a reality.

Because of my experience working collaboratively with government agencies, citizens, and environmental groups I feel I have a unique ability to assist in bringing environmental campaigns to good outcomes. In my years working as a volunteer on environmental issues in southern New Mexico I have gained knowledge of environmental issues that isn't complete, but not insignificant.

Help me to continue to serve and support environmental efforts in Southern New Mexico.

Draft Oil and Gas Rules Released Amid Pro-Drilling Hysteria

The politics of fear and the misinformation relentlessly repeated on major media outlets seem to have had an unfortunate impact on the ongoing battle to protect environmentally fragile watersheds and our neighborhoods from the threats of unconventional oil and gas recovery. As the futures speculators ran up the prices of oil and natural gas last summer, Industry ramped up the multimillion-dollar ad campaign just in time for the national political conventions. According to the Center for Economic and Policy Research, the “major media outlets provided daily repetition of the false claim that expanded drilling in environmentally sensitive zones would significantly lower gasoline prices.” A recent poll by the *Albuquerque Journal* indicated that a vast majority of Republicans and a slight majority of Democrats in New Mexico favor expanded domestic exploration. Many politicians have relented and joined in the “drill here, drill now” chorus.

Nevertheless, on September 30, Santa Fe County unveiled a draft ordinance to address the proposed drilling in the Galisteo Basin. The proposed ordinance addresses many of the hazards to water, air, and public health. The exploration companies would have to participate in the huge cost of infrastructure to accommodate convoys of trucks and access for emergency personnel. The quiet dirt roads of rural residential neighborhoods would be straightened, widened, and “upgraded” to accommodate the industrialization, and Industry would be forced to contribute millions of dollars to create these industrial sacrifice zones. Maps

were presented to establish suitable areas for exploitation. Unfortunately, these maps left wide areas of the most fragile ecosystems in the Basin as low-impact areas.

The ordinance however is a profound attempt to protect citizens, habitat, and cultural resources before the industrialization begins. A few days after the release of the draft, the New Mexico Oil and Gas Association held its annual meeting in Santa Fe. Spokesmen made clear that Industry would fight these local attempts to zone environmental pollution away from water and people. Industry has complained that these attempts at regulation and protection have made it too difficult to carry on business as usual.

There is still a frenzied effort at the national and state levels to crush environmental protections. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) recently undermined the National Environmental Policy Act by amending land management plans across the west to allow oil shale development, a disastrous and wasteful misuse of our public lands. BLM officials have been working overtime to rubber-stamp new drilling permits in the most pristine habitats of the Rocky Mountain states. The Farmington BLM office paved the way for 10,000 more wells and thousands of tons per year of pollutants in the San Juan Basin. But why?

As the credit markets have frozen over the last few weeks, the hedge fund titans of Wall Street and the CEOs of some of the more aggressive exploration companies have lost lines of credit and been forced to liquidate various positions in the mysterious financial house of cards that had supported massive speculation in the shale and tight sand areas. Lehman Brothers was a major player in the speculative, unregulated credit market that funded the small and large companies bidding for so many leases in the shale plays from Santa Fe County all the way to the Marcellus Shale in New York State. But fossil fuel exploration has always ridden the boom-and-bust cycles, and prices will fluctuate up as recovery becomes more and more expensive and environmentally detrimental.

Prices have returned to more normal levels in the futures markets. Demand has softened. Exploration companies are attempting to farm out their leases or bring in new private capital. Tecton Energy of Houston now has all of its leases in Santa Fe County and Bernalillo County up for sale. Unconventional recovery is very expensive, and unless the demand for natural gas can be unnaturally raised, today the economics don't work. Of course, if the lobbyists and public relations campaigns persuade a new Congress to use taxpayer money to build huge energy corridors from the shale plays and mandate liquefied natural gas for cars and trucks, that demand could come back, and the whole speculative frenzy will begin again.

Media reports bemoan the huge losses to New Mexico as oil and gas prices return to more normal levels and the economic slowdown impacts state revenue. Why would the State base spending estimates on a parabolic rise in futures prices? Families cannot gamble their limited funds on a speculative bubble. Anyone who has looked at the depletion rates in New Mexico knows that only the expensive and destructive unconventional recovery of “frontier” areas is left to the speculators. Why are these special places such



Exploratory oil and gas drilling with open pit in a once-pristine archaeological site near the Canadian River. If properly strengthened and enforced, Santa Fe County's draft ordinance could help protect the Galisteo Basin from this kind of destruction. (Photo © Johnny Micou 2008)

as Mora and the Galisteo Basin and Tierra Amarilla so expensive to exploit? The small amounts of oil and gas are locked in hard rock. Huge amounts of energy and water and chemicals are required to keep the wells circulating. The easy money has been made. It is time to rethink how New Mexico funds the public schools. It is time for the State to work with local communities to bring wind, geothermal, solar, and biomass energy into actual production. The economic slowdown is a perfect opportunity to completely rethink renewable energy and local authority. Citizens must demand that enough is enough; it is time for change.

The draft ordinance will be discussed during public hearings on November 6 and 13 in the Santa Fe County Commission chambers. For more information and to review the draft ordinance materials, visit the Drilling Santa Fe website (www.drillingsantafe.org) and the Santa Fe County website (www.santafecounty.org).

—Ellen Cavalli

Dairy's Permit Re-application Sparks New Campaign

Many Sierra County residents received notices, dated October 16 from the New Mexico Environment Department, that ParaSol Dairies has re-applied for a permit to operate a 2,000-head dairy very close to Caballo Lake. This alarming announcement has led to the immediate reorganization of the coalition of local, state, and national organizations involved in the successful opposition to the first permit application. That application was denied by Secretary Ron Curry on February 27, 2008.

The dairy's new plan calls for evaporative ponds rather than direct application of the effluent onto fields as described in the old plan. The new ParaSol plan continues to disregard the fact that the potential for catastrophic contamination of Caballo Lake is still present. As climate change increases destructive flooding, more and more severe local flood events could easily wash out or overflow the effluent ponds – sending the potent contamination directly into the lake about 10,000 feet away.

Southern Group members are mobilizing around this recurring gambit to sell off our environmental security for a private corporation's high profits. For more information, contact Dan Lorimier (575/740-2927, daniel.lorimier@sierraclub.org).

—Dan Lorimier

Ordinance Hearing Schedule

On October 16, the Santa Fe County Development Review Committee (CDRC) had the first round of meetings regarding the draft Oil & Gas Ordinance and Land Use amendment, General Plan – Oil & Gas Element. The second and third meetings will be conducted at 4:00 p.m. on November 6 and 13 at the BCC Chambers, 102 Grant Ave., Santa Fe.

The CDRC will submit to the Santa Fe County Board of County Commissioners (BCC) recommendations about the ordinance and amendment. The BCC will have the ordinance and amendment on the agenda for the BCC meetings of November 18, December 9, and maybe January 13, 2009. The BCC is scheduled to adopt the ordinance January 23. In February 2009, the current moratorium is scheduled to expire. It contains a clause for an additional six-month moratorium, if necessary.

Compact Fluorescent Light Recycling in NM

As we have all heard, compact fluorescent light (CFL) bulbs can significantly conserve energy and last longer compared to standard light bulbs. There is also a mercury element in the CFL bulbs that should be properly handled and disposed of.

Relative Household Mercury Amounts

CFL – 4 mg
 4-foot fluorescent lamp – 8 mg
 Mercury thermometer – 500 mg
 Automotive mercury switch – 800 mg
 Older thermostat – 3000 mg

Where Can You Recycle CFLs?

Alamogordo Home Depot
 Albuquerque Home Depot stores
 Albuquerque and Bernalillo County (residents only): Rinchem Company, 6133 Edith Blvd NE, 505/345-1650
 Albuquerque: EnviroSolve, 5338 Williams St. SE, 877/WASTE11, fee
 Belen: Advanced Environmental Solutions, 505/861-1700, fee
 Farmington Community Recycling Center, 400 S. Orchard St., 575/327-6284
 Farmington Home Depot
 Gallup Home Depot
 Hobbs Home Depot
 Las Cruces Recycling Center, 2855 Amador Ave., 575/528-3589
 Los Lunas Home Depot
 Rio Rancho Home Depot
 Roswell Home Depot
 Roswell Municipal Landfill Household Hazardous Waste Center, 505/624-6951
 Ruidoso Recycling Center, Lincoln County Solid Waste Authority, 222 Second St., 575/378-4697
 Santa Fe: Buckman Road Recycling and Transfer Station, 505/820-0208, www.swma.org; bulbs, tubes and U-shaped bulbs
 Santa Fe: Eldorado Transfer Station, 505/992-3010; CFL bulbs, tubes, and U-shaped bulbs
 Santa Fe Home Depot

Periodic Household Hazardous Waste Collection Events That Accept CFLs:

Rio Rancho, April and November, 505/891-5015
 Los Alamos, 505/662-8050

The NM Environment Department Solid Waste Bureau encourages recycling of burned-out CFLs and tubes, if available. However, if recycling is not an option in your area, CFLs from a household are OK to put out with the trash. First, seal the CFL in a plastic bag. Only large businesses, institutions, and industrial users of fluorescent lamps are required to recycle. Please note that Home Depot will not accept broken CFL bulbs for recycling.

For an excellent summary of CFLs, mercury concerns, energy consumption, and other related topics, please check out www.nmenv.state.nm.us/SWB/doc/fluorescent.html.

For more info, contact English Bird, Executive Director, New Mexico Recycling Coalition (505/983-4470, english@recyclenewmexico.com), or visit www.recyclenewmexico.com.

—English Bird

The ABCs of TIDDs

Financing growth and development can be a real snoozer for the average citizen. So long as the new roads, schools, and water/sewer systems get built – who cares how it happens?

We should all take notice of a relatively new financing tool called the tax increment development district (TIDD), because it promises to dramatically impact the state's General Fund and, in the process, incentivize sprawl development. Proposals for reforming the TIDD law will be considered by the NM Legislature in January.

The TIDD provides funding for public infrastructure in a specific area by using part of the increased property and/or gross receipts tax (GRT) revenue generated within that area. The assumption is that redevelopment in that area will result in increased economic activity and increased tax revenue – and this increase will cover the costs of the infrastructure. Bonds are issued to finance the infrastructure. Normally, the increased GRT revenue would go into the state and local general fund budgets to pay for programs, and if any is left over at the end of the year, for capital outlay projects. So TIDDs are really a form of state and local investment in these developments.

Tax increment financing (TIF) can be a good tool to provide incentives for “brownfields” – areas in the community with significant disinvestment or other problems which make development risky. Redevelopment projects are often risky because they involve renovating existing structures and dealing with possible environmental contamination. For example, TIF is being used to redevelop the Stapleton Airport in Denver. After the airport was abandoned, 4,700 acres within the Denver city limits sat vacant – the runways needed to be removed and contamination from jet fuel needed to be addressed. The city, county, and the Denver Urban Renewal Authority are working together to redevelop the property into residential and commercial areas using TIF.

The New Mexico TIF has taken on a new complexion. Rather than limit TIF for redevelopment projects, the New Mexico Legislature liberalized this financing tool for new development anywhere. Although originally developed to promote urban infill redevelopment, New Mexico communities may now subsidize “greenfield” development on the fringe, drawing jobs and vitality from the existing community. New Mexico already ranks sixth in the nation for per-person vehicle miles traveled. Unfortunately, New Mexico's TIF law incentivizes sprawl development, making the problem worse.

How much public money is at stake? More than \$1.1 billion in future state GRT revenues has been requested for just two TIDD projects – Mesa del Sol and SunCal (if the SunCal request is approved by the Legislature in January). Compare this to \$123 million in General Fund money for fiscal year 2009 capital outlay projects for the entire state. The \$1.1 billion going to Mesa del Sol and SunCal will subsidize infrastructure in only 7,000 acres of the total 67,000 acres planned for these two developments. Under current law, developers will keep coming back for more, so it's easy to see how this could eat up the state's General Fund in very short order. This was the case in Illinois, which enacted similar TIF legislation in the 1980s. Within a year, the sheer number of new requests threatened to drain the state treasury. An emergency repeal was enacted, and preexisting TIFs were scaled back.

The big question is “Should the State pay for development that will occur anyway?” In New Mexico, TIF is being used to pay for growth where development is already occurring or very likely to occur. Without TIF, the state and local governments would receive 100% of the increased GRT revenue from that growth.

The NM Legislature very likely will consider proposals for TIDD reform in 2009 – including possibly:

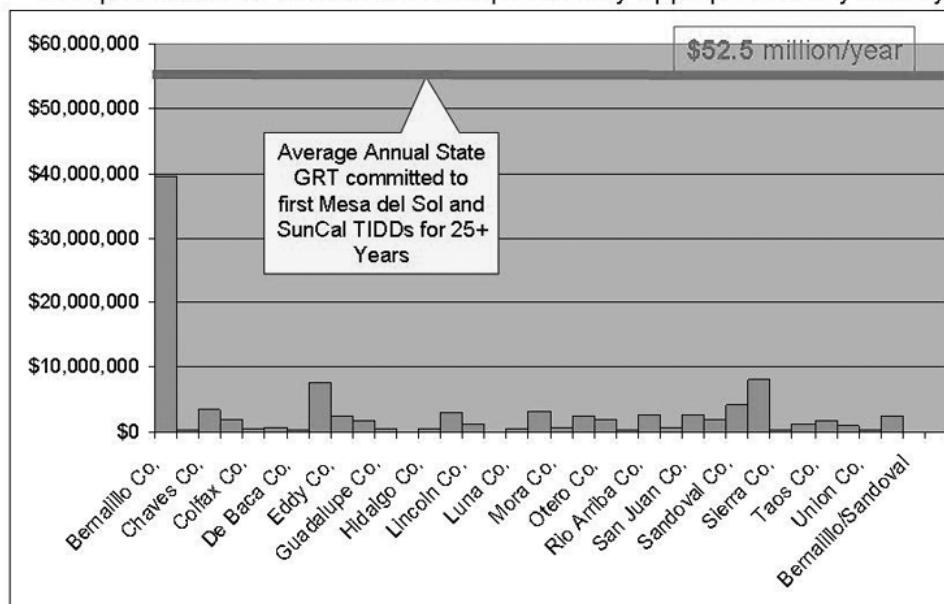
- Restricting TIDD to brownfields, not greenfields
- Reducing the amount or percentage of state taxes contributed to TIDDs. New Mexico is one of very few states allowing state funds for TIDDs
- Directly linking the state tax increments received to the public policy goals (such as affordable housing, new jobs, smart growth)
- Increasing state oversight in all areas
- Conducting assessment of market requirements for planned projects
- Ensuring more oversight and transparency on TIDD projects
- Increasing developer commitment to detailed plans, costs, schedules, reporting
- Strengthening the protection of all government agencies from TIDDs defaulting on bonds

For more information, contact Lora Lucero, AICP (loralucero@aol.com). Lucero acknowledges the assistance of the New Mexico Voices for Children and Bob Hearn of the Quality Growth Alliance of Doña Ana County in the preparation of this article.

—Lora Lucero, AICP

State GRT Funding of First Increment of TIDDs

Compared to 2008 General Fund Capital Outlay Appropriations by County





PAJARITO GROUP NEWS

It's Election Time

Don't forget to vote for our Pajarito and Chapter ExCom candidates. Michael Di Rosa and James Thrasher are running for Pajarito Group ExCom. Mark Jones is our Pajaritan running for Chapter Executive Committee. We appreciate their service and your votes.

Outings

Saturday, November 8 • Ojitos Trail hike (Chama River Canyon Wilderness) – Moderate/strenuous, 8 to 10 miles, some bushwacking. Please contact Michael Di Rosa for details (505/667-0059 work, 505/663-0648 home).

Saturday, December 20 • Cross-country ski at Cumbres Pass – Intermediate skill, intermediate strenuousness. Leave Los Alamos at 7:30 a.m. Return at 6:00 p.m. To arrange for carpools, gear, etc., you need to contact Jean Dewart (505/662-9592) prior to December 16.

Pajarito Group Directory

<http://riogrande.sierraclub.org/pajarito/mainpaj.asp>

Executive Committee

Chair: Ilse Bleck
ibleck@yahoo.com 505/662-2368
Vice-Chair, Secretary:
Jody Benson 505/662-4782
Treasurer: David Gemeinhart
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Michael Di Rosa
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Mark Jones
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James Thrasher
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Committee Chairs

Conservation: Michael Di Rosa
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Environmental Education: Pauline Wilder
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Global Warming: Charles Keller
alfonso@cybermesa.com 505/662-7915
Grazing, National Forests, Wetlands,
Wilderness: David Gemeinhart
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Newsletter Editor, Publicity, Sprawl,
Endangered Species/Wildlife:
Jody Benson 505/662-4782
Outings, Parks/Refuges, Membership Co-Chair:
Ilse Bleck
ibleck@yahoo.com 505/662-2368
Political, Cool Cities, Membership Co-Chair:
Mark Jones
jonesmm1@comcast.net 505/662-9443
Webmeister, Student Liaison: James Thrasher
james_thrasher@hotmail.com 505/570-0182

Meetings

Wednesday, November 5, 7:00 p.m. • Upstairs Meeting Rooms, Mesa Public Library

Jim Norton, Director, NM Environmental Protection Division, Presents: The Western Climate Initiative

New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson has joined 10 other Western governors and Canadian provinces to work on an ambitious plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions over the next dozen years, regardless of what happens at the national level. This Initiative is a significant advancement in environmental protection, with states and provinces leading the way for achieving emissions reductions. Environmental Protection Director Jim Norton will describe the plan to reduce regional greenhouse-gas emissions 15% below their 2005 levels by 2020. Join us in this important opportunity to learn about the Initiative, how you might get involved, and to give your input to the plan.

Wednesday, December 3, 7:00 p.m. • Upstairs Meeting Rooms, Mesa Public Library

Dennis Hjeresen Presents: LANL's Environmental Management System – Making Environment Everyone's Responsibility

Los Alamos Lab is the major economic driver of Northern New Mexico. But what about being a driver on environmental issues? Does economy trump environment? Certainly, we hear about the Lab's lapses. However, just as Los Alamos County is striving to improve its policies, so is LANL. Denny Hjeresen will describe one of these efforts: ISO 14001 Registered Environmental Management System (EMS). The goal of the EMS is to drive environmental improvement to the everyday working level of the Lab and enable continuous improvement. This process is delivering significant results that will be reviewed along with future challenges. Join in the discussion about how LANL is working to be more green.

Beyond Recycling: Cradle to Cradle, Food for Industry, Food for Thought

As we slip into winter, it's a good time to switch our reading choice from light summer fare to something to enlighten the long winter nights. Consider *Cradle to Cradle* by William McDonough and Michael Braungart, a 2002 publication from North Point Press. McDonough, an architect, specializes in environmentally sound buildings. Braungart, a German chemist, studies the environmental effects of chemicals. This book has left, figuratively and literally (more on the literal left later).

The core of their proposal is the concept of "waste equals food." Taking examples from nature, they demonstrate that nothing is wasted; everything moves from one use to another in endless cycles. How many seeds does a cherry tree have to produce to replace itself and add another tree? But in its lifetime, how many cherries and seeds does a cherry tree actually produce? Why aren't we buried in cherries?

The biomass of ants on the earth is greater than the biomass of humans yet we're not overrun with ant landfills or ant pollution. These organisms exist in a system where everything is reused. "Waste" from one organism (or the organism itself) is food for something else. This is different from our current recycling, which the authors refer to as "down-cycling." We're not keeping that plastic bottle in the system indefinitely; we're merely sending it on a detour on its way to the landfill. Maybe the plastic bottle can be made into carpet or a jacket but that wasn't the intended use for the material; forcing it to be something else takes considerable effort.

But what if the bottle were made of a material designed from the outset to be remade into new bottles or similar products? What if your computer were made of materials intended from the start to be reused in computer manufacturing instead of creating an environmental mess in China or India or some other out-of-sight place?

This is the waste-equals-food concept – in this case, food for industry.

Doesn't this make more sense than pitching everything – hazardous components and all – in the landfill and then producing new materials? The

book itself is an example. The book is printed not on traditional wood-pulp paper, but rather on a plastic-like material that is completely reusable (and unfortunately, heavy). Every component material is separable and reusable.

Not all materials need to be "industrial feedstock." Natural materials can be turned into food for people, composted or used in some manner in the production of what humans know as food.

Another concept introduced by the authors is "product of service." Do you really want to own that computer or wide-screen TV? Or, do you just want to use it for a while? This concept is similar to leasing; that the company retains ownership of the product and the customer pays to use it.

In this case, however, the manufacturer wants the product back because it's their feedstock for making new products. Nothing goes to the landfill.

The authors advocate a revised paradigm for corporate management – the "triple bottom line." That's the idea that beyond the traditional financial bottom line, a company also has an "equity bottom line" and an "ecology bottom line." The equity bottom line refers to how fairly the employees are paid and treated, and the ecology bottom line refers to how the company's products and processes affect the environment. None of the separate bottom lines should predominate over the others. The company must do well with the financial bottom line in order to survive, but it must also do well with the other bottom lines in order to retain good employees and function sustainably.

The authors argue convincingly for a new industrial-consumer paradigm. It's a paradigm that's not really new; it's all around us and has been as long as life has existed on earth. We just need to view ourselves and what we do as part of a larger system rather than outside it. It's a system where industry and the environment aren't adversaries but where everything is part of the whole. The book isn't simply theoretical musing; for the technically inclined, the authors include a section outlining some technical aspects of how this can be done.

—David Gemeinhart

Dooda Desert Rock Fair a Huge Success

The Sierra Club is a proud supporter of Dooda Desert Rock (DDR), a Navajo grassroots organization dedicated to stopping the proposed Desert Rock coal-fired power plant in New Mexico. I've included a photo of DDR's parade float from the Shiprock Fair that took place October 3-5. I was proud to be there to help on behalf of the Sierra Club.

The float was amazing. I wish the wind turbine could have been turning...it was so windy that day! Elouise Brown, President of DDR, pulled off a great event with a concert and info table at the fair. She collected many petition signatures for her campaign. A big "Ahe'hee" and thanks to all the volunteers from Colorado, New Mexico, and Arizona who came together to help build the float and volunteer their time to get petition signatures and handed out "Dooda Desert Rock!" bumper stickers, fact sheets, and music. "Dooda" in Navajo means NO!!!

It was rain and mud at the fair, but worth it. There was a huge crowd. I would estimate the 2-mile parade route was PACKED shoulder-to-shoulder for the full 2-mile route at 60,000. DDR hosted a three-day music festival at the fair as well, and educated thousands of local residents about the dangers of building another coal plant to the Four Corners region.

A big thanks to Elouise Brown and everyone at DDR for their leadership in keeping the pressure



Hank Dixon of DDR at the wheel of the DDR float during the Shiprock Fair parade. A live band played on while volunteers handed out candy and bumper stickers and got petition signatures. (Photo by Andy Bessler)

on to say no to coal and yes to green jobs through a clean energy future with wind and solar!!

They still need our support, so be sure to help out with funding or volunteering by contacting Elouise at PO Box 7838 Newcomb, NM 87455; 505/947-6159; thebrownmachine@hotmail.com; www.dooda-desert-rock.net.

For more information, contact Andy Bessler of the Sierra Club Tribal Partnerships Program (928/774-6103, andy.bessler@sierraclub.org) or visit www.sierraclub.org/partnerships/tribal.

—Andy Bessler

Four Corners Members and Allies to Meet Nov. 13

Members of the Sierra Club, the San Juan Citizens Alliance (SJCA), and the public are invited to a local Environmental Briefing on November 13 at 7:00 p.m. The event will be held at the San Juan Community College in Farmington.

Presenters will bring us up to speed on Desert Rock, the Western Climate Initiative (WCI), local recycling efforts, an environmental state legislative forecast, and other topics impacting our land, air, and water in the region. This meeting will stimulate and update area residents on key environmental issues with brief presentations, questions, and open discussion.

Mark your calendar and ask some friends to share a ride with you to this interesting and informative event – the Sierra Club & SJCA Four Corners Environmental Briefing. Find out more by contacting Dan Lorimier (575/740-2927, daniel.lorimier@sierraclub.org).

—Dan Lorimier

Steering Committee

Art Jaquez, Co-Chair

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Nick Cullander, Co-Chair

505/334-0935 • ncullander@hotmail.com

Gordon Glass, Air Quality, Outings

505/564-4460 • agglass@earthlink.net

TAOS BRANCH NEWS

Otters Reintroduced to Rio Pueblo de Taos

A project to restore river otters to the state's rivers began to meet its goals on October 14 by releasing five otters into the Rio Pueblo de Taos. Wild otters from the State of Washington tentatively poked their noses out of holding pens, then dashed for the river and dove in, as part of the first of many planned releases in the state. River otters were once native to southwestern rivers, including the Rio Grande, the Chama, the Gila, the Mora, the San Juan, and the Canadian rivers, but were extirpated by the 1950s. River otters are an important part of a healthy river ecosystems, occupying the role of top predator, sustained by fish, crayfish, and other prey. Their presence should help restore a healthy balance to our rivers, in part by reducing the abundance of exotic crayfish that damage river ecosystems. Otters are also highly social, playful, lively animals whose antics are a pleasure to watch.

Additional releases are planned for the Upper Rio Grande this fall and next year, and for the Gila River in the future. The release was the culmination of year of work by many partners, including the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, U.S.



River otter. (Photo by James Stuart)

Wildlife Services, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Taos Pueblo, and the New Mexico Friends of River Otters, a coalition of New Mexico citizens agencies and conservation organizations – including the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club – dedicated to restoring otters to the state.

—Melissa Savage

Volunteers Wanted

The Taos presence continues to develop and is in need of members to step forward to be part our leadership core. We are looking to fill positions on the board as well as committee chairs. We anticipate the amount of time required will be minimal, and as our membership base solidifies in the Taos region, these leadership positions will play key roles in the future of the group and our community. Please contact Scott Estep (575/770-7969, wetmtn@rmi.net) for more information.

Contact List

Eric Patterson, Taos contact and Director of Rios de Taos Water Sentinels • 575/776-2833, eepatt@gmail.com

Anna Walters, email alert list • annaainsworth@kitcarson.net

William Brown, The Climate Project •

575/758-8008, nmglobalwarming@yahoo.com, www.nmglobalwarming.org

Scott Estep • 575/770-7969, wetmtn@rmi.com



NORTHERN GROUP NEWS

Tuesday, November 18, 7 PM

WELCOME TO THE ANTHROPOCENE:

Notes on the Vegetation of the Southwest, Past and Future

Local author and conservationist **William deBuys** tells us that, although the landscapes of the Southwest appear to most of us timeless and unchanging, they have been the scene of enormous dynamism over the years, especially in historic times. Their legacy of change is hardly at an end. A warming and increasingly variable climate promises to usher in a period in which the limits of change become increasingly unbounded and the changes themselves become harder to predict, harder to live with, and, for many of us, harder to accept.

Bill is the author of four books: *Enchantment and Exploitation*, *River of Traps*, *Salt Dreams: Land and Water in Low-Down California*, and *The Walk*. He has also co-authored and edited *Valles Caldera: A Vision for New Mexico's National Preserve* (with Don J. Usner).

*Membership meetings are held at the Unitarian Church
107 W. Barcelona Street (between Galisteo and Don Gaspar).*

All meetings, outings, and activities are FREE and open to the public

Northern New Mexico Group of the Sierra Club
1807 Second Street, Unit #45, Santa Fe, NM 87505
505 · 983 · 2703 ♦ website <http://riogrande.sierraclub.org/santafe/>

GROUP CHAIR

John Buchser

Thanks to all those who have helped with the Obama, Udall, Lujan, Heinrich, and other local campaigns. While the Nation and the world struggle with a financial meltdown, there is ample opportunity to rebuild a clean energy economy. I urge all to rejoice in our victories and take your positive energy into the future to continue protecting our environment.

In Santa Fe we received a unique gift from the City for six weeks this fall: flow in the Santa Fe River. Express your thanks to the mayor and to councilors Rosemary Romero, Chris Calvert, and Rebecca Wurzbarger for helping to make this happen. In a related process, in order to make flow in the River a reality, we need a regional water supply from the Rio Grande, an energy-intensive proposition. The alternative energy provision in the City's long-range water supply plan is there due to our Cool Cities volunteers.

Another great opportunity lies in an advisory body to the County of Santa Fe: the County Open Lands and Trails Planning and Advisory Committee. This committee meets monthly and has for the last four years focused on improving the trails network within our county. The County Commission has been supportive of bringing up staffing levels to be effective at the task. There are volunteer positions open countywide to replace outgoing term-limited appointees. Please check out the website and let Colleen Baker know about your interest in the program:
santafecounty.org/resident/open_space_trails.php.

Chair – John Buchser * ‡ jbuchser@comcast.net 820-0201
Vice-Chair – Norma McCallan * ‡ nmccallan@mindspring.com 471-0005
Secretary – Jean Watts * jeanwatts@comcast.net 989-5010
Treasurer – Anne Stauffer arsinm@comcast.net 986-1412
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Joe Lewis jcoulterlewis@yahoo.com 505-216-7529
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Sierran Distribution – Marcia Rodda 986-0449
Outings – Norbert Sperlich bsperlich@cybermesa.com 474-4354
Tobin Oruch oruch@lanl.gov 820-2844
Political Committee – Susan Martin smartin31@comcast.net 988-5206
Tom Robey trobey@cybermesa.com 955-9578
Phone Answerer – Bebs Taylor 983-9129
Publicity – Kia Mudge 474-6697 and Mary Thomson 982-5486
Social Cohesion – Jean Watts * jeanwatts@comcast.net 989-5010
Las Vegas contact – Betty Quick bettydquick@gmail.com 505-454-9123
Taos Branch – Scott Estep wetmtm@rmi.com 575-770-7969

♦ ♦ NORTHERN NEW MEXICO GROUP OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS ♦ ♦

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Conservation – Chair – Dexter Coolidge * dextercoolidge@yahoo.com 988-1197
Activist Outings – Norma McCallan * ‡ nmccallan@mindspring.com 471-0005
4 Corners' Power Plants – Robb Thomson * robbm@toast.net 988-8958
Santa Fe Nat'l Forest – Tom Gorman ‡ 438-3932
Genetically Engineered Food – Jim Hannan jhannan505@aol.com 988-5760
Mining – Cliff Larsen clarsen1@ix.netcom.com 466-2128
Cool Cities Campaign – Leader, David Van Winkle ‡ david@vw77.com 820-1006
Cool Biz – Mark Walztoni * mark@leadershipchanges.com 603-5810
Eco Footprints – Brian Skeelee brianvida@nm.net 984-1739
Resources – Ken Hughes ‡ b1family@comcast.net 474-0550
Educational Outreach – Teresa Seamster tseam@qwest.net 466-8964
Water – Sig Silber ‡ ssilber1@juno.com 473-7006
Wildlife/Nat'l Parks/Rangelands - Roger Peterson ‡ rogpete@aol.com 983-7559
Brendan Miller * bmiller59@comcast.net 490-2680
Carol Raymond * Carol@SFSR.com 989-8600, ext 27 (w)
* Northern Group Executive Committee ‡ Core Conservation Committee

unless otherwise indicated.

Sunday, December 14, 5 to 8 PM

ANNUAL HOLIDAY POTLUCK DINNER



Held at The Commons
2300 West Alameda Street



(corner of West Alameda and Camino Carlos Rael)

Join us for a year-end celebration, an opportunity to meet new and old members, to laud our successes, and look to plans for the new year. Please bring a main dish, salad or side, dessert, or wine and indicate which in your RSVP to ...

Jean Watts (989-5010, jeanwatts@comcast.net) or Alice Cox (505-757-2145, auntialice@pecosplaza.com)

NORTHERN GROUP COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Sierra Club Office, 1807 Second Street, Unit #45

Group Executive Committee:

Tuesday, November 11, 7 PM Tuesday, December 2, 7 PM

Group Conservation Committee: Thursday, November 20, 7 PM (change)

CONSERVATION CHAIR

Dexter Coolidge

Although most of our effort over the last two months has gone into the political campaigns, we continue to make significant headway with our most important conservation objectives. Robb Thomson, our representative to the Western Climate Initiative, has identified some significant weaknesses in the current Cap and Trade proposal and is working to address them. Sig Silber, the Chapter Water Chair, has broadened our long-term goal from only addressing water in agriculture to supporting local sustainable agriculture and saving the family farm, with the sense that the broader purpose will help create openings to work constructively with farmers. Sig has been very successful in creating numerous bridges to the agricultural community and has now joined the New Mexico Food and Ag Policy Council.

COOL CITIES UPDATE

David Van Winkle

We are making good progress in working with the City of Santa Fe to reduce greenhouse emissions from fossil fuels. As a result of lobbying by the Cool Cities volunteers, the Santa Fe City Council adopted a resolution on September 24 that commits the city to using renewable energy to support the long-range water plan. This is a very significant action, as the Buckman Direct Diversion project is a key aspect of the long-range plan and will increase the city's electricity consumption by 65% at full production.

In our education program, 20,000 compact fluorescent light bulbs, which have been supplied by PNM, will be distributed this year to Santa Fe area residents, up from 15,000 last year.



NORTHERN GROUP NEWS

NORTHERN GROUP OUTINGS

Sat Sun November

- 1 **Strenuous Hike** to Painted Cave (Bandelier). 13 miles RT, 2400' gain. High clearance vehicles needed. **Bogdan Mihaila** (662-0421)
- 1 **Very Strenuous Hike** to Santa Barbara Divide (12,000') from Santa Barbara Campground. Great views. 24 miles, 3100' gain. Dogs okay. Bring headlamp. **Hal Davis** (575-758-3949)
- Daylight Saving Time Ends Sunday Morning – Fall Back!**
- 2 **Moderate Hike** Call for details. **Marcia Skillman** (699-3008) (replaces **Art Judd's** hike)
- 2 **Moderate/Strenuous Hike** to Holiday Mesa in Jemez (rescheduled from October 11). Start from Guadalupe box, 6 miles, 1600' gain. Rough trail with stream crossing. Fossils and petroglyphs. Dogs okay. **Stephen Markowitz** (983-2779 before 8 PM)
- 8 **Moderate/Strenuous Hike** on Ojitos Trail (Chama River Canyon Wilderness), 8-10 miles, some off trail. **Michael Di Rosa** (667-0095 work, 663-0648 home)
- 9 **Easy Hike** in Diablo Canyon. 6 miles RT, 400' gain. Dogs okay. **Dan Rusthoi** (690-8967)
- 15 **Easy Birdwatch Walk**. Bring binoculars. **Ron Duffy** (466-6398)
- 15 **Santa Fe River Cleanup**. **John Buchser** (820-0201, jbuchser@comcast.net) See inset article for details.
- 15 **Strenuous Hike** on La Luz Trail (Sandias). 14 miles RT, 3800' gain. Dogs okay. **Tobin Oruch** (820-2844) before 8 PM.
- 16 **Easy/Moderate Hike** along gentle Penstemon Ridge, off lower end of Ski Basin Road, 7 miles, dogs okay, good views. **Norma McCallan** (471-0005)
- 22 **Moderate/Strenuous Exploratory Hike** in Taos Foothills, mostly off trail. 7-9 miles, 1500' gain. Dogs okay. **Page Press** (946-0169)
- 23 **Moderate Hike** in Caja del Rio to Tor, Cerro Rito, Blowhole (remnants of volcanic activity). 8-9 miles RT, 1200' gain. All off trail, some steep, rough sections. **Norbert Sperlich** (474-4354)
- 29 **Moderate Hike** to Red Mesa (near San Isidro). 6 miles RT, 1500' gain. Mostly off trail, some rough sections. A few well behaved dogs okay. **Stephen Markowitz** (983-2779 before 8 PM)
- 30 **Strenuous Hike** to Pedernal, snow conditions permitting. 8 miles RT, 1900' gain, one steep scramble. **Patrick O'Keefe** (820-2359)

PLEASE ALWAYS CALL THE OUTINGS LEADER PRIOR TO A HIKE FOR CONFIRMATION AND DETAILS.

All outings are open to the public and free unless otherwise noted.

For changes and updates in the hike schedule, check our website:
<http://riogrande.sierraclub.org/santafe/>

Sat Sun December

- 6 **Easy Hike** on Borrego/Bear Wallow loop, 4 miles, 760' elevation gain, dogs okay. **John Varner** (795-5948)
- 7 **Moderate/Strenuous Hike** to Window Rock and Gates of Hell basalt formations near Española as a loop, 8-9 miles, some in sand, dogs okay. **Bogdan Mihaila** (662-0421)
- 13 **Moderate X-Country Ski** probably in the Brazos area. **Alan Shapiro** (424-9242)
- 14 **Easy Hike** on tranquil Nun's Corner Loop, at the foot of the Ski Basin Road, 4+ miles, 500' gain, dogs okay. **Norma McCallan** (471-0005)
- 20 **Beginner's Snowshoe Clinic** near Santa Fe ski basin. Rent shoes and poles, come out and play in the snow for a couple of hours! Gear and technique tips will be shared. **Marcia Skillman** (699-3008)
- 20 **Moderate/Strenuous Hike** near Ghost Ranch, 7-8 miles, 1200' gain, mostly off-trail, one scramble up Kitchen Mesa possible, **Michael Di Rosa** (667-0095 or 663-0648)
- 20 **Easy Birdwatch Walk** locally, bring binocs. **Ron Duffy** (466-6398)
- 20 **Santa Fe River Cleanup** **Kathleen Davis** (438-0357 or kdav40@aol.com) See inset article for details.
- 21 **Moderate/Strenuous Hike** to Tetilla Peak by way of old La Bajada Road. ±10 miles, 1600' gain, dogs okay. **Daisy Levine** (466-8338)
- 27 **Strenuous Snowshoe** to Deception Peak, 6-7 miles, 2000' gain, dogs okay. **Patrick O'Keefe** (820-2359)
- 28 **Moderate/Strenuous Hike** into White Rock Canyon. About 8 miles RT, 1000' gain. Some steep sections, some rough off trail, dogs okay. **Norbert Sperlich** (474-4354)

SANTA FE RIVER CLEANUP AND VEGETATION MAINTENANCE

Saturdays – 9 to 11 AM – November 15 • December 20 • January 17

Help keep our river looking great! Park at Lower Alto Street north end of Closson. Bring work boots, gloves and drinking water. Be sure to connect with appropriate contact prior to cleanup date. **Kathleen Davis** (438-0357, kdav40@aol.com)

Sat Sun January

Thursday, January 1, 2009 - New Years Day

- Strenuous Snowshoe**, probably near Santa Fe ski basin, to celebrate the new year in fresh powder. Not too early a start, and back mid-afternoon. **Marcia Skillman** (699-3008)
- 3 **Moderate X-Country Ski** (Sandias hike if poor snow, dogs okay). **Page Press** (946-0169)
- 4 **Moderate Hike** to Buckman Mesa, 5 miles, 1100' gain. Dogs okay, but dry hike, so bring water. **John Varner** (795-5948)
- 10 **Moderate/Strenuous Snowshoe** Calaveras and Cebolla Canyon areas of Jemez, 8 miles, 100' gain. **Michael Di Rosa** (667-0095/663-0648)
- 11 **Moderate/Strenuous Hike or Snowshoe**, call to vote/see, dogs okay. **Tobin Oruch** (820-2844 before 8 PM)
- 17 **Moderate Hike, Snowshoe or X-Country Ski**, depending on snow conditions. Frijoles Cyn Overlook, 2-3 mi. **John Varner** (795-5948)
- 17 **Easy Birdwatch Walk** locally, bring binocs. **Ron Duffy** (466-6398)
- 17 **Santa Fe River Cleanup** **Kathleen Davis** (438-0357, kdav40@aol.com) See inset article for details.
- 18 **Tour** of SF County Thornton Ranch Open Space, in rolling terrain of Galisteo Basin w/local historian Bill Baxter. Visit site of Kennedy RR station, where AT&SF tracks intersected the NM Central line and take a peek at Petroglyph Hill. Meet at office or meet Bill at the church in Galisteo. Dogs okay, 4-5 miles. **Norma McCallan** (471-0005)
- 18 **Moderate/Strenuous Hike or Snowshoe**, call to vote/see, dogs okay. **Royal Drews** (699-8713)
- 24 **Beginner's Snowshoe Clinic** near Santa Fe ski basin. Rent shoes and poles, come out and play in the snow for a couple of hours! Gear and technique tips will be shared. **Marcia Skillman** (699-3008)
- 24 **Moderate X-Country Ski** Brazos area (?). **Alan Shapiro** (424-9242)
- 25 **Moderate Hike** La Bajada area, ±8 miles RT, 600' gain. Mostly off trail, rough sections, dogs okay. **Norbert Sperlich** (474-4354)
- 31 **Moderate/Strenuous Hike** to Red Mesa west of Bernalillo, 6-7 miles, 1300' gain, off trail, dogs okay. **Bogdan Mihaila** (662-0421)

NORTHERN NEW MEXICO GROUP VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- WEBMASTER for Rio Grande Chapter** – Experienced web person to oversee chapter website and ensure it is attractive and informative. **Norma McCallan** (nmccallan@mindspring.com) / **Steve Markowitz** (stephenmarkowitz@gmail.com)
- Sierra Club Publicity** – Getting out information about events and speakers and writing short ads for KSFR and local newspapers (a team of 2 to 3 people) **Kia Mudge** (474-6697, kiamudge@hotmail.com)
- Cool Cities/Cool Biz** – Work with Santa Fe City officials and Santa Fe businesses, neighborhoods and schools to promote clean and affordable energy. **David Van Winkle** (820-1006, david@vw77.com) also visit <http://riogrande.sierraclub.org/santafe/>
- Santa Fe River Clean-Up** – Assist in monthly cleanups of our section of the river. Also need coordinators and leaders of the monthly cleanups. **Kathleen Davis** (438-0357, kdav40@aol.com)
- Membership Data Entry** – on the HELEN database updating membership and volunteer entries. Can be done at home. **Donna Michalski** (473-3734, dmichalski@comcast.net)
- Survey of Members** – Help our Communications team implement a survey to determine if we are adequately communicating with members and how to do it more effectively. **Brendan Miller** (490-2680, bmiller59@comcast.net)
- Forest & Public Lands Issues** – Work on various issues affecting public lands, including the ongoing Forest Travel Management Plan that will designate roads that are open to motorized traffic, upcoming Forest Management Plan, BLM's new Management Plan in process and designation of Sabinosa WSA as Wilderness. **Tom Gorman** (438-3032) or **Norma McCallan** (471-0005)
- Tabling** – Man a table at an event for 2-4 hours, handing out literature, membership applications and sometimes selling Sierra Club merchandise. Will be paired with an experienced volunteer. **Norma McCallan**
- Outings** – New hike leaders (simple training provided), assistance in exploring possible non-Sierra Club site internet posting of future hikes, and compilation of data from previous sign-up sheets for email notification of upcoming hikes. **Tobin Oruch** (820-2844, oruch@lanl.gov) or **Norbert Sperlich** (474-4354, bsperlich@cybermesa.com)
- Sierra Club Office** – Man Santa Fe office, 1807 Second Avenue, Suite 45, 2 to 4 hours per week (answer phones, sort mail, other minor routine office tasks). Training provided. **Jo Ann Lucas** (466-6691, joannlucas@comcast.net)

Outings Notes – Unless otherwise noted, outings leave from Sierra office, 1807 Second Street, Unit #45. Turn into the driveway at the entrance of Cloud Cliff Bakery, go past the bakery to the next building on the left. It has trees, benches and sculptures in the front yard. Parking is beyond the building on the left. Meet near the benches. Although the signs in back say that parking is restricted, that doesn't apply at night and on weekends. Carpooling is encouraged. It is routine that each rider pays the driver 10 cents/mile, rounded down to nearest dollar (7.5 cents/mile when 100+ miles and 3+ riders). Bring lunch, water, sturdy hiking boots or shoes and clothing suitable for the weather. Leader reserves the right to turn away anyone whose equipment or experience appears unsuitable. Leader may alter destination of hike or cancel trip due to weather, other unfavorable conditions, or insufficient number of participants. Unaccompanied minors need written permission from parents or guardians to participate—ask leader for form. Dogs permitted only if so noted in write up. To participate you will need to sign a liability waiver at meeting site.



SOUTHERN GROUP NEWS

Southern NM Group Directory

P.O. Box 735, Mesilla, NM 88046

Glenn Landers

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Margot Wilson

Conservation Chair, Parks/Refuges, Outings
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Cheryll Blevins

Treasurer, Editor Southern NM
Group Page
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Mary Katherine Ray

Wildlife, Membership
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Lou McCall

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John Waugh

Endangered Species/Wildlife,
Chapter Delegate
cactoblast@hotmail.com 575/526-7116

Earle Pittman

Global Warming
espittman@zianet.com 575/541-6281

David Farrell

Political Chair
dafarrelli@hotmail.com 575/895-3352

Outings

Be sure to call the outings leader and confirm in case there are any changes.

Saturday, November 8 • Pine Tree Trail and off-trail canyons hike – Beautiful views of the east side of the Organ Mountains and the Tularosa Basin. Moderate hike of 7 miles with some elevation gains. Meet at the K-Mart on I-70 at 9:00 a.m. BLM parking fee of \$3. Call John Waugh (575/526-7116) for information.

Sunday, November 9 • Monticello Box and the upper Alamosa hike – Come see the cottonwoods and willows in golden fall foliage as we walk along the perennial Alamosa stream while the Beryllium mine still exists only on a paper application. It's an easy 4-mile round-trip walk through the cliffs and bluffs of Monticello Box. Meet at the Forest Service office parking lot in TorC at 9:00 a.m. Bring lunch and shoes and socks you don't mind getting wet. (Bring a dry pair for the way home.) Contact Mary Katherine Ray (575/772-5655).

Sunday, November 16 • Gallinas and Railroad Canyons hike – Leave the Forest Service Office in TorC at 8:00 a.m. and pick up any folks at the General Store in Hillsboro at 9:45 a.m. for a 12-mile outing in Gallinas and Railroad Canyons. This is a strenuous hike through wooded, steep walled canyons and along the Black Range Crest with some great views. There are some wet footed crossings. Come prepared for cool weather. Call Margot (575/744-5860) for details.

Sunday, December 14 • Valles Canyon hike – Visit some of the very best petroglyphs in an enchanting canyon. This area is only accessible with four-wheel drive. Valles Canyon is truly remarkable, but has some dangerous scrambles over rocks. This outing is for 12 participants only so call Dan Lorimier (575/740-2927) or Margot Wilson (575/744-5860) for a reservation. When you call for your reservation we will tell you the time and place of meeting. Bring your camera and lunch for an amazing experience.

Sunday, December 21 • Fillmore Canyon hike – See the old mine ruins, and expect to go beyond into the canyon. Moderate hike of 8 miles with elevation gain. Meet at 9:00 a.m. on north side of Pan American Center parking lot on NMSU campus to carpool. BLM parking fee of \$3. Call John Waugh (575/526-7116) for information.

Projects Receive Funding from Rio Grande Chapter

After receiving a generous donation to fund climate-change education efforts, the Rio Grande Chapter has chosen three projects to support here in the south. All three meet the goals of the Chapter and the donor and will be made possible or greatly strengthened by this funding.

The Bountiful Alliance (TBA) in Sierra County is a newly formed pro-environment, sustainable lifestyles, nonprofit organization. Two of their programs are getting help from the Chapter in both funding and volunteer assistance. Their Recycling Committee has begun to offer a monthly recycling option to Sierra County residents. For the first time, glass, plastic, noncorrugated cardboard, steel cans, junk mail, and catalogues can all be dropped off for recycling. This effort will be enhanced and grown with the help of Chapter volunteers and a \$1,200 grant.

TBA's Water Harvesting Committee will install roof water catchment, storage, and distribution systems on some low-income houses in Sierra County. On-the-ground benefits of lower utility bills and the significant conservation of energy and water will help ignite the new culture of resource conservation and efficiency in this already conservative community. This project will receive volunteer assistance and \$6,700 for materials from the Chapter.

The Gila Resources Information Project (GRIP), headquartered in Silver City, will conduct a public education campaign on climate change and sustainable living in southwestern New Mexico. With Rio Grande Chapter funding of \$14,600, they will partner with us to produce and distribute a "Sustainable Living" education guide for residents in Silver City and Las Cruces. This project also includes a sustainability conference and Green Expo.

The Chapter and the Southern Group are looking forward to deepening our ties with these great organizations and preparing southern New Mexicans for their transition into an efficient, conservative, and sustainable energy and lifestyle future.

—Dan Lorimier

Southern Group Takes Mimbres Archaeological Tour

There are numerous archaeological sites in the Black Range District of the Gila National Forest. One of these sites, the Three Circles Mimbres site, sits perched on a hilltop overlooking the Mimbres Valley. Chris Adams, Zone Archaeologist for the Black Range & Wilderness Districts of the Gila National Forest, recently lead a group to the site, named for the style of pottery found there when the site was discovered by Wesley Bradfield in 1927.

The remains of several Mogollon pit houses are barely discernible to the uninitiated. Depressions in the earth are all that are left of buildings that were constructed partially underground with wood beams supporting a roof structure. As many as 150 people may have lived on this hilltop, which was easily defensible and near a source of fresh water. The site was abandoned in the early 12th century; the reasons for its desertion remain a mystery.

A short drive toward Lake Roberts brought the group to the mouth of Pictograph Canyon. After a quick hike through a creekbed, we arrived at a rock wall face covered with pictographs. There were two distinctive styles of artwork painted by different native populations: those that were painted roughly

1,000 years ago by the Mogollon people, and others that were painted by the Apache in about the 18th century. This indicates that the canyon may have been used as a transportation route from the mountains of the Black Range to the Mimbres Valley. Chris gave us a test – sort of a "Where's Waldo?" of the pictograph world – which we all miserably failed.

Damage has been done to historic sites like these through ignorance, vandalism, and greed. Archaeological sites throughout New Mexico offer us a unique opportunity to study the history of the Southwest as experienced and depicted by the people who lived it. These sites are protected by the American Antiquities Act of 1906 and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) of 1979 – so if you are hiking through the forest and come across pots, pottery sherds, fragments of arrowheads, grinding stones, etc., please don't give in to the temptation to bring them home with you. Aside from bringing on really bad karma, removing artifacts from these sites is against the law and punishable by fines and/or time in prison.

—Margot Wilson and Gina Kelley



Agents Needed Instead of Fences Selected Group Outings

—James Pinkerton

For business and elected leaders in Texas border towns, it's a simple question: Since arrests of illegal immigrants are declining steadily along the Texas-Mexico border, why should the controversial and costly fence be completed? An analysis by the Texas Border Coalition, an association of elected officials and business leaders, shows a 56 percent drop in arrests during the last four years by the U.S. Border Patrol on the Texas-Mexico border. Government officials have maintained for years that fewer arrests mean fewer immigrants are trying to cross the border illegally. Eagle Pass Mayor Chad Foster, who heads the border coalition, said a steady increase of Border Patrol staffing is responsible for the declining arrests. "We have a new Border Patrol station opened in Eagle Pass in the last six months, and the Border Patrol has continued to recruit agents," Foster said. "I think because of their strong presence (on the border), that links back to reduced apprehensions."

However, some experts maintain that a slowing economy is more responsible for the lower number of arrests. With fewer jobs available, fewer immigrants try to migrate north. That raises an obvious question: When the U.S. economy recovers, won't more immigrants try to cross into America illegally, thus making a case for a border fence? Foster, however, said by the time the economy bounces back Congress will have passed long-anticipated immigration reform that includes a guest worker program. Immigrant workers will cross the border lawfully through ports of entry. His border group notes that in San Diego, where heavy fencing and walls have been in place for years, apprehensions are up 28 percent during the last four years.

"Here we are in middle of a financial crisis, and we're going to spend billions on something that doesn't make sense?" said Laredo Mayor Raul Salinas. "Walls don't work - people go under, over and around them." Elected officials from nearly every Texas border town oppose the fence, saying it's not as effective as more border agents and installing high-tech surveillance technology. According to Border Patrol statistics, apprehensions of illegal immigrants along the Southwest border have fallen dramatically in the last four years. In fiscal year 2005, nearly 1.2 million immigrants were arrested, dropping to 1 million in 2006 and 860,000 by 2007. In the first 11 months of the most recent fiscal year, which ended Sept. 30, arrests on the border had fallen to 660,000.

The head of a border agents union said fencing only delays illegal immigrants for the few minutes it takes them to climb over the barrier. If there are not enough agents in the area to detain them as they attempt to enter, they simply slip by. "We don't build fences that slice and dice people," said T.J. Bonner, president of the 14,000-member National Border Patrol Council. "We design fences that slow people down and if you don't have the agents in place, that's all you've done."

In the Rio Grande Valley, landowners who oppose the fence say the increased Border Patrol activity is all that's needed. "We have more bodies on the river and that is helping," said Noel Benavides, a Roma City Council member who is fighting efforts to condemn portions of his family's 140-acre ranch on the Rio Grande for the fence. "With the wall costing millions per mile how many agents would that hire?"

Opposition to the fence has been blunted in some border communities, where the government incorporated the barrier with needed projects. In Hidalgo County, county and drainage district officials teamed up with the federal government and are rebuilding dirt levees on the river with 22 miles of concrete walls topped with security fencing. The \$179 million project, funded in part with \$48.5 million in local flood control funds, is on existing right-of-way and does not require land acquisition. In Laredo, plans to fence miles of riverfront were scrapped when local Border Patrol officials determined it was not needed. Instead of a fence, Border Patrol officials added hundreds of agents, are planning to clear thick stands of non-native cane that provides hiding places on the river bank and instituted a zero-tolerance arrest policy for first-time border crossers. As a result, arrests have dropped 23 percent in the last fiscal year.

Mr. Pinkerton's piece was first published in the Oct. 21, 2008 Houston Chronicle. It appears here in an abridged version —Ed.

Nov 8: McKittrick Canyon Dayhike

Place: Guadalupe Mountains National Park
 Class: Easy +
 Length: 7 miles
 Elevation gain: none
 Leader: Gil Pinon: 915 307-3398

Don't miss the fall foliage in the "Guads!" Color should be at its height on this weekend. We will leave early for the two and half hour drive out east through Guadalupe Pass and on around to McKittrick Canyon in case the parking lot should fill up. After our orientation we'll take a leisurely walk up to the Grotto, enjoying the fall colors and pristine riparian areas along the way. Bring a camera, a lunch and some water. Picnic tables provided! Our friends at GMNP really take great care of our nearest National Park.

Nov 15-16: West Dog Canyon/Marcus Campground Backpack

Place: Guadalupe Mountains National Park
 Class: Moderate +
 Length: about 7 miles round trip
 Elevation gain: about 800 feet
 Leader: Rollin Wickenden rwickgila@aol.com

We will depart El Paso on Saturday morning and drive to Dog Canyon Campground. After picking up our backcountry permit, we will head off from the trail head in Dog Canyon to the West, climbing to the rim overlooking West Dog Canyon. After descending into West Dog, we will continue hiking west to our campsite at Marcus Campground. After setting up our tents and hanging our food, we may offer a day hike on the Outer Mountain Loop trail. After spending a pleasant but cold night at Marcus Campground, we will pack up and retrace our steps to our vehicles in Dog Canyon. Participants must carry all water for cooking and drinking. Participants should be experienced backpackers, well equipped for cold, windy, winter weather. E-mail Rollin for details and reservations.

El Paso Group Directory

<http://texas.sierraclub.org/elpaso>

Executive Committee

Chair: Laurence Gibson	lgibson@utep.edu	915/309-5419
Vice-Chair: Gil Pinon	bifflehead@yahoo.com	915/307-3398
Secretary: Ann Falknor	afalknor@sbcglobal.net	915/833-9162
Treasurer: Kathy Sunday	sundayt@zianet.com	915/584-9301
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Rollin Wickenden	rwickgila@aol.com	915/855-6697
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Terry Sunday	sundayt@zianet.com	915/584-9301

A Primer on Cap and Trade

The Western Climate Initiative (WCI) has mostly finished its job to study and recommend a template cap and trade (C&T) system for the alliance of states and Canadian provinces who have agreed to form a regional greenhouse gas mitigation scheme. A cap and trade system is a systematic approach to the problem of greenhouse gas regulation, because it sets a limit for emissions across an entire economic sector (or sectors) and over an entire geographical region. The governments within the region may adopt additional measures to control the emissions, such as “clean cars” legislation, but the cap system is the secret to ultimate control, and the fact that our State has been an enthusiastic member of the WCI is very good news for addressing the climate change problem in our state and region.

In a cap and trade system, the first step is to set the cap as a function of time so that it starts innocuously, and decreases over time so that at some target date, a scientifically justified level of emissions has been achieved. In our case, the first intermediate target date is 2020, when emissions are to be reduced to 15% below their values in 2005. The ultimate goal in 2050 is to reduce emissions to 75% - 80% below their 2005 levels, a goal consistent with accepted science recommendations. Emission regulation will begin on January 1, 2012, and the cap declines linearly from its initial value in 2012 to the 2020 goal.

The “trade” part of the scheme means that once targets have been set for each industry, the industrial entity can buy and sell its “permits” or “allowances” to meet its needs. That is, the company must surrender allowances to cover its actual emissions at specified times. An individual company obtains its allowances by one of two different ways: 1) The State or region conducts an auction of the emission allowances consistent with the cap for a given time period. 2) The State may distribute all or a portion of the allowances



A cap and trade system would help to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions from such coal-fired power plants as the Four Corners plant in northwestern NM. (Photo © Carlan Tapp 2006)

freely to individual companies consistent with the cap set for that company. 3) The State may combine the former methods. For example, it may auction at least 10% (the actual proposal for WCI) and distribute the remainder free. The WCI proposes that the lower limit grow over time to 75% in 2020.

The scope of the program is set initially to cover electric power, large industrial emitters (above an annual limit of 25,000 tons of CO₂ [equivalent]), and emission from oil and gas production. In 2015, transportation is proposed to be brought under the program. Thus, the WCI system covers multiple industrial sectors, and trading of allowances is permitted not only geographically between companies, but between covered sectors, as well. (This multiple sector coverage is unique in extant C&T schemes, and the effects of inter-sector trading are only imperfectly understood.)

The point of regulation is the source of emissions – in the electric sector, that is the power plant. For imported products (electricity imported from a non-WCI state), the first jurisdiction which controls the power or other product is responsible for holding emission permits. This raises a serious issue of determining the emission characteristic of the imported product, which is not generally known. That is, electricity is bought off the grid from a producer who does not specify the emission characteristic of the electricity. The states are currently studying methods for dealing with this issue.

Two major issues have risen: The first is the auction limit noted above, and the distribution of the proceeds from the auction. This is important, because, since there exists a market for buying and selling allowances, an allowance has monetary value, and if they are given away, that can be the equivalent to a direct monetary subsidy, and “windfall profits” to the company holding the allowance. If the allowances are fully auctioned, the monetary value of the allowances is held by the State, and they can be distributed in various ways to lower the impact of greenhouse regulation, for example on low-income families, or to fund research on renewables, etc. On the other hand, an industry with high capitalization, such as a steel mill, the cost of conforming to a cap may cause large price run-ups for the steel while the company invests in emission control technology.

There is a special situation in the electric power sector. In NM, the electric utilities are mostly regulated by the Public Regulation Commission (PRC), and this oversight by the PRC can prohibit windfall profits. Indeed, since the utility need not purchase allowances at auction, this saving from not buying the allowances can be passed on directly to the public in lower rates. (Note that this does *not* mean that the utility can “skin out” of its obligation to install emission savings technology – that is always assured by the existence of the cap.)

A further advantage of free distribution of allowances to the utilities is that the entire administration of the emission control program, including efficiency programs and Renewable Portfolio Standards programs, etc., can be administered in an optimum manner. The Sierra Club recommends that 10% of the electric sector allowances be auctioned, and the remainder distributed freely under the supervision of the PRC. We recommend that nonregulated industries under the cap be auctioned at the 100% level.

The second major issue revolves around offsets. The idea of an offset is that certain industries entirely outside the scope of the emission control program (such as planting trees) may provide a source for emission reduction. In a sense, it makes little difference where an emission is not made – it still contributes to lowered emission, even if it is not covered by the C&T system. But offsets, by definition, take place in industrial sectors not understood as well as those sectors included in the program. Thus, it is not easy, and may be expensive, to set up the necessary controls and assurance mechanisms that the emissions saved are really saved. The forestry sector, for example, is notoriously difficult to understand and to assure this suitability. So the Sierra Club recommendation is that no more than 10% of the allowances needed to meet the cap at any one time be permitted to be offset.

The State is currently deeply involved in the process of determining how it will implement the WCI program, specifically, what new authority is needed from the Legislature, and when it should be approached for that authority. If you wish further information, contact Robb Thomson (robbsm@toast.net).

—Robb Thomson

There is no Central Group page this issue, but see page 16 for outings. Contact any of the members of the ExCom with questions or to volunteer.

Central Group Directory

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Lori Healy, Membership Chair

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The Executive Committee meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m., at the Sierra Club office, 142 Truman NE, Albuquerque.

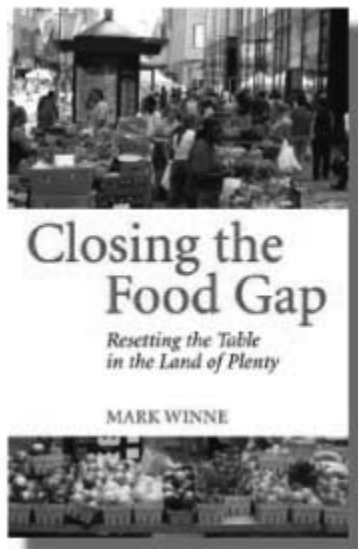
Book Focuses on Making Local Food Accessible to All

Closing the Food Gap: Resetting the Table in the Land of Plenty by Mark Winne

I chose this book to understand an expert's advice in what other parameters I should be aware of as I sought a better understanding of how to bring "more food local." Winne's story is one of having hope to feed persons of lower income levels with better food, drawing on his decades-long experience with moving the farm closer to the people.

Mark presents his many experiences and perspectives in an engaging style that drew me into the challenge that he faced as he led the Hartford Food System in Connecticut. His presentation creates visual paintings for the reader, and he has an ability to see humor in his encounters.

Santa Fe Farmers Market is our own wonderful example



of how it is possible to bring locally grown organic food to the consumer. It decreases the distance from the farm to the table, which decreases our energy footprint, and brings hope to the small farmer for survival. For those able to afford the higher prices, it brings more variety and fresher produce. However, what about all of the lower-income folks?

How is it possible for poor neighborhoods to have healthy food although they are surrounded by high-fat and high-sugar fast food, and devoid of local supermarkets? Mark examines a number of interconnected support systems that we have built to assist those of lower income levels. He shows how we can "fight back" when McDonalds spends \$500 million on a single advertising campaign in a year in which our Department of Agriculture spends only \$3 million to promote the food pyramid guidelines.

Mark makes a critical point: We will have to work the solution

from our local area. The process of lobbying in Washington tends to focus on the specific agenda of a particular vested interest. The Sierra Club has finite resources, and through our political activism, we are focusing on the imminent threat of global warming, which will impact all of us, but especially the poor.

We will all be in trouble if our planet is not able to sustain us. Food security for those of lower income levels is one of the most urgent needs that Mark Winne presents. As we work to solve environmental challenges, we need solutions that provide us all food security. Bringing farms closer to us is a feasible and powerful way to reduce our carbon footprint while improving everyone's access to sufficient and wholesome food.

—John Buchser



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Preserve the Future

To Contribute to the Rio Grande Sierran

The *Rio Grande Sierran* is published six times a year – early January, March, May, July, September, and November – by the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club as a benefit for members living in New Mexico and West Texas. The opinions expressed in signed articles in the *Rio Grande Sierran* are the opinions of the writers and not necessarily those of the Sierra Club. Articles may be freely reprinted for nonprofit purposes, provided that credit is given to the author and the *Rio Grande Sierran*. (Please let us know if you reprint.) Products and services advertised in the *Rio Grande Sierran* are not necessarily endorsed by the Sierra Club.

Contributions – articles, photos, artwork, poems, letters to the editor, paid advertisements – are welcome. Send to the editor (see masthead page 2). Submissions by Rio Grande Chapter members will take precedence over others. Articles are subject to abridgement. Letters to the editor may be up to 500 words. The contributor's name and email address will be printed as a source of more information, unless the contributor specifies otherwise.

Submissions must be received by the 10th of the month prior to publication. Editorial practices as developed and adopted by the Rio Grande Chapter will be used in production of the *Rio Grande Sierran*. Contents of the Group pages are the responsibility of the editor for that Group and any policies that are in place from that Group.

Nonmember subscriptions are \$10 per year. Send checks to Cliff Larsen, 824 Los Lovatos Road, Santa Fe, NM 87501. Please allow eight weeks for processing.

Extra copies are often available. Please contact the editor (see masthead, page 2) or the Group Chair in your area (see Group pages).

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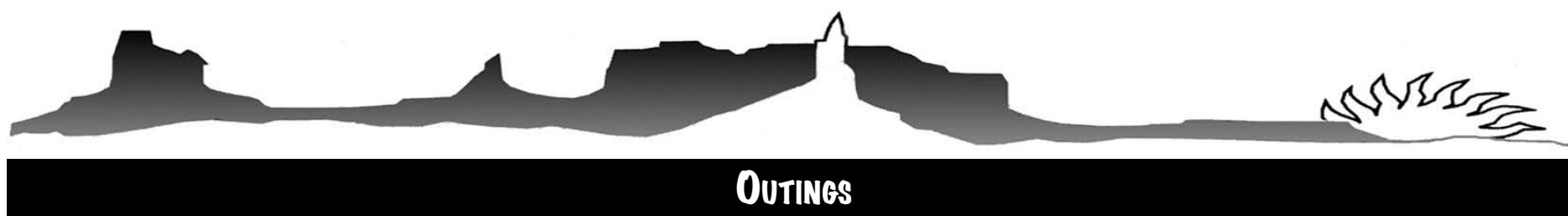
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OUTINGS

Selected Sierra Club Outings for Nov./Dec. 2008, Early Jan. 2009

Sunday, November 2 • Holiday Mesa hike, in Jemez – 6 miles, 1600' gain. Moderate/strenuous. Fossils and petroglyphs. Dogs okay. Stephen Markowitz (505/983-2779 before 8:00 p.m. – Northern Group).

Saturday, November 8 • Ojitos Trail hike, Chama River Canyon Wilderness – 8 to 10 miles. Some off-trail. Michael Di Rosa (505/667-0095, 505/663-0648 – Pajarito Group).

Saturday, November 8 • Pine Tree Trail and off-trail canyons hike – 7 miles. Moderate. Beautiful views of Organ Mountains and Tularosa Basin. John Waugh (575/526-7116 – Southern Group).

Saturday, November 8 • Desert exploratory hike – 6-10 miles, 500'-1500' gain. Moderate. Off-trail. Enjoy the desert in the cool season. Tom Petencin (505/271-9928, tompeten@msn.com – Central Group).

Saturday, November 8 • McKittrick Canyon hike, in Guadalupe Mountains State Park – 7 miles. Easy. Fall colors, pristine riparian areas. Gil Pinon (915/307-3398 – El Paso Group).

Sunday, November 9 • Diablo Canyon hike – 6 miles, 400' gain. Easy walk to the Rio Grande. Dan Rusthoi (505/690-8967 – Northern Group).

Saturday, November 15 • La Luz Trail hike, Sandia Mountains – 14 miles, 3800' gain. Awesome views. Tobin Oruch (505/820-2844 – Northern Group).

Saturday, November 15 • Desert exploratory hike – 6-10 miles, 500'-1500' gain. Moderate. Off-trail. Enjoy the desert in the cool season. Tom Petencin (505/271-9928, tompeten@msn.com – Central Group).

Saturday-Sunday, November 15-16 • West Dog Canyon/Marcus Camp-ground backpack – 7 miles, 800' gain. Moderate-plus, For reservations, email Rollin Wickenden (rwickgila@aol.com – El Paso Group).

Sunday, November 16 • Cottonwood Springs hike, in Franklin Mts. State Park – 4 miles, 750' gain. Moderate. Liz Walsh (915/747-5421, ewalsh@utep.edu – El Paso Group).

Sunday, November 16 • Gallinas/Railroad Canyon hike, Black Range – 12 miles. Strenuous. Stream crossings, great views. Margot Wilson (575/744-5860 – Southern Group).

Sunday, November 16 • Penstemon Ridge hike, off lower end of Ski Basin Road – 7 miles. Easy/moderate. Interesting views. Norma McCallan (505/471-0005 – Northern Group).

Saturday, November 22 • Taos Foothills exploratory hike – 7-9 miles, 1500' gain. Moderate/strenuous. Off-trail. Dogs okay. Page Press (505/946-0169 – Northern Group).

Sunday, November 23 • Caja del Rio to Tor, Cerro Rito, Blowhole hike – 8-9 miles, 1200' gain. Moderate. Remnants of volcanic activity. Norbert Sperlich (505/474-4354 – Northern Group).

Saturday, November 29 • Red Mesa hike – 6 miles, 1500' gain. Moderate. Off-trail. Dogs okay. Stephen Markowitz (505/983-2779 before 8:00 p.m. – Northern Group).

Saturday, November 29 • Desert exploratory hike – 6-10 miles, 500'-1500' gain. Moderate. Off-trail. Enjoy the desert in the cool season. Tom Petencin (505/271-9928, tompeten@msn.com – Central Group).

Sunday, November 30 • Cerro Pedernal hike – 8 miles, 1800' gain. Strenuous. Patrick O'Keefe (505/820-2359 – Northern Group).

Saturday, December 6 • Desert exploratory hike – 6-10 miles, 500'-1500' gain. Moderate. Off-trail. Enjoy the desert in the cool season. Tom Petencin (505/271-9928, tompeten@msn.com – Central Group).

Saturday, December 6 • Borrego/Bear Wallow loop hike – 4 miles, 760' gain. Easy. Dogs okay. John Varner (505/795-5948 – Northern Group).

Sunday, December 7 • Window Rock and Gates of Hell hike, near Española – 8-9 miles. Moderate/strenuous. Some in sand. Dogs okay. Basalt formations. Bogdan Mihaila (505/662-0421 – Northern Group).

Saturday, December 13 • Cross-country ski in the Brazos area – Moderate. Alan Shapiro (505/424-9242 – Northern Group).

Sunday, December 14 • Nun's Corner Loop hike at Ski Basin Road – 4 miles, 500' gain. Easy. Dogs okay. Norma McCallan (505/471-0005 – Northern Group).

Sunday, December 14 • Valle Canyon hike – View remarkable petroglyphs. Some dangerous scrambles. Accessible only by four-wheel drive. 12 participants only, reservations a must. Dan Lorimier (575/740-2927 – Southern Group), Margot Wilson (575/744-5860 – Southern Group).

Saturday, December 20 • Cumbres Pass cross-country ski – Intermediate skill. Moderate/strenuous. Jean Dewart prior to December 16 (505/662-9592 – Pajarito Group).

Saturday, December 20 • Beginner's snowshoe clinic near Santa Fe Ski Basin – Rent shoes and poles. Learn about gear and technique. Marcia Skillman (505/699-3008 – Northern Group).

Saturday, December 20 • Ghost Ranch hike – 7-8 miles, 1200' gain. Moderate/strenuous. Mostly off-trail, one scramble up Kitchen Mesa possible. Michael Di Rosa (505/667-0095 or 505/663-0648 – Pajarito & Northern Groups).

Saturday, December 20 • Santa Fe River cleanup – 9:00-11:00 a.m. Park at Lower Alto Street, north end of Closson. Bring work boots, gloves, and drinking water. Kathleen Davis (505/438-0357, Kdav40@aol.com – Northern Group).

Sunday, December 21 • Fillmore Canyon hike – 8 miles. Moderate. See old mine ruins. John Waugh (575/526-7116 – Southern Group).

Sunday, December 21 • Tetilla Peak hike, by way of old La Bajada Road – 10 miles, 1600' gain. Moderate/strenuous. Dogs okay. Daisy Levine (505/466-8338 – Northern Group).

Saturday, December 27 • Deception Peak snowshoe – 6-7 miles, 2000' gain. Strenuous. Dogs okay. Patrick O'Keefe (505/820-2359 – Northern Group).

Sunday, December 28 • White Rock Canyon hike – 8 miles, 1000' gain. Moderate/strenuous. Some rough off-trail. Dogs okay. Norbert Sperlich (505/474-4354 – Northern Group).

Saturday, January 3 • Sandias cross-country ski – Hike if poor snow, with dogs okay. Page Press (505/946-0169 – Northern Group).

Sunday, January 4 • Buckman Mesa hike – 5 miles, 1100' gain. Moderate. Dogs okay. John Varner (505/795-5948 – Northern Group).

Please check the five Groups' pages for more information on these trips and additional activities. All mileages are round trips. Participants must sign a liability waiver.

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—Dan Lorimier



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