

# Rio Grande Sierran



NEWS OF THE RIO GRANDE CHAPTER OF THE SIERRA CLUB

JULY/AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2010

## Oil Disaster Is a Wake-Up Call to Move Beyond Dirty Energy

**T**his oil disaster should be a wake-up call. It changes everything. If this can happen in the Gulf Coast, it can happen anywhere that drilling takes place, such as New Mexico.

We're standing in solidarity with the people of the Gulf Coast who are looking at massive job losses and devastated coastlines. We need to clean up the Gulf Coast and then clean up our energy so we're not relying on dirty oil and coal.

This oil disaster shows that drilling is risky, dirty, and dangerous. It's time to move forward with an aggressive plan to end our addiction to oil/coal and build a clean energy economy.

Send an email to President Obama telling him that we need accelerate plans to build a clean energy economy. And visit [http://action.sierraclub.org/site/PageNavigator/adv\\_oilspill](http://action.sierraclub.org/site/PageNavigator/adv_oilspill) for more ways to take action.

—David Van Winkle



*Brown Pelican covered in oil on Barataria Bay off the coast of Grand Terre Island, Louisiana, found by members of the Sierra Club on a recent trip to survey the effects of the oil spill. The Brown Pelican, Louisiana's state bird, was taken off the endangered species list in November of 2009. (Photo by Julie Nermansky © 2010)*



*Sierra Club volunteers clean up oil from Queen Bess Island, Grand Isle, Louisiana. Michael Burne, the new executive director of the Sierra Club, and Sierra Club staff toured the area in early June and met with officials about the unsatisfactory response to the oil leak crisis. (Photo by Jordan Macha)*

## Change the Politics, Not the Climate: Congressional Action Now!

**M**ore than a year has lapsed since the U.S. House of Representatives passed the American Clean Energy and Security Act (H.R. 2454, ACES Act), setting limits on climate change pollution and targets for a shift to clean, renewable electricity nationwide. All eyes have been on the U.S. Senate since then to follow suit with its own clean energy and climate protection plan. Introduction of various bills notwithstanding, our senators have failed to advance their own energy-climate legislation – and the United States continues to lag behind China, Europe, and others in addressing the climate crisis caused largely by our deadly addiction to fossil fuels.

The window of opportunity for Congress to pass a bill this year is closing rapidly with the 2010 elections just a few months away. This summer, therefore, is do-or-die time for our senators to pass strong, comprehensive legislation that limits carbon pollution and accelerates our transition to a clean energy economy. In New Mexico, we must especially influence our senior senator, Jeff Bingaman (Chair of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee), and urge him to exercise leadership in pushing for bold,

clean energy measures that will help create jobs, save consumers money, and improve public health.

Senator Bingaman's ENR Committee did put out an energy bill around the same time the House passed the ACES Act. Despite the bill's title – the American Clean Energy Leadership Act (S. 1462) – the Sierra Club and nearly all our allies declared opposition to the bill for its weak targets and handouts to dirty energy industries. We must demand an ambitious Renewable Electricity Standard, a standalone Energy Efficiency Resource Standard, and a Clean Energy Deployment Administration that gives highest priority to investments that will achieve the maximum greenhouse-gas emission reductions.

The Sierra Club, along with many allies, believes that the American Power Act, introduced by Senators John Kerry and Joe Lieberman, presents the most solid foundation of a climate bill, if – and only if – it is improved by limiting the amount of “offsets” that can be utilized to meet emission reduction targets; eliminating subsidies and incentives for dirty energy industries like nuclear, carbon capture and sequestration, and offshore oil drilling; and increasing

funding for clean energy deployment and domestic and international adaptation measures.

For a more complete analysis of the American Power Act, please visit <http://nmsierraclub.org/club-takes-strong-positions-on-climate-change-actions>. A primer on federal energy-climate legislation is at <http://nmsierraclub.org/clean-energy-legislation-primer>.

Join us in urging Senators Jeff Bingaman and Tom Udall to make action on energy and climate change their top priority before the current congressional session ends. To volunteer this summer, contact Shrayas Jatkar, Associate Regional Representative of Sierra Club's Clean Energy Solutions & Federal/International Curbing Carbon campaigns (505/243-7767, [shrayas.jatkar@sierraclub.org](mailto:shrayas.jatkar@sierraclub.org)).

—Shrayas Jatkar



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The Club has four structural levels. The National Board of Directors determines the overall direction of the Club. The National Club is subdivided into three Regions (West, Central, East), which are subdivided into Chapters. Each chapter is divided into Groups, of which the Rio Grande Chapter has five. One representative from each Chapter reports to the National Board through the Council of Club Leaders.

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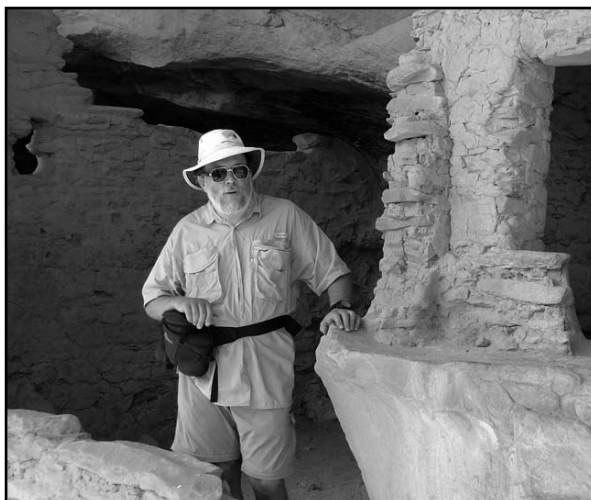
## Celebrating the Legacies of New Mexico's Eco Heroes

"It is crucial you take care of the earth."

—Message from Stewart Udall in his final days, directed to the conservation community, as related by Karin Schaufele, who cared for Stewart during his last 18 months.

"Stewart Udall is the greatest American conservationist since Teddy Roosevelt."

—Bruce Babbitt,



New Mexico lost three of its most respected conservationists this year. Most recently, Stewart Udall helped us to save the Valles Caldera. His son Tom Udall, I am sure, will help us gain the full protection under the National Park Service. It was evident from the many speakers and large audience this Father's Day at a Celebration of the Life and Legacy of the senior Udall that he touched folks in many ways, from recognition of the damage to the health of Navajo uranium miners to the hiring of the first black ranger in the park service. His sibling Burr Udall did point out he had a weakness – he was poorly focused on farming, with his horse team frequently returning to the barn on its own soon after he started to plow the fields.

Marilyn Cooper was New Mexico's first licensed female building contractor. I met her at a training seminar in Albuquerque, whose focus was about the planet needing a goal of a sustainable human population. She shared my belief that we needed to do as much as we could to educate about family planning – focusing especially on women around the world. Her

own beautiful business headquarters was the place where we met. I recall her commenting to me that, after she let young folks from around the country occupy her office while they were in Albuquerque to knock on doors in support of conservation-minded Democratic candidates, she needed to spend over \$10,000 to rehabilitate the premises.

Gail Ryba was an alternative energy and biking advocate. She was the only person I have ever met who could clearly explain a complex energy regulatory issue in 5 or 10 minutes. It is fitting to have the new bike bridge across the Rio Grande in Albuquerque named in her memory. Gail's path to a new energy economy will be one we will be following for many years.

We can all take inspiration from the qualities and focus of these environmental heroes.

—John Buchser,  
Chair, Rio Grande Chapter

### Sierran Goes Quarterly

With this issue, our print newsletter, *Rio Grande Sierran*, will be published every three months: January, April, July, and October. The Rio Grande Chapter's website, Facebook page, and Twitter account are updated daily, so be sure to join us online!

Web – <http://nmsierraclub.org>  
Facebook – Sierra Club: Rio Grande Chapter  
Twitter – @NMSierraclub

### Norma McCallan Honored by Sierra Club

Everyone involved in the Rio Grande Chapter is well aware that Vice Chair Norma McCallan is a major force in protecting New Mexico's environment. In recognition, Norma has been selected to receive the Sierra Club's One Club Award. The award honors Club members at any level who have used outings as a way to protect or improve public lands, instill an interest in conservation, increase membership in the Sierra Club, or increase awareness of the Sierra Club.

Norma will receive her award at the Club's annual dinner to be held in San Francisco on Saturday, September 25.

Congratulations, Norma!

—Ellen Cavalli

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## Clean Energy Champion Gail Ryba Passes Away

At an Earth Day celebration in 2002 in Santa Fe, I spotted Gail Ryba riding her bike, wearing her ubiquitous yellow jacket. “So, Gail, how’d you like to take over for me as energy chair for the Rio Grande Chapter?” She replied, “Gee, I’m pretty busy with the bicycle coalition and the Coalition for Clean Affordable Energy and raising a child.” “I know,” I said, “I always look for over-extended activists.” “Okay, I’ll think it over.” The very next day Gail called me and agreed to be the energy chair, and thus began Gail’s short but effective stint as a Sierra Club activist.

Gail found the Public Regulation Commission ripe for public input. So she encouraged Club staffer Carol Oldham to ask the commission to advocate that the electric utility PNM supply compact fluorescent light bulbs through schools, churches, and public events, and in return Sierra Club would distribute them for free. Tens of thousands of light bulbs distributed, hundreds of folks saving on electric bills, and untold pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> avoided, are all thanks to Gail’s insight and encouragement.

Gail’s scientific background helped her tackle issues we mere mortals shrink from due to their sheer complexity. The Club’s fight against the Desert Rock power plant was greatly enhanced by her ability to untangle technical and economic arguments and to

explain how an alternative route of energy efficiency and renewables is a far preferable road to take.

Tidiness was not one of Gail’s virtues. On the day when the Coalition and the Club were to move from one office site to another, Gail was still putting eminently recyclable items like 10-year-old reports into boxes, and no moving trucks were to be seen. Then, at the appointed 8:00 a.m. hour, bicyclists toting carts and kids’ buggies behind their bikes arrived to tote off the items for a 2-mile schlep.

It was always fun to carpool to one of our quarterly chapter meetings with Gail. We’d talk on the drive down to Seville about how to get another policy in place to promote bicycling at city hall or DOT, and scheme about promoting energy efficiency before the Legislature or at the PRC, then we’d pick up the conversation’s threads on the drive back.

Getting the news those many months ago that Gail was fighting cancer was more of a blow to the gut than the Gulf oil disaster is now. The last time I saw Gail was at her yard sale, held last autumn to raise funds for her medical bills. Her physical weariness was outmatched by her cheery determination to greet all who came and offer a bargain no one could refuse.

They say no one is irreplaceable. There are exceptions to every truism. Gail is that exception.

—Ken Hughes

### Gail Naomi Ryba

November 30, 1962 - May 7, 2010



Gail is survived by her husband, Thomas Robey (former Rio Grande Chapter treasurer); her daughter, Lynn; her mother, Frances (Joyce) Ryba; and siblings David, Eric, and Diane.

Donations in memory can be made to the Sierra Club, Gerard’s House, Presbyterian Medical Services Home Care and Hospice, or the Bicycle Coalition of New Mexico.

## Support Strong EPA Controls on Coal Waste

New Mexico suffers the polluting effects of combustion coal waste (CCW) from coal-fired electrical generation in San Juan County where the toxics bearing “fly ash” have been dumped in unlined strip mines that formerly produced coal. Tell Governor Richardson and our congressional delegation to support strong Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) controls on disposal of this toxic waste to protect our land and water.

After decades of efforts to get federal oversight of the disposal of CCW, concerns over pollution from the careless disposal of this coal-fired electrical generation waste stream are finally on center stage. Nationally, 70 million tons of CCW were dumped last year. To make the right choices now, the EPA needs to hear your support for the more protective of two policies being proposed as options.

National attention is currently focused on the threats generated by CCW slurry impoundments, like the one that ruptured in 2008 at Kingston, Tennessee. While both of EPA’s options focus on dealing with this slurry impoundment problem, only one of the options being considered by the EPA has the potential to address the CCW pollution caused by mine dumping. That option is also far more effective at controlling the disposal of this dangerous by-product of coal-fired electrical generation.

Now is a critical time to counter industry efforts who support the weaker option that excludes the examination of New Mexico’s mine-fill dumping of CCWs. Please send an email to get our governor and congressmen to support the stronger option.

To make sure that the EPA chooses the more protective option, go to <http://action.sierraclub.org/peoplenotcoal>. Find out more about this important issue and the true costs of coal at <http://nmsierraclub.org>. Or contact Dan Lorimer, Chapter Conservation Coordinator (575/740-2927, [daniel.lorimer@sierraclub.org](mailto:daniel.lorimer@sierraclub.org)).

—Dan Lorimer

## Conservation Groups Want Nation’s Biggest National Park Polluter to Clean Up

Conservation groups have asked federal agencies to require New Mexico’s dirtiest coal-fired power plant to take measures to reduce its air pollution, and thereby lessen the amount of haze it causes in national parks and wilderness areas.

The National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA), Earthjustice, Sierra Club, San Juan Citizens Alliance, the Center for Biological Diversity, Dooda Desert Rock, Diné CARE, WildEarth Guardians, and the Grand Canyon Trust have petitioned the Department of Interior and the Department of Agriculture to declare that the pollution from the Arizona Public Service Company’s Four Corners Power Plant (Four Corners) on Navajo land in northwest New Mexico is violating the Clean Air Act by causing poor visibility in protected areas in Arizona, Utah, New Mexico, and Colorado.

“This outdated plant’s emissions have obscured priceless views in our national parks for years in a brown haze,” said Stephanie Kodish, Clean Air Counsel for NPCA. “It’s time for EPA to take action for residents’ health and to protect our cultural and scenic treasures.”

Four Corners is the largest single source of air pollution in the state of New Mexico, according to the Arizona Public Service’s monitoring reports. Every year Four Corners’ five generating units burn over 10 million tons of coal, and discharge into the air of the Colorado Plateau approximately 42,000 tons of nitrogen oxides, 12,000 tons of sulfur dioxide, and 1,300 tons of particulate matter. These pollutants are the major components of haze.

Because Four Corners is within 300 kilometers of 16 Class I national parks and wilderness areas, much of this pollution degrades the beauty of these national treasures. Places with world-recognized cultural and natural value, including Mesa Verde,

Canyonlands, and Arches National Parks, are among those most affected by Four Corners’ pollution.

“When the wind is blowing pollution from the Four Corners plant to Mesa Verde, Bryce Canyon or Grand Canyon National Parks, visibility is seriously impaired,” said Roger Clark, air and energy program director for the Grand Canyon Trust. “Only when the wind is coming from another direction is the clarity of the landscape anything like what it used to be. The number of days when views in these parks is clouded by pollution seems to be ever-increasing.”

Air modeling done for the Arizona Public Service Company has found that the plant’s air pollution reduces visibility by 27 times the amount defined as causing impairment by the Environmental Protection Agency. The National Park Service has found that Four Corners has the greatest visibility impact on Class I national parks of any coal plant in the country.

“Not only is the pollution hurting national parks, but the Four Corners Region, which is home to several indigenous tribes,” said Anna Frazier, Diné CARE Coordinator, who lives on the Navajo reservation. “Their health and way of life are impacted by deadly chemicals from pollution.”

James Zion of Dooda Desert Rock agrees. “I frequently travel to Shiprock from Gallup on business, and in winter, the horizon is yellowed with pollution,” he said. “Much of this pollution seems to be coming from the Four Corners plant. As an attorney who represents Navajo clients interested in tourism and economic growth, I am concerned that tourists will not want to visit this area because of all the pollution in the air.”

For more information, contact Kathleen O’Neil, Media Relations, National Parks Conservation Association (202/419-3717).

—Kathleen O’Neil

## White Peak Safe for Now, but State Auctions Nearby Land to Petroleum Industry

A fierce counter to New Mexico State Land Commissioner Patrick Lyons' White Peak "land swap" with local ranchers in Mora County took front page in New Mexico newspapers this past winter. Today, that deal lies in the hands of the New Mexico Supreme Court after the attorney general intervened, but not without unprecedented efforts on the part of citizens who believe White Peak is land of the people, not a chosen few.

Some say in response to this citizen intervention, the rash of 78 state trust land parcels auctioned in June and July (26,461.17 acres) in Mora and 20 in Colfax County for oil and gas lease is ongoing retaliation. Nine of the original 29 parcels slated from Colfax County in June were withdrawn from auction due to their proximity to White Peak after citizens reported the conflict based upon a 2009 press release in which Lyons said "all land in the vicinity of White Peak would be protected from oil and gas drilling."

Until September 2008, no state trust land had been leased in Mora County, and then 13,000 acres were auctioned to KHL Inc., Albuquerque, and Daniel Gonzales, Santa Fe. A number of these parcels are in Naranjos, just east of Ocate, and well within the White Peak area, which according to Lyon's statement would preclude them from oil and gas development due to the sensitivity of the White Peak area for hunting and recreational activities. These leases have yet to be contested based upon this decree.

The June/July parcels fall just outside the Las Vegas Basin, north of Wagon Mound, east of I-25. According to the Broadhead Report produced by industry and used by Lyons to promote the state land leasing, the Las Vegas Basin has less than 1% total organic carbons (T.O.C.) compared to the Raton Basin at more than 10% T.O.C., which is currently being drilled for coal bed methane "natural gas." The Las Vegas Basin, according to geologist Andrew Feldman, would produce natural gas from shale

bed formations. Both basins require hydraulic fracturing to release the trapped hydrocarbons from deep pockets beneath the earth's surface.

According to Lyons, state trust land goes to auction at the request of individuals and corporations for the purpose of generating revenue, largely to pay for our children's public school education. It is a curious contradiction of social action – lease state land for industrial development; contaminate water, air, and soil in order to support the education of our children. Surely another answer is within sight so that our children can have not only a well-funded public school education, but also a clean, natural wild environment in which to learn their connection to Nature without sharing it with generators and gas pumps.

In October 2007, KHL Inc. began leasing private mineral rights in Mora and San Miguel Counties. The total recorded private land leases to date in Mora County, filed at the clerk's office, tallies over 105,000 acres, but industry asserts not all leased land has been recorded. KHL Inc. has since sold their leases to Royal Dutch Shell subsidiary, SWEPI (Shell Western Exploration & Production), out of Denver, Colorado. And Oklahoma-based CEJA Inc. holds nearly a third of those acres on file.

New players entered the leasing game this June at the land office. The list of lessees has doubled since leasing began in Mora County: Yates Petroleum, Black Crown Energy Partner, Roy, G. Barton Jr., KHL Inc., and Cecilia Rath. This activity is expected



*Ojo Feliz, as viewed from Montosa, is threatened with drilling because the leases lie within the Las Vegas Basin. (Photo by Dan Hamilton)*

and follows suit with all other counties where leases begin a corporation at a time, and can multiply into the hundreds.

Private and state trust land leases for exploration in and near the Las Vegas Basin, not including the pending "land swap," put mineral leases in Mora County at a hefty 144,000 acres of land leased for drilling. It is clear that the plan to lease the Las Vegas Basin and region is firmly under way. At this time, however, permits by neither the state nor the county have been given for oil and gas development activity.

For more information, contact Kathleen Dudley, co-founder, Drilling Mora County ([drillingmoracounty@gmail.com](mailto:drillingmoracounty@gmail.com)), or visit <http://drillingmoracounty.org>.

—Kathleen Dudley

## San Miguel, Las Vegas Enact Moratoriums on Drilling

Two northeastern New Mexico counties continue to try to navigate the uncharted territory of oil and gas exploration. San Miguel County Commission voted and signed into law a one-year oil and gas moratorium in winter 2010. The Las Vegas City Council doubled that protection, and enacted a two-year moratorium in May.

The City Council functions under a Home Rule Charter, which gives "the power of government back to the people," said Mayor Tony E. Marquez, Jr., in his op-ed in the *Las Vegas Optic* on July 10, 2009, by "allow[ing] the city to exercise any power or perform any function not expressly denied by statute or its own charter." The moratorium will give the people and government time to decide how Las Vegas will look in the future: natural gas wells within city limits dictated by industry, or a city defined by the vision and goals of people who take self-governing to heart.

Not so for Mora County. While a moratorium was voted and passed unanimously by the commission during the March 2008 meeting, the unsigned February 2008 drafted moratorium sits in the County Clerk's Office, and both county attorney John Grubestic and commission chair Peter Martinez state, "There is no moratorium in Mora County."

Perhaps the absence of a moratorium is not such a loss for Mora County. It is often noted that once a moratorium is lifted, industry sits perched and ready for action, and legally there is no keeping them out once a moratorium expires. Unless of course, you are willing to challenge the existing laws and be ready for a legal fight.

San Miguel County residents are heavily criticizing their commission, rather deservedly, for its "unbalanced" task force on oil and gas, which weighs heavily on the side of industry representatives. In Mora County, the commission maintains their silent vigil on the subject of oil and gas, but momentarily opened the door to hear industry when Commissioner Peter Martinez invited Royal Dutch Shell representatives to present alongside the Concerned Citizens of Wagon Mound and Mora County at the May commission meeting.

On the day-to-day grind, the Mora County Planning and Zoning Committee has not met since December 2009, and until May 2010 was absent three members of the five. Four of five are now officially appointed. The land use administrator, Rumaldo Pino, has been noticeably missing from the recent commission meetings. In August 2009, John Garcia left after three months as county manager. Nearly a

year later, this position is being advertised in the *Las Vegas Optic*. Without a Planning and Zoning Committee and a county manager, what is taking place and how in Mora County? Have the wheels stopped?

Apparently not. Although Shell did not present in May, they were on the agenda for the June commission meeting, which was suddenly canceled. While the Mora County Commission remains silent, the citizens, however, are moving boldly forward letting the commission and industry know through their recent elections that the will of the people has spoken. (Drilling opponents John Olivas and Paula Garcia won the primaries for their respective seats in the commission.) Mora County citizens hold to the values of their Development Guidance System and Comprehensive Land Use Plan of 1995 – protection of their water, agriculture, and way-of-life – despite whatever opinions their current commissioners may have.

For more information, contact Kathleen Dudley, co-founder, Drilling Mora County ([drillingmoracounty@gmail.com](mailto:drillingmoracounty@gmail.com)) or visit <http://drillingmoracounty.org>.

—Kathleen Dudley

## Chapter Efforts Help Primary Candidates

Volunteer efforts of Rio Grande Chapter members in the June 1 primary assisted in the election of some new candidates who have pledged their efforts to support environmental protection and helped some environmental champions retain their office.

In Mora County, John Olivas was endorsed by the Chapter and won his primary. He has no opponent in the November general election. He will join the rest of the commission who have all pledged to protect the county from the very real threat of oil and gas drilling in untouched areas.

State Representative Eleanor Chavez, a first-term legislator with an outstanding environmental record, won against a challenger who received last-minute infusions of funds from business interests pledged to weaken environmental regulations. She has no general election opponent and has expressed her appreciation of Sierra Club volunteers who made trips from Santa Fe to walk blocks to support her campaign.

Most legislative environmental champions endorsed by the Chapter did not have opponents in the primary, but several face very difficult races in November against opponents funded by "polluting interests." This is especially true in the case of first-term Representatives Bill O'Neill and Ben Rodefer.

Ray Powell, a former state land commissioner with an outstanding environmental record in office, overcame two opponents, one of whom was financed with contributions from oil and gas interests. Ray was endorsed by the Chapter and still has a tough race to win in November. He has pledged to bring ethics and stability, as well as true environmental stewardship, back to the New Mexico State Land Office.

In the Public Regulation Commission (PRC) election, Chapter-endorsed Bill McCamley won his uncontested primary for District 5 in the Las Cruces area. His promises to be a tough race in November against an opponent funded by energy extraction and development interests. Hank Hughes, the PRC candidate in District 4 endorsed by the Chapter, lost his race. Theresa Becenti-Aguilar, a former PRC employee, won that position and has an opponent in November.

David Bacon, endorsed by the Northern Group, failed in his bid to become Santa Fe County commissioner, but he has stated his appreciation for the efforts of Sierra Club volunteers and voters in his election.

—Susan Martin

## Senators Introduce Bill to Transfer Valles Caldera to National Park Service

The Chapter has been strongly supporting the effort by Caldera Action to transfer management of the Valles Caldera from the Valles Caldera Trust to the National Park Service, which has the experience and resources to better manage the Preserve. We are delighted to announce that on May 27, Senators Jeff Bingaman and Tom Udall introduced legislation to transfer the management of the Valles Caldera National Preserve to the National Park Service.

The bill follows on a report from the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) mandated by the Valles Caldera Preservation Act of 2000 and a feasibility study from the National Park Service requested by the two senators.

The National Park Service study determined the Valles Caldera meets the high criteria for inclusion in the National Park System as a National Preserve. In particular, the report highlighted the nationally significant geologic resources found in the area.

The senators' bill directs the Park Service to take over management in a way that protects the Preserve's natural and cultural resources. Hunting, fishing, and cattle grazing would be permitted

under the bill. Additionally, the measure strengthens protections for tribal cultural and religious sites and ensures access by pueblos to the area.

"The Valles Caldera is not only one of the most stunning places in New Mexico, it's one of the most beautiful places in our country. That is why I worked so hard to bring it into public ownership," Bingaman said. "I believe it is the perfect candidate for the National Park System."

"For centuries the Valles Caldera has stood out as the icon of the Jemez Mountains," said Udall. "As one of the largest volcanic calderas in the world, the vast grass-filled valleys, forested hillsides, and numerous volcanic peaks make the Valles Caldera a treasure to New Mexico, and a landscape of national significance millions of years in the making. It is clearly worthy of National Park Service status."

The measure will be sent to the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, which Bingaman chairs. A hearing could be scheduled as soon as July.

For more information, contact Pajarito Group Chair Ilse Bleck (505/662-2368, [ibleck@yahoo.com](mailto:ibleck@yahoo.com)).

—Ilse Bleck

## Commission Hears Dairy Regulation Proposals

New Mexico's highest regulatory water quality authority, the Water Quality Control Commission (WQCC), is considering the state's first industry-specific groundwater discharge regulations. These rules were proposed by New Mexico Environment Department, and stronger regulations have been proposed by the Citizens Coalition of Caballo Concerned Citizens, the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club, Amigos Bravos, and Food & Water Watch, with the New Mexico Environmental Law Center's legal support.

The commission will also consider regulations proposed by the Dairy Industry Group for a Clean Environment (DIGCE), which represents this highly polluting industry in New Mexico and whose idea of regulations is very little more than regulatory permission to abuse our precious groundwater. DIGCE's proposal is a far cry from the regulatory protection needed in a state where two-thirds of dairies have groundwater beneath and around them that

is unfit to drink, exceeding acceptable pollution levels described in state and federal water quality standards.

In 2009, legislation devised by the dairy industry mandated new industry-specific Groundwater Discharge Permit rules. Since then they have recognized that their vision of codifying very weak regulations is at risk and they are fighting to keep the regulation weak. Legislation nullifying the new rule is expected if meaningfully protective regulations are adopted by the commission.

The Rio Grande Chapter, with our coalition partners, is a party to the proceedings and an active participant in the hearing, along with members giving nontechnical public comments. Please contact Chapter Conservation Coordinator Dan Lorimier (575/740-2927, [daniel.lorimier@sierraclub.org](mailto:daniel.lorimier@sierraclub.org)) for more information on this important rule-making procedure.

—Dan Lorimier

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## Sierra Club Youth Rally for Green Jobs

“I love nature.” “I gotta work.” “I want good green jobs.” Those were the rallying cries of the Sierra Club’s youth delegation at the Good Jobs, Green Jobs National Conference on May 4–6. Representing dozens of communities in 20 states from across the country, 79 vibrant, green-minded young people descended upon Washington, DC, demanding green jobs.

Twelve youth from The Wellness Coalition in Silver City and the Rocky Mountain Youth Corps in Taos made up the New Mexico youth delegation. These youth were picked by their organizations, our partner grantees, through a rigorous, competitive process.

In its third year, the conference drew a record crowd of 3,500 activists from around the country, including a Sierra Club delegation of about 300 staff and volunteers. The conference was coordinated by the Blue Green Alliance, a national partnership of labor unions and environmental organizations, which now unites 8.5 million people in pursuit of good jobs, a clean environment, and a green economy.

The Sierra Club made it a priority to highlight the youth voice at this year’s conference. Nearly one quarter of the Sierra Club delegation was under 30, and they came from every imaginable walk of life: rural New Mexicans, youth from New York and Los Angeles, college students, and a fairly large contingent from our nation’s capital.

Joining the youth from Taos and Silver City, a six-person “blue-green” delegation of New Mexican environmentalists, labor leaders, and Sierra Club members attended this year’s conference. The blue-green delegation included Conservation Voters New Mexico and the Northern New Mexico Central Labor Council (NNMCLC), in addition to Sierra Club staff and members from Albuquerque and Santa Fe.

The youth delegation kicked off the conference with a service project at the Anacostia River with local partner Earth Conservation Corps. The youth also took part in the Green Innovations Expo through a workshop on green jobs with 200 DC schoolchildren. Working with the DC youth helped bring that youth element needed at the conference.

Our New Mexico youth attended a breakfast with New Mexico Senator Tom Udall and spoke with him about their activities at the conference. Senator Jeff Bingaman opened up his office for photos and a chat with the Rocky Mountain Youth Corps delegation.

At Advocacy Day, the New Mexico delegates urged swift passage of a strong clean energy and climate protection bill in meetings with Senators Bingaman’s and Udall’s staff. Even more special was the impromptu face time with Congressmen Martin Heinrich and Ben R. Luján, who was a featured speaker at this year’s conference.

Bringing together youth, environmentalists, and labor leaders from New Mexico sent a powerful message to our congressional delegation. Check out our blog at [www.sierraclub.org/youth](http://www.sierraclub.org/youth) for some insights from one of our delegates, and join us at the 2011 conference, when we hope to have an even larger and more diverse NM blue-green delegation.

For more information, contact Kristina Ortez de Jones, Southwest Youth Program Representative, Sierra Club’s Building Bridges to the Outdoors program (505/243-7767, [kristina.ortez@sierraclub.org](mailto:kristina.ortez@sierraclub.org)), or Shrayas Jatkar, Associate Regional Representative, Sierra Club’s Clean Energy Solutions & Federal/International Curbing Carbon campaigns (505/243-7767, [shrayas.jatkar@sierraclub.org](mailto:shrayas.jatkar@sierraclub.org)).

—Kristina Ortez de Jones & Shrayas Jatkar



Members of the Sierra Club youth delegation pushed for good green jobs at the May conference. (Photo by Kristina Ortez de Jones)

## Club Sponsors Anti-obesity Forum

August 5, 2010, marks the date for the first annual Getting Kids Outside: A Strategy for Combating Childhood Obesity in New Mexico forum at the Bosque School in Albuquerque. This event is convened by the Sierra Club, Environmental Education Association of New Mexico, the USDA Forest Service, the Bosque School, and other partners in the Leave No New Mexico Child Inside Coalition. Bringing together public health experts, environmental advocates, teachers, and decision makers, we hope to explore ways to increase opportunities to getting kids outside as a means to a healthier lifestyle and to combat childhood obesity.

The forum will start at 8:30 a.m. with an optional hike and tour of the bosque with Kimi Scheerer of the Bosque Ecosystem Monitoring Program. The

program begins at 9:30 a.m. at Budagher Hall at the Bosque School. Participants will then go into breakout sessions that range from learning how to take advantage of local outdoor opportunities to developing a state plan for connecting children with the outdoors.

This forum is free and open to the public, and lunch will be provided. Please RSVP by July 30.

For more information or to register, please contact Kristina Ortez de Jones, Southwest Youth Representative, Sierra Club’s Building Bridges to the Outdoors program (505/243-7767, [kristina.ortez@sierraclub.org](mailto:kristina.ortez@sierraclub.org)). Please register at <http://sierraclub.org/youth/newmexico/>.

—Kristina Ortez de Jones



It’s time for America to get smart about energy and be less dependent on dwindling oil reserves. We need to increase our use of clean, renewable energy sources like wind and solar power. Let your voice be heard.

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Contributions, gifts and dues to Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to *Sierra* magazine and \$1 for your Chapter newsletters.

Enclose a check and mail to Sierra Club, P.O. Box 421041, Palm Coast, FL 32142-1041

or visit our website [www.sierraclub.org](http://www.sierraclub.org) F94Q W  1

## Quarterly Meetings

The Chapter’s Conservation and Executive Committee meetings will be held Saturday-Sunday, October 2-3, at Sevillita Wildlife Refuge. Contact Conservation Chair Ken Hughes or Chapter Chair John Buchser (see directory, page 2) for more information. Carpooling is encouraged.

## Sunland Park Residents Unite Against Landfill Permit Renewal

**A**cross the Rio Grande from El Paso, the three-year saga of Camino Real Landfill's application for a 10-year renewal of an expired permit to dump nonhazardous waste in the small community of Sunland Park remains unresolved.

Camino Real Landfill managers consider their company, with a waste-to-energy plant that converts landfill methane to electricity, an "environmentally progressive" corporate neighbor. But Sunland Park residents say they've had enough of the 480-acre privately owned dump and its clouds of dust, intolerable stench, and steady traffic of garbage trucks.

Sunland Park's main stance for closure is that a significant portion of the landfill is unlined, and the Mesilla Bolson, one of the two Rio Grande aquifers that sustain not only Sunland Park, but the equally

arid cities El Paso and Juarez as well, lies below.

According to New Mexico Environment Department (NMED), the life of the protective liner that has been used is just 250-400 years. Further, adds an NMED representative, local geologic faulting by which surface precipitation (and pollutants) reach groundwater is "potentially an issue." Moreso for the recent disclosure by Phelps Dodge that hazardous waste from its facilities was illegally dumped at Camino Real.

No one truly knows whether other hazardous materials have already been dumped in Sunland Park, or what more may escape detection if the 10-year permit is renewed. But seepage to groundwater, whether from the unlined section of the landfill, or through the eventual deterioration of existing liners, already appears inevitable.

The landfill is not the residents' only complaint. By 1982, Sunland Park, due to emissions from a nearby ASARCO smelter, had been recognized as the most heavily lead-contaminated community in New Mexico. Later, in the 1990s, ASARCO was cited by the Environmental Protection Agency for illegal incineration of hazardous waste from military weapons manufacturing.

To date, the residents' unfunded legal battle, led by Sunland Park Grassroots Environmental Group, has reached to the New Mexico Supreme Court, to no avail. Just as the NMED's final permit decision looms, the landfill's fate, through a late development, may stem from a new quarter: the City of El Paso, whose

600,000 tons of waste sent annually to Camino Real yields 75% of the landfill's income. El Paso's City Council is now considering a "flow control" policy by which all city waste would be sent to its own landfills. If approved, the substantial reduction of Camino Real's profitability might achieve what litigation has not: final closure.

Pending El Paso's decision, Camino Real has promised \$2.25 million annually to the city if the council does not adopt flow control, or a lawsuit if it does.

For now, this issue puts to a test Governor Bill Richardson's 2005 Executive Order on Environmental Justice, to provide "meaningful opportunities for involvement to all people" in public environmental decisions, including for the purpose of "better siting" of state-permitted projects and operations. The City of El Paso's vote may simply preempt any new conclusions about the legal gloss or regulatory might of environmental justice regulations. Otherwise, the NMED Secretary's final decision will conclude the latest case study on the meaning and practice of this illusory but evolving branch of justice.

A brief video of a 2007 NMED public meeting on the landfill issue can be seen here: [www.youtube.com/caminoreallandfill#p/a/u/0/2YiXko\\_tbwI](http://www.youtube.com/caminoreallandfill#p/a/u/0/2YiXko_tbwI).

For more information, contact Sierra Club Regional Field Organizing Manager Michael Casaus (505/243-7767, [michael.casaus@sierraclub.org](mailto:michael.casaus@sierraclub.org)).

—Nat Stone

### Sierra Club Wants Ban on Leg-hold Traps

**M**exican Gray Wolves were killed out decades ago by people thinking they were making our wild lands safe for livestock. But now we know that wolves are a keystone species and their presence is essential for the balance of nature. At last, we have begun to restore them to the Gila region where they belong and should never have been exterminated.

But they are not doing well for reasons that are all human caused. One of those reasons is the presence of legal leg-hold traps. The population in New Mexico is down to only 15 animals, a reduction by nearly half from the prior year. Trapping for fur and predator "control" remains legal here, even where this highly endangered mammal's recovery is badly faltering.

We don't know the reasons so many wolves in New Mexico disappeared last year but we do know that in the course of reintroduction, 14 wolves have been trapped by accident or mistake and 12 of those 14 were in New Mexico. (Traps and snares are illegal on public land in Arizona.) Of those, several sustained injuries to their paws or legs including lost toes. Two have had to have their legs amputated.

One amputee, male number 1039, is special to me. We live near the wolf recovery area in New Mexico and were delighted to learn that a lone collared male wolf was exploring the nearby forest. It was winter though, the time when fur trappers lay their hidden menaces. Not long after, we noticed a helicopter flying low up and down the canyons. It turned out that m1039 had stepped into a trap set and had managed to unsecure it from its anchor chain. He had to be found, thus the helicopter, and captured for medical care. But the trap had been clenched on him for too long and the leg had to go.

M1039 was released back to the wild but went missing within a year and is now presumed dead. He had no pack mates to help him hunt. Having only three legs could have been so compromising he just couldn't survive alone.

Traps and snares are a threat to wolves and we fervently hope the Forest Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will respond favorably to the petitions filed by the Sierra Club, WildEarth Guardians, the Southwest Environmental Center, and others to prohibit these cruel devices where wolves should be roaming freely.

For more info, contact Wildlife Chair Mary Katherine Ray ([mkrscrim@kitcarson.net](mailto:mkrscrim@kitcarson.net)).

—Mary Katherine Ray



Concerned citizens of Sunland Park attend a 2007 public meeting on the Camino Real permit, leading up to the administrative hearing that December. (Photo by Nat Stone)

### To Contribute to the *Rio Grande Sierran*

**T**he *Rio Grande Sierran* is published four times a year – January, April, July, and October – 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 directory, 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. Notify Norma McCallan ([nmccallan@mindspring.com](mailto:nmccallan@mindspring.com)) of your interest and mailing address; send check to our Treasurer, Barbara Scheer, 28 Cedar Drive, Roswell, NM 88203. Please allow eight weeks for processing.

Extra copies are often available. Please contact Norma McCallan or the Group Chair in your area (see Group pages).



## PAJARITO GROUP NEWS

### Meetings

#### July and August: No meetings

Spend the long summer evenings relishing our splendid outdoors.

#### Wednesday, September 1, 7:00 p.m. • Upstairs Meeting Rooms, Mesa Public Library

##### Katherine Wells: Life on the Rocks

Katherine Wells is an artist and writer who also happened to have purchased a piece of property that she later learned has more than 6,000 petroglyphs. She has spent 20 years preserving and protecting the rock art in her area that is also a prime target for a well-known local businessman's pumice operations. She put her money where her mouth is, and in 2007 donated 156 acres of her petroglyph-patterned land to the Archaeological Conservancy. Come listen to Katherine talk about her adventures in petroglyph preservation.

### Outings

See page 16 for adventures in the area.

## BP and Me

Because we of all the species invented alphabets, cars, crime, and whoopee cushions, we named our species *Homo sapiens* – “wise Man.” We pride ourselves in our ability to overcome and adapt through ingenuity and technology. But our reaction to the BP oil spill (not to mention our rationale for causing it in the first place) makes me wonder if it's time for a new species descriptor: how about *Homo indocile edacis* – an unteachable, ignorant, destructive, rude creature that refuses to change its behavior despite all threats to its survival.

Hand-wringing and assigning blame are not inappropriate. Changing policy and procedures, and increasing regulations are essential. But in the meantime – right now – how are we as individuals showing our commitment to the Gulf and other oil-afflicted areas? Is there proof of America's concern as more of

us carpool, turn off electricity, refuse plastic bags, reuse plastic spoons, and support higher gas prices? Nah.

Each of us has been astonished by people who feel the disaster in the Gulf has nothing to do with them. If you bring up personal responsibility, you might hear: “Individual action in a disaster of this size won't do any good.” “No, honey, I'm definitely not walking those two blocks. What? Save a pelican? What's a pelican?”

Our cheap energy has given us our exceptional quality of life. There's a time, however, when we need to ask whether cheap energy is worth the price. Do we have the will to be sapiens rather than indocile edacis? Maybe we could ask just a simple question and act upon it according to our values: What indeed is a pelican? And what is it to me?

—Jody Benson

## Earth Day at PEEC

The theme of PEEC's Earth Day Celebration was “Fire Recovery and Volunteerism.” The Pajarito Group, enlivened by youth volunteers, displayed a poster that showed the proposed reopening of Pipeline Road (closed since the Cerro Grande Fire) to motorized vehicles. Hikers and mountain bikers, along with Quemazon residents (surprised by the proposal and averse to the pollution, noise, and litter that would follow the vehicles), wrote comment cards to Española District Forest Ranger Sandy Hurlocker. Each postcard writer was entered into a drawing to see the astonishing abundance of rock art on the tour of the Wells Petroglyph Preserve.

You can still comment on impacts to resources including wildlife, water quality, archaeological resources, and “other important values.” See the National Forest Draft Environmental Impact Statement webpage ([www.fs.fed.us/r3/sfc/travelmgt/index.html](http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/sfc/travelmgt/index.html)).

—Jody Benson

### New ExCom Member

Charles Pergler brings extensive experience in environmental policy to the ExCom. He has worked both locally and nationally on Environmental Impact Statements and other NEPA documentation. With his background and national contacts, Chuck offers a powerful political perspective to the ExCom.

### Do You Finally Have Time to Be on the ExCom?

Our Executive Committee is the leadership of the Pajarito Group. It makes the decisions as to which environmental, educational, and community issues the group should become involved in. It also works with other groups in the region, chooses monthly speakers, cleans up our Golden Mile at the edge of the VCNP, and organizes activities (remember the PowWow and the picnics?). Currently, we are developing a proposal to compete for one of the Sierra Club Environmental Projects. If you would like to be a candidate or would like to suggest a candidate, please contact any member of the nominating committee by August 8. Members are Mark Jones and Lynn Jones (505/662-9443) and Ilse Bleck (505/662-2368).

## Pajarito Group Directory

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

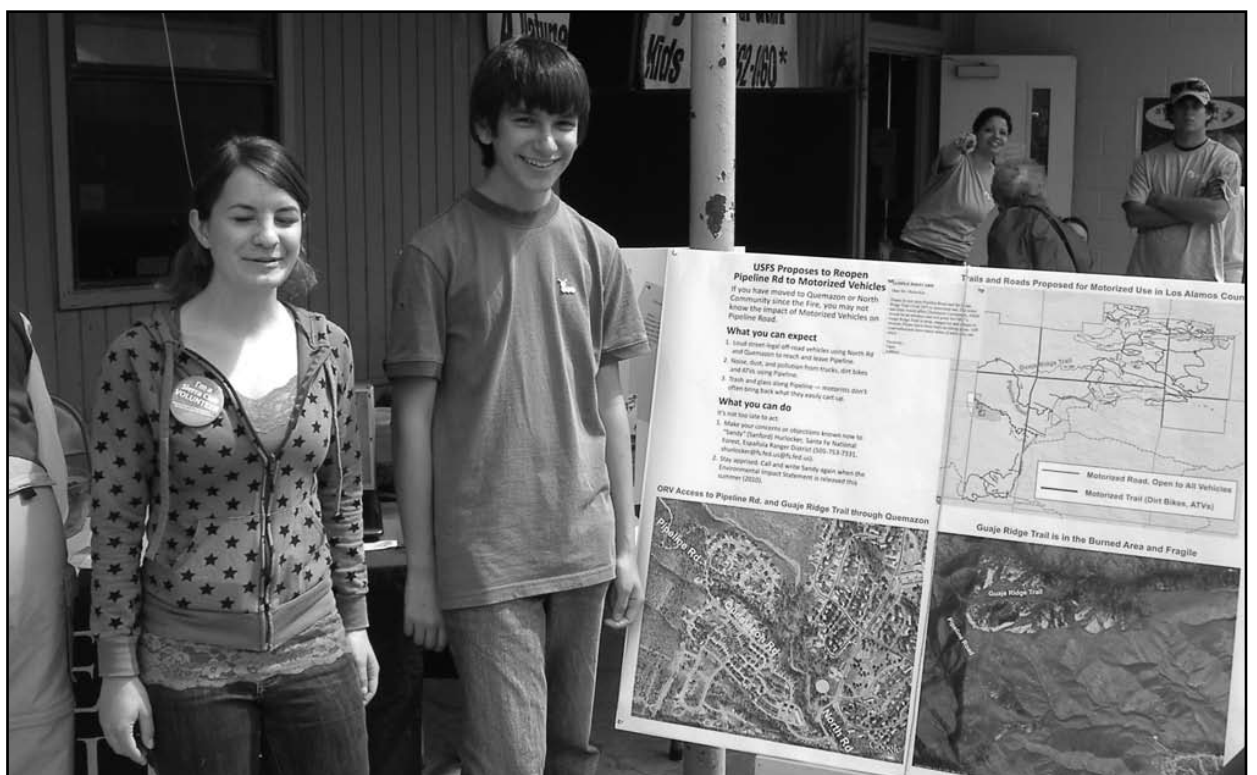
### Executive Committee

Chair: Ilse Bleck  
505/662-2368      ibleck@yahoo.com  
Vice-Chair: Mark Jones  
505/662-9443      jonesmm1@comcast.net  
Secretary: Jody Benson  
505/662-4782  
Treasurer: David Gemeinhart  
505/672-6267      ddgem@losalamos.com  
Michael Di Rosa  
505/663-0648      mdd@stanfordalumni.org  
Chuck Pergler  
ccpergler@gmail.com

### Committee Chairs

Conservation: Michael Di Rosa  
505/663-0648      mdd@stanfordalumni.org  
Environmental Education: Pauline Wilder  
505/662-7768      xxmpxx@gmail.com  
Global Warming: Charles Keller  
505/662-7915      alfanso@cybermesa.com  
Grazing, National Forests, Wetlands,  
Wilderness: David Gemeinhart  
505/672-6267      ddgem@losalamos.com  
Mining: David Torney  
575/829-3433      dtorney@valornet.com  
Newsletter Editor, Publicity, Sprawl,  
Endangered Species/Wildlife: Jody Benson  
505/662-4782  
Outings, Parks/Refuges, Membership Co-Chair:  
Ilse Bleck  
505/662-2368      ibleck@yahoo.com  
Political, Cool Cities, Membership Co-Chair:  
Mark Jones  
505/662-9443      jonesmm1@comcast.net  
Water Issues: Barbara Calef  
505/662-3825      bfcalef@yahoo.com

Below: Miriam Barnum and Myles Gurule volunteered at the Pajarito Group's Earth Day table to describe the proposed opening of the Pipeline Road to motorized vehicles. (Photo by Jody Benson)





## NORTHERN GROUP NEWS

### FALL MEMBER PARTY

6:30 to 7:30 PM, Friday, September 17

*The Commons, 2300 West Alameda*

Please come to our annual fall member party. Delicious food and drink will be provided. Chat with your friends and meet new people. Learn about the club's successes.

Sit back and enjoy a presentation by **David Blagg**, with the Biophilia Foundation, on "**Herding Cats: Our attempt at land and riparian restoration on the Ranchito Pajarito Azul, its failures and triumphs.**"

Please RSVP to Alice Cox (505-757-2145, [auntialice@pecosplaza.com](mailto:auntialice@pecosplaza.com)) or contact Jean Watts (989-5010, [jeanwatts@comcast.net](mailto:jeanwatts@comcast.net))



### NORTHERN GROUP COMMITTEE MEETINGS Sierra Club Office, 1807 Second Street, Unit #45

<b>Group Executive Committee:</b>	Tuesday, July 6, 7 PM
Tuesday, August 3, 7 PM	Tuesday, September 7, 7 PM
<b>Cool Cities Committee:</b>	Tuesday, July 6, 5 PM
Tuesday, August 3, 5 PM	Tuesday, September 7, 5 PM
<b>Group Conservation Committee:</b>	
Tuesday, July 27, 7 PM	Tuesday, September 28, 7 PM

*All meetings, outings, and activities are FREE and OPEN TO THE PUBLIC unless otherwise indicated.*

**Northern New Mexico Group of the Sierra Club**  
1807 Second Street, Unit #45, Santa Fe, NM 87505  
505 • 983 • 2703 ♦ NEW WEBSITE: <http://northern.nmsierraclub.org>

### ONE MAN MAKES A DIFFERENCE

At the beginning of 2008, the NM State Legislature passed a law to change the approach to reimbursement for electric utilities in the state that was designed by the Sierra Club and other members of the Coalition for Clean Affordable Energy and under the leadership of the late Gail Ryba. Previously, utilities made more profit when they sold more electricity. This is exactly the opposite of what is needed to address climate change.

The new law left most of that reimbursement structure in place, but it created a financial incentive for reducing some of the current use by, for example, getting people to trade in old refrigerators for new, more efficient ones. At the time, we all recognized this as a sea change. PNM, for one, has gradually committed to it and has found that it can make money and keep rates down by reducing electricity use in this way.

While the utilities were starting to reduce waste from old uses, they were still pushing new uses, such as air conditioners. Decoupling had been considered as a solution, had even been proposed by PNM, and had been soundly rejected by the PRC. Decoupling eliminates the incentive for the utility to increase electricity usage. If the utility sells less electricity, it does not impact their profit. **Robb Thomson, a Sierra Club member**, recognized that decoupling was the only good solution to the problem.

### FUTURE OF THE VALLES CALDERA

6:30 PM, Tuesday, October 19

*Unitarian Universalist Congregation, 107 West Barcelona Road  
(just north of Cordova)*

**Tom Ribe**, a long-time public land and national park advocate, will give a talk on the **Valles Caldera National Preserve** and its potential move to management by the National Park Service. Tom is the author of the recent book, *Inferno by Committee, A History of the Cerro Grande (Los Alamos) Fire, America's Worst Prescribed Fire Disaster*. Please join us. Coffee, tea and cookies will be served.

### SUSTAINABLE LAS VEGAS

10 AM to 5 PM, Saturday, August 14

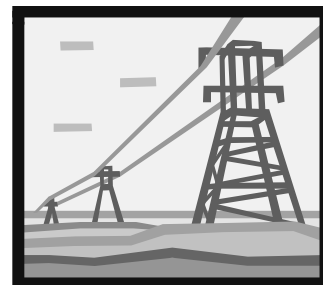
*Carnegie Park, National Avenue, between Fifth and Sixth Streets*

**Sustainable Las Vegas**, the local chapter of the **NM Solar Energy Association**, will have demonstrations of solar and alternative energies from the Sun Chaser kit, as well as providing information on other sustainable topics. Demonstrations include a solar-powered water pump, cookies baked in a solar oven, and a model passive solar house. The **Las Vegas People's Faire** celebrates local arts and crafts, but also includes artists from distant places and hosts tables by many local nonprofit organizations. Carnegie Park is the site of an historic Carnegie Library, modeled after Monticello. Contact Cheryl Zebrowski, SynergyFest Coordinator (505-454-3255, [czebrowski@desertgate.com](mailto:czebrowski@desertgate.com))

### *Dexter Coolidge, Conservation Chair*

The initial reaction to decoupling was mild curiosity and deep skepticism. Robb decided that the first thing was to win over the environmental community. He brought in an expert to make a presentation and run a workshop. This tactic was largely seen as a pie-in-the-sky approach, but Robb persisted. He set up meetings with PNM and kept talking about it. Then he set up another workshop for environmentalists. In September 2009, Robb and David Van Winkle met with a new vice president at PNM, Ron Darnell, who recognized the possibility and embraced it.

This spring, all Robb's efforts have been paying off. PNM is endorsing decoupling and is proposing it again to the PRC. NRDC is bringing in a national expert on it to testify on PNM's behalf. It looks as if decoupling is likely to be adopted and is perhaps the most significant change in regulation related to climate change in New Mexico. Robb had simply refused to let it die and persisted in the face of indifference and opposition.



### ♦ ♦ NORTHERN NEW MEXICO GROUP LEADERS ♦ ♦

<b>Chair</b> – David Van Winkle * ‡	<a href="mailto:david@vw77.com">david@vw77.com</a>	820-1006
<b>Vice-Chair</b> – Norma McCallan * ‡	<a href="mailto:nmccallan@mindspring.com">nmccallan@mindspring.com</a>	471-0005
<b>Secretary</b> – Jean Watts *	<a href="mailto:jeanwatts@comcast.net">jeanwatts@comcast.net</a>	989-5010
<b>Treasurer</b> – Bill Jones	<a href="mailto:billjones4@aol.com">billjones4@aol.com</a>	989-9204
Office – Joann Lucas	<a href="mailto:joannlucas@comcast.net">joannlucas@comcast.net</a>	466-6691
In office Wednesdays - Jerry Knapczyk	<a href="mailto:jknapczyk@yahoo.com">jknapczyk@yahoo.com</a>	466-4564
Book Distribution – Chuck Ducey	<a href="mailto:duceyiii@yahoo.com">duceyiii@yahoo.com</a>	505-204-6859
Book Mailer - Gail Bryant		757-6654
Sierran Dist-Mary Ann Wamhoff/Dean Wootonsomasphere@earthlink.net		629-9210
Chapter Rep – Dexter Coolidge *	<a href="mailto:dextercoolidge@yahoo.com">dextercoolidge@yahoo.com</a>	988-1197
Alternate – Tom Gorman		438-3932
Membership – Alice Cox *	<a href="mailto:auntialice@pecosplaza.com">auntialice@pecosplaza.com</a>	505-757-2145
Newsletter – Kay Carlson	<a href="mailto:kcarlsonwp@earthlink.net">kcarlsonwp@earthlink.net</a>	982-3926
Nominating Committee – Alice Cox *	<a href="mailto:auntialice@pecosplaza.com">auntialice@pecosplaza.com</a>	505-757-2145
Pat Carlton	<a href="mailto:carlton505@comcast.net">carlton505@comcast.net</a>	988-1596
Royal Drews *	<a href="mailto:royala300@aol.com">royala300@aol.com</a>	505-699-8713
Outings – Norbert Sperlich	<a href="mailto:norbert.sperlich@gmail.com">norbert.sperlich@gmail.com</a>	474-4354
Tobin Oruch	<a href="mailto:oruch@lanl.gov">oruch@lanl.gov</a>	820-2844
Political Committee – Susan Martin	<a href="mailto:smartin31@comcast.net">smartin31@comcast.net</a>	988-5206
Phone Answerer – Bebs Taylor		983-9129
Publicity – Kia Mudge		474-6697
Volunteers – Patricia Carlton	<a href="mailto:carlton505@comcast.net">carlton505@comcast.net</a>	988-1596
SF River Cleanups – Kathleen Davis	<a href="mailto:kdav40@aol.com">kdav40@aol.com</a>	505-795-3286
Social Cohesion – Jean Watts *	<a href="mailto:jeanwatts@comcast.net">jeanwatts@comcast.net</a>	989-5010

Las Vegas contact – Betty Quick	<a href="mailto:bettydquick@gmail.com">bettydquick@gmail.com</a>	505-454-9123
Taos Branch – Eric Patterson	<a href="mailto:epatt@gmail.com">epatt@gmail.com</a>	575-776-2833
Farmington Branch – Art Jaquez	<a href="mailto:artjaquez@yahoo.com">artjaquez@yahoo.com</a>	505-326-5229
Nick Cullander	<a href="mailto:ncullander@hotmail.com">ncullander@hotmail.com</a>	505-334-0935
Web Master – Monika Bittman		466-0130
Dan Rusthoi	<a href="mailto:rusthoi@earthlink.net">rusthoi@earthlink.net</a>	474-3965
Kathy Priola	<a href="mailto:kjpriola@gmail.com">kjpriola@gmail.com</a>	466-1040
<b>Conservation – Chair – Dexter Coolidge *</b>	<a href="mailto:dextercoolidge@yahoo.com">dextercoolidge@yahoo.com</a>	988-1197
Activist Outings – Norma McCallan * ‡	<a href="mailto:nmccallan@mindspring.com">nmccallan@mindspring.com</a>	471-0005
4 Corners' Power Plants – Robb Thomson *	<a href="mailto:robbsm@toast.net">robbsm@toast.net</a>	988-8958
Santa Fe Nat'l Forest – Tom Gorman * ‡		438-3932
Mining – Cliff Larsen	<a href="mailto:clarsen1@ix.netcom.com">clarsen1@ix.netcom.com</a>	466-2128
<b>Cool Cities Campaign – OPEN – HELP WANTED</b>		
Cool Biz – Spence Terrell	<a href="mailto:spenceterrell@hotmail.com">spenceterrell@hotmail.com</a>	801-231-6047
Eco Footprints – Brian Skeeel	<a href="mailto:brianvida@nm.net">brianvida@nm.net</a>	984-1739
Green Building – Bob Taylor *	<a href="mailto:bobtaylor@greenroadsrealty.com">bobtaylor@greenroadsrealty.com</a>	690-5012
Resources – Ken Hughes ‡	<a href="mailto:b1family@comcast.net">b1family@comcast.net</a>	474-0550
Educational Outreach – Teresa Seamster *	<a href="mailto:tcseam@qwest.net">tcseam@qwest.net</a>	466-8964
Water – Sig Silber ‡	<a href="mailto:ssilber1@juno.com">ssilber1@juno.com</a>	473-7006
Wildlife/Nat'l Parks/Rangelands - Roger Peterson ‡	<a href="mailto:rogpete@aol.com">rogpete@aol.com</a>	983-7559

\* Northern Group Executive Committee  
‡ Core Conservation Committee



## NORTHERN GROUP NEWS

### BUCKMAN WATER PROJECT ONE MEGAWATT SOLAR ELECTRICITY PLANT

In early 2009, David Van Winkle and Dexter Coolidge of the Northern Group met with Santa Fe Mayor David Coss, City of Santa Fe City Councilors, Santa Fe County Commissioners, and the Buckman Project Manager to convince them to use renewable energy for the Buckman water project. It became a reality on June 3, 2010, when the Buckman Direct Diversion project announced an agreement to build a one megawatt solar electricity plant to support the water treatment facility for the Buckman project. For more details about the project, read the story on our website at this URL: <http://nmsierraclub.org/buckman-solar>

### TEN GALLONS PER DAY

Santa Fe's own **Louise Pape**, Vice Chair of the Sustainable Santa Fe Commission and Sierra Club member, has created a website that explains how to reduce personal water consumption to ten gallons per day. Take a look at the **new website that she developed at [www.tengallonsaday.org](http://www.tengallonsaday.org)**

### YARD SALE A BIG SUCCESS

Kudos to all who contributed to our most successful biennial Sierra Club Yard sale held May 15. The spectacular event yielded about \$1100 for the club. Monies collected will be used for our various conservation projects, such as energy efficiency, more solar roofs, and the protection of the San Juan Basin Badlands. The success of the sale can only be attributed to all the wonderful donations and buyers. The hardworking and energetic organizers, price markers, sherpas and salespersons deserve special recognition. Particular mention goes to Brenda, Elaine, Norma, Bob, Russell, Hermine, Bonnie, Theresa, Kate, and Ross, whose time and talent made the sale a great success. Special thanks go to our gracious hostess Carole Owens whose driveway makes the perfect locale for this event. Our yard sale is an environmental way to recycle our gently used treasures and witness them being appreciated by the happy buyers.

**Think 2012** and start putting by your no-longer-needed-items for the next gigantic sale! Thank you!

### SANTA FE RIVER CLEANUP AND VEGETATION MAINTENANCE

Saturdays - 9 to 11 AM  
July 17 • August 21 • September 18

Please join our river cleanups for 2010 !!!! Meet at Closson Street footbridge. Wear long pants, bring work boots, gloves and drinking water.

**Confirm prior to cleanup date to:**

**July 17 -** Greg Lower ([glower@lanl.gov](mailto:glower@lanl.gov), 699-6893)  
**August 21 --** Kathleen Davis ([kdav40@aol.com](mailto:kdav40@aol.com), 505-795-3286)  
**September 18 -** Paige Grant ([paigeanna@comcast.net](mailto:paigeanna@comcast.net), 982-4081)

### VOLUNTEERS ♥ VOLUNTEERS ♥ VOLUNTEERS

**Cool Cities Team Leader** – coordinate local Sierra Club activities with both Santa Fe City and the County, who have committed to support the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, which calls for municipalities to meet the Kyoto Agreement goal to address Climate Change. – David Van Winkle (820-1006, [david@vw77.com](mailto:david@vw77.com))

**Public Lands Activists** - Work with other experienced conservationists to protect our public lands and wildlife. Projects include off-road vehicle issues in Carson & Santa Fe National Forests and protection of unique geological features in San Juan Basin Badlands – Tom Gorman (438-3932) or Norma McCallan (471-0005, [nmccallan@mindspring.com](mailto:nmccallan@mindspring.com))

**Wildlife Monitoring** – assist with wildlife monitoring in the County of Santa Fe – Teresa Seamster (466-8964, [tcseam@qwest.net](mailto:tcseam@qwest.net))

**Volunteer Coordination** - Work with the Volunteer Coordinator to match volunteer interests to volunteer opportunities. Contact Pat Carlton (988-1596, [carlton505@comcast.net](mailto:carlton505@comcast.net))

### FACEBOOK/TWITTER

Join the other 400 fans for our page and get your latest environmental news by becoming a fan of the Rio Grande Chapter page on Facebook at: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Sierra-Club-Rio-Grande-Chapter/122558948433>.

Also, check out our twitter page at: [twitter.com/nmsierraclub](http://twitter.com/nmsierraclub)

### WHERE ARE THE NORTHERN GROUP OUTINGS? They are now on the back page



### NORTHERN NEW MEXICO GROUP VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION EVENT

About 50 people attended the Northern New Mexico Group Volunteer Recognition event on May 7. A moment of silence for Gail Ryba was followed by recognition of her contributions and leadership in the environmental community by many of the members.



Highlights of the event include John Buchser talking about the Santa Fe River, Betty Quick told about her solar systems, Susan Martin talked about key endorsements that the Club has made this year, Norma McCallan talked about the yard sale on May 15, Judith Bunney talked about the Club's legislative success this year, and David Van Winkle implored everyone to write to President Obama to stop drilling and build a clean energy economy.

Awards for 10 to 25 years of service were given to John Buchser, Kay Carlson, Eleanor Eisenmenger, George Grossman, Jim Hannan, Ken Hughes, Art Judd, Susan Martin, Norma McCallan, Tobin Oruch, Carole Owens, Roger Peterson, Marcia Skillman and Norbert Sperlich.

Seth Roffman, of *Green Fire Times*, provided the photographs.

**OUR NEW WEBSITE IS** <http://northern.nmsierraclub.org>.  
Webpage views are up 100x compared to the old website.

### WEEKLY RADIO PROGRAM

Tune in to our program on FM 101.5 every Friday at 9:15 AM to hear the latest environmental hot topics and outings with John Buchser, Chapter Chair, and other Sierra representatives.

Project 101.5 is also a great rock and roll channel!

### Bring Nature Indoors with This Beautiful Richard Sloan Print

Support the Rio Grande Chapter and enrich your home's ambiance by ordering this or another of the seven striking prints offered only by the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club. These stunning 17-by-22-inch representations of some of our high desert's endangered raptors are numbered and signed by the artist, Richard Sloan, the world-renowned master wildlife painter. To see full-screen color pictures of the seven Sloan prints (Burrowing Owl, Aplomado Falcon, **American Kestrel** shown here, Spotted Owl, Swainson's Hawk, Ferruginous Hawk, and Golden Eagle) reserved as a thank-you for contributors to the Rio Grande Chapter, visit the Chapter's website (<http://riogrande.sierraclub.org>). A contribution of \$140 will be recognized with the delivery of your choice of a signed and numbered Sloan print, shipped flat and ready for framing. Contact Dan Lorimier (575/740-2927, [daniel.lorimier@sierraclub.org](mailto:daniel.lorimier@sierraclub.org)) to make your donation and get a Richard Sloan print.

—Dan Lorimier

*American Kestrel*



## Kids Get Hooked on Fishing Derbies

**D**r. Jim Morgan attended the Kids' Fishing Derby sponsored by the Kiwanis Club at Lake Maloya near Raton on Saturday, June 5. Jim was representing both the Enchanted Circle Chapter of Trout Unlimited and Sierra Club. He donated 15 Sierra Club rod and reel combinations and 10 TU kids' memberships. There was a good turnout, and many fish were caught.

The Kids' Fishing Derby at Eagle Rock Lake on June 5 attracted about 75 children along with quite

a few parents and grandparents. The youngsters won 15 Sierra Club backpacks, 14 Zebco rod and reel combinations, and a few T-shirts donated by Sierra Club. In addition, the first- and second-place winners of the 10- to 11-year-old casting competition won Sierra Club fly-fishing outfits. The fishing was not as good as at Lake Maloya, but everyone had a good time.

—Eric Patterson



Jason Sides, president of the Enchanted Circle Chapter of Trout Unlimited, ties flies for kids at the Trout Unlimited/Sierra Club booth at the Eagle Rock Lake Kids' Fishing Derby. (Photo by Eric Patterson)

## Join Us for a Weekend in the Beautiful Columbine Hondo WSA, July 31-August 1

**C**ome join the Sierra Club and the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance on a moderate, 8- to 9-mile hike in the Columbine Hondo Wilderness Study Area (WSA) Saturday-Sunday, July 31-August 1. Local groups and the conservation community are currently working with Senator Jeff Bingaman to convert this area to true Wilderness in early 2011.

The hike will begin from the Columbine Campground and the hike will take us up Columbine Canyon. Elevations will go from 7900' to the mid-9000' level. Bring your walking shoes, water, and raingear, and join us for this fabulous outing in the Carson National Forest in northern New Mexico. Those who want can camp at the Columbine Campground both Friday and Saturday nights. Sunday we will do a moderate exploratory hike in the area.

For further information, please contact Norma McCallan (505/471-0005, nmccallan@mindspring.com) and John Olivas, Northern Director for the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance (575/387-2665 or 505/379-5551, john@nmwild.org).

### Directions

From Questa, New Mexico, take State Route 38 east 3.9 miles to Columbine Campground. Turn right into campground. Contact for Carson National Forest – Questa District: 575/586-0520.

—Norma McCallan

### FOUR CORNERS BRANCH

#### Steering Committee

**Art Jaquez, Co-Chair**

505/360-0176 • artjaquez2@yahoo.com

**Nick Cullander, Co-Chair**

505/334-0935 • ncullander@hotmail.com

**Gordon Glass, Air Quality, Outings**

505/564-4460 • agglass@earthlink.net

## Fourth Annual Taos River Clean Up Day a Big Success

**T**he annual Taos River Clean Up Day has expanded to become the annual Taos River and Trails Clean Up and Tree Planting Day. Co-sponsored by Centinel Bank, Amigos Bravos, Rocky Mountain Youth Corps, and Sierra Club's Sentinels—Rios de Taos on June 12, the fourth annual River Clean Up Day was attended by over 200 volunteers from the community.

In addition to cleaning up the waters and banks of the Rio Pueblo de Taos, which was the purpose of the original Clean Up Day, volunteers also cleaned up a hiking trail, parts of Cabresto Creek in Questa, a trash dump on the banks of the Rio Grande de Rancho, the Rio Hondo shoreline of a new park near Valdez, and planted trees in Fred Baca City Park. The tired but happy volunteers attended a burger cookout for lunch after some hard but productive work in the morning. All the participants, including the children, exhibited a sense of pride in themselves and in our community.

Sentinels—Rios de Taos would like to especially thank Centinel Bank of Taos for their fine example of community responsibility and leadership. Their commitment to our sense of community just cannot be overstated.

—Eric Patterson



Jim White (left) of Centinel Bank, the leader and originator of Taos River Clean Up Day, with two volunteers at the Taos Recycling Center. Each year the Clean Up Day yields several truckloads of recyclables that get processed here. (Photo by Eric Patterson)

### Contact List

**Eric Patterson, Taos contact and Director of Sentinels—Rios de Taos** • 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



## CENTRAL GROUP NEWS

### Buon Viaggio, Patrick!

**W**ith the departure of Patrick Redmond for Italy, the Central Group has lost its Chair and much more. Patrick was an activist of many hats, and we are scrambling to find heads for them all. In addition to serving as our Group Chair, he was also Water Chair, Political Chair, edited this newsletter page, and helped organize the Sierra Club & Beer events that some of you may have attended.

Patrick received his law degree a few years ago from UNM with a specialty in environmental law, especially water law and the Endangered Species Act. He will continue to work on water issues from afar (southern Italy) and plans to move to the Bay Area in about a year. By then, he will be married to Mirella Vaglio, who is the reason for his sudden departure from this city and continent. Patrick is from California and has always planned to return there sooner or later, though he didn't expect his return to take an

exciting detour to Italy. Life has dealt him a surprise, and he seems very happy about it.

Patrick was never a grandstander, but he did a lot of leading during his two years as Chair of the Central Group. He was Political Chair through the 2008 election and if you did any campaign work, you probably met Patrick, who knocked on hundreds of doors during that campaign season. He methodically worked on event after event, in his deliberately, quietly passionate way. We will all miss him very much and hope to hear from him about his impressions of Italy from time to time.

Left behind, Julie Wilt is serving as the interim Chair of the Central Group. Eva Thaddeus is the interim Political Chair, and Michal Mudd will be working on the newsletter. We continue to seek out additional heads to fill those hats!

—Eva Thaddeus

### Outings *(continued from page 16)*

#### Northern Group cont.

**Sun., 9/12 • Fun...gus!** – Moderate mushroom-oriented hike, perhaps on the Winsor then up the Nambe Lake trail (max of 7 miles/2100' gain with collection stops). Good monsoon season will ensure success. Art Judd (505/982-3212).

**Sun., 9/12 • Strenuous hike to Lake Peak (12,409') near Santa Fe ski basin** – 7 miles, 2000' gain. Marcia Skillman (505/699-3008, marciaskillman@hotmail.com).

**Sat., 9/18 • Hike along the Cañones Creek National Recreational Trail, north of the Valles Caldera** – Moderate/strenuous, -9-mile one-way with car shuttle, 2000' cumulative climb. Michael Di Rosa (w: 505/667-0095, h: 505/663-0648).

**Sat., 9/18 • Strenuous hike to Santa Fe Baldy (12,622')** – 14 miles RT, 3600' gain. Early start, moderately fast but not killer pace, fabulous views. Dogs OK. Mary Thompson (505/469-9499, mxtmary@yahoo.com).

**Sat., 9/18 • Santa Fe River cleanup** – Meet at Closson Street Footbridge. Wear long pants and bring work gloves and water. Paige Grant (505/982-4081, paigeanna@comcast.net).

**Sat.-Sun., 9/18-9/19 • Colorado 14er trip to Mt. Shavano (14,229') near Poncha Springs** – Very Strenuous 8-9 miles, 4600' gain, easy scramble to the top (10m/5400' for optional Tabeguach). Drive up and camp Sat.; Sun. bag peak and return. Patrick O'Keefe (505/501-0688).

**Sun., 9/19 • Hike to Dear Trap Mesa near Los Alamos** – Easy/moderate, 5 miles RT, 500' gain. Some rock scrambling, lovely views. Michael Goldey (505/820-7302, m.goldey@mindspring.com).

**Sun., 9/19 • Hike to Glorieta Baldy** – Strenuous, 12 miles, 2800' gain, dogs OK. Cynthia Good (505/699-2717).

**Sat., 9/25 • Hike to Cerro Azul** – Easy/moderate, 6 miles RT, some scrambling to the summit at

the end. Views to Colorado. Need two high-clearance vehicles. Explore the other peaks as desired. Cinny Green (505/699-4747, edit@thema.us).

**Sat., 9/25 • Strenuous hike in the Jemez** – Dogs OK. Norbert Sperlich (505/474-4354).

**Sun., 9/26 • Hike to Tesuque Peak via Carl's Meadow** – Moderate, 5 miles, 2000' gain, Aspen might start turning. Alan Shapiro (505/424-9242, nm5s@yahoo.com).

**Sun., 9/26 • Hike to Pecos Baldy (12,529')** – Strenuous, 17 miles, 3800' gain, dogs OK. Tobin Oruch (505/820-2844).

*Unless otherwise noted, Northern outings leave from our office, 1807 2nd St., Santa Fe. When carpooling, it is routine for each rider to pay the driver 10 cents/mile rounded down to nearest dollar, or 7.5 cents/mile when 100-plus miles, 3-plus riders.*

### Chapter Volunteers Needed

**T**he vibrancy and effectiveness of the Rio Grande Chapter is a direct result of the work of many active volunteers throughout New Mexico and West Texas. As we continue to expand the scope of our efforts, we identify areas in which we could be even more effective with more active volunteers. Some of these are listed below.

**Adopt-a-Legislator Program:** Our lobbyist is looking for members around the state to "adopt" one of their local state legislators, so that when our important bills come up, these legislators are already familiar with the Sierra Club and its goals. For more information, contact Dan Lorimier (575/740-2927).

**Fund-raisers:** The Chapter Fund Development Team needs additional members, especially individuals who have had experience in fund-raising for nonprofits. Contact John Buchser (505/820-0201).

**Public Lands Activists for various land issues:**

- Protect the grasslands of **Otero Mesa** from oil and gas drilling: contact Margot Wilson (575/744-5860).
- Work on the **National Forests' Travel Management Plan** designating which roads and

trails should be off-limits to motorized vehicles: Northern NM – contact Tom Gorman (505/438-3932); Southern NM – contact Margot Wilson (575/744-5860).

- Help to get the **Valles Caldera** under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service: contact Ilse Bleck (505/662-2368).
- Protect the unique **badlands sites** in the BLM's San Juan Basin: contact Norma McCallan (505/471-0005).

**Wildlife Issues:** Our Wildlife Chair needs help, such as with attending meetings, sending letters, and wildlife monitoring. Hot issues currently are the Mexican wolf, trapping, and wildlife corridors, but new ones are always arising. Contact Mary Katherine Ray (575/772-5655).

**Phone Bank Team:** Members from around the state to make telephone calls to other members re urgent legislation that needs personal calls. Will only be used 4-5 times a year. Will set up a phone bank where feasible, could be done from home. Contact Pat Carlton (505/988-1596, carlton505@comcast.net).

—Norma McCallan

### Central Group Directory

#### Executive Committee

P.O. Box 25342  
Albuquerque, NM 87125-0342

#### Julie Wilt

Interim Chair  
505/404-0972 julie@thewilts.net

#### Eva Thaddeus

Co-Chair, Secretary, Global Warming Issue Chair, Political Chair  
505/266-9646 evathad@nmia.com

#### Michal Mudd

Website Coordinator, Newsletter Editor, General Meetings  
505/715-7886 mudd\_pi@mac.com

#### David Ther

Treasurer, Outings Chair  
505/260-1553 grelbik@gmail.com

The Executive Committee meets on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. Call for location.

### Save Trees and Money: Opt for 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 quarterly paper has been put up on our website, so you can read it on your computer.

—Norma McCallan



## SOUTHERN GROUP NEWS

### Outings

Be sure to contact outing leaders in case of any changes in plans due to weather or other events. For updated hikes that did not make it in time for the print edition of the newsletter check online at <http://riogrande.sierraclub.org>.

**Sat., 7/17 • Hike from Springtime Campground in the San Mateos** – Beautiful wooded area, where we hope to see some great wildlife, spectacular views. Moderate to strenuous, 5 miles, about 1600' gain. Call Kass Akers (575/430-1834).

**Sat., 7/24 • Outing to Sawyer's Peak** – About a 9-mile round trip with possibilities of interesting warblers and ladybugs. We will leave the parking lot in front of the Forest Service Office in TorC at 7:15 a.m. for breakfast at the General Store in Hillsboro. Come prepared with lunch, snacks, and rain ponchos. Call Margot Wilson (575/744-5860) for information.

**Sat., 7/31 • Hike to Indian Creek in the San Mateos** – Beautiful views, old log cabin remains, and spectacular views of Skeleton Ridge. 8 miles, 600' gain, then drop into valley. Steep switchbacks, strenuous. Call Kass Akers (575/430-1834).

**Sat., 8/14 • Hike Railroad Canyon to wilderness boundary** – 6 miles, 1600' gain with wet foot crossings. Spectacular views, well worth the climb. Call Kass Akers (575/430-1834).

**Sat., 8/28 • Exploratory hike to an old mining ghost town in the San Mateos under Vicks Peak** – Strenuous, 5-6 miles, 700' gain. Call Kass Akers (575/430-1834).

**Sat., 9/18 • Easy Monticello Box hike** – Come see the Monticello Box and Alamosa River in all its late summer glory: big cottonwoods, migrating birds, and stunning cliffs and bluffs. We will try our best to ignore the exploratory beryllium drilling that will be underway. It's an easy 4-mile round-trip walk but bring shoes you don't mind getting wet (not sandals, it is too gritty). Dogs OK on leashes. Bring lunch and meet across from the Winston store on Highway 52. Call Mary Katherine Ray (575/772-5655).

### Southern NM Group Directory

#### Executive Committee

P.O. Box 735, Mesilla, NM 88046

#### Glenn Landers

Chair, Pollution, Grasslands Issues  
575/525-0491 [glenn.landern@gmail.com](mailto:glenn.landern@gmail.com)

#### Margot Wilson

Vice Chair, Outings, Conservation Chair,  
Parks/Refuges  
575/744-5860 [sierratrekker70@live.com](mailto:sierratrekker70@live.com)

#### Cheryll Blevins

Treasurer, Editor Southern NM  
Group Page  
575/524-4861 [spotblev@earthlink.net](mailto:spotblev@earthlink.net)

#### Mary Katherine Ray

Secretary, Wildlife, Membership  
575/772-5655 [mkrscrim@kitcarson.net](mailto:mkrscrim@kitcarson.net)

#### Earle Pittman

Global Warming  
575/541-6281 [espittman@zianet.com](mailto:espittman@zianet.com)

#### David Farrell

Political Chair  
575/895-3352 [dafarrelli@hotmail.com](mailto:dafarrelli@hotmail.com)

#### Robert Gray

Sustainability

## ParaSol Dairy Permit Approved

In an unexpected and dangerous reversal of New Mexico Environment Department decisions, the New Mexico Water Quality Control Commission (WQCC) approved the discharge permit for the proposed 2,000-head ParaSol Dairy in Sierra County. The WQCC is the State's highest administrative water quality authority.

Despite passionate public opposition spearheaded by the Rio Grande Chapter, after denying ParaSol's first permit application in 2008, the Environment Department's Groundwater Quality Bureau was instructed by the WQCC to consider a revised application for the proposed dairy. This application was also opposed by a full house of local residents and local Chapter members as well as the Elephant Butte Irrigation District (EBID) and the Bureau

of Reclamation (BOR). Again, the Environment Department Secretary, Ron Curry, denied the revised permit in 2009. Using its last administrative option, ParaSol demanded the WQCC conduct a Records Review of both hearings and rule on the application. The WQCC met in executive session for several hours and relied on legal advice from the Attorney General's Office that seemed to ignore critical testimony from the two hearings and favored ParaSol's position.

No ground has been broken on this project and it's anticipated that at least some of the stakeholders who oppose it will ask the courts to decide on the validity of this decision.

—Dan Lorimier

### Sarah's Green Tip of the Week

#### Tip #1: Flip That Switch

*Sarah is a second grader in Las Cruces who is concerned enough about the effects that climate change will have on the planet that she is taking action to do something about it. Her principal agreed to let her regularly broadcast her "Green Tip of the Week" to the school about the problem and how kids can help. We think grownups can help, too, so we are pleased to introduce Sarah's Green Tips here:*

Today's green tip is Flip That Switch!! Every time you leave a room that's empty Flip That Switch and turn off the lights. This will save energy, and help save the Earth. Thank you and remember to Flip That Switch. Spread the word!!!

## Chapter Grant Helps Families Harvest Rainwater

Rainwater harvesting is all about capturing and storing rainfall to irrigate plants or to supply people and animals. It is one of the oldest-known gardening watering methods, dating back to the beginnings of agriculture.

Water is a precious resource in Sierra County, New Mexico. There are roughly 8-10 inches of rain per year. Storing water that falls during monsoon season can help water a garden or fruit trees for a family. You can store water in a variety of ways: large dark-colored plastic storage tanks, suitable for water storage, are good to use. For a simple storage system, place a barrel on a raised platform under a downspout. The barrel should have an external pipe with a shutoff valve to control the amount of water sent to the plantings. If you have designed your system properly, gravity will enable you to obtain water from your roof and gutter system into the barrel followed to a drip irrigation system without a pump.

The Bountiful Alliance, working with a grant from the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club, has given harvesting opportunities to 10 homes in the downtown historic hot springs district of Truth or Consequences. Saving thousands of gallons a year will allow families to grow food for their families' benefit. In good years, many may be able to sell or trade their bounty for other items. This generous Sierra Club grant will allow volunteers with The Bountiful Alliance to help families understand the value of rainwater harvesting and assist them in setting up a collection tank provided by the grant. Teaching how to take advantage of this bounty from the sky, residents will direct water to their gardens and trees. This saves energy, which might be used

to pump water up from a well or provided by the city water system. In addition, water harvested from roofs and pavement is naturally part of the planet's hydrologic cycle. Rain and drainage can provide low salt-content water that can dilute existing salts in the soils. This helps the plant grow at the right pH, producing more vegetables or fruits.

The Water Harvesting Project allows the Rio Grande Chapter and The Bountiful Alliance to make a significant impact on the lives of 10 families in Sierra County. This cooperative effort will be filmed for educational purposes and will be aired on the community's public access channel. For some families, this may make available some healthier choices for living.

"We've moved away from harvesting traditions over the past 150 years," according to Brad Lancaster, in *Rainwater Harvesting for Drylands, Volume 1: Guiding Principles* (Rainsource Press, Tuscan, AZ). The theory suggests that we've taken too much out of the aquifers and haven't made the best use of waters from the primary hydrologic cycle – rainwater. Surface and ground waters are secondary waters in the hydrologic cycle. They were convenient and inexpensive for homeowners. Primary water sources were ignored and even feared, avoided, or diverted. This worked for some time, but this project hopes to educate local residents on the importance of using the resource before it goes down river to other communities.

For more information, visit The Bountiful Alliance's blog (<http://thebountifulalliancennm.blogspot.com>).

—Sandi B. Gardner, Ph.D.,  
President, The Bountiful Alliance



## Remember Deepwater Horizon iAdelante El Paso!

In the first weeks after the oil platform “Deepwater Horizon” sank in the Gulf of Mexico off the coast of Louisiana, the standard “Drill, baby, drill” Republican mantra was notably absent. As the biggest environmental disaster in American history unfolded, perhaps even the staunchest ultra-right-wingers realized, as a matter of their own self-interest, that it was not the best time to push for more oil drilling—in the lower 48, in Alaska or offshore. Perhaps they feared an anti-conservative backlash, as Americans saw at first hand the risks of our addiction to petroleum. The ecological, social and economic consequences of millions of barrels of crude washing ashore on the beaches and estuaries of the Gulf states and beyond will be almost incalculable. Most Americans will feel some effects. There is a real chance that this disaster will deal the shrimp, oyster and fishing industries in the Gulf a blow from which they will never recover. There is a real chance of the decimation or extinction of much of the unique fauna and flora that make these areas their home.

Of course, the tragedy of “Deepwater Horizon” has not stopped the wackos from finger-pointing at the Obama Administration, and at the President personally, for causing the spill, and for failing to act fast enough to control it. It’s best to ignore them for the moment—they clearly live in a fantasy world that, thankfully, most intelligent, rational Americans do not even visit, let alone inhabit. What we cannot afford to ignore is the certainty that these demagogues WILL at some point again push their petroleum-centric agenda. In a few months or years, when memories of the disaster have faded, they will again demand more oil wells, more drilling, more pipelines, more refineries.

Americans have short memories. How many people today remember “Exxon Valdez” as anything other than a name with a strange pronunciation? How little of that huge environmental disaster lives on in the national psyche today?

It is up to us to make sure the public never forgets the terrible lessons of “Deepwater Horizon.” When the cry for more drilling arises again—as it surely will—we need to be ready with images, videos, articles, presentations, facts and figures, to help Americans recall the milieu when that undersea well was spewing oil inexorably with no end in sight. We need to tirelessly champion our own agenda for clean, renewable alternative energy sources. We need to have our own mantra: “Remember Deepwater Horizon.”

—Terry Sunday

## Outings

### August 7-8: Springtime Campground Car-Camp/Day-Hike

Place: San Mateo Mountains, part of the Cibola National Forest

Class: Easy to Moderate

Length: As far as you want

Elevation gain: Strenuous for those taking the day hike.

Leader: Rollin Wickenden rwickgila@aol.com

We will depart El Paso early Saturday morning, drive North on I-10 and I-25 to the Springtime Campground exit and follow a pretty good dirt road west to Springtime Campground. This campground is located in a canyon of the San Mateo Mountains and is unique in the Southwest for having several wooden lean-to structures. There is a trailhead and optional day hike that climbs up the canyon to the crest of the range if anyone is interested. Participants should bring all their own camping equipment, including food, drink, firewood, camp chairs, and a 3-5 gallon container of water, per person. Participants should also be prepared for rain, as this trip is during the rainy season. After a pleasant evening and leisurely breakfast, we will depart Springtime Campground and return home on Sunday. E-mail Rollin for reservations.

### September 4-6: Labor Day Weekend Backpack

Place: Gila Wilderness north of Silver City, NM

Class: Moderate

Length: About 15 miles total

Leader: TBA-E-mail Laurence Gibson for details lgibson@utep.edu

- In order to expedite implementation of the Clean Air Act in Texas, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has begun to remove some permitting authority delegated to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) 16 years ago.
- After protests from El Paso Sierrans, City Council demanded and got El Paso Electric Company (EPEC) to raise its funding subsidy for home solar installations from the present \$127,000 per year to \$500,000 in 2012 in addition to an agreement to allocate \$10 million for large-scale solar demonstration projects in the next two years.
- The City of El Paso is considering imposing “flow control” on commercial trash from private haulers to deposit it in city-owned landfills, thereby diverting about 600,000 tons per year from Sunland Park’s Camino Real landfill and generating about \$3.7 million for the city.
- The recent recession and the NIMBY (not in my backyard) syndrome have delayed area alternative energy projects. Construction of a \$9 million wind tower factory in Santa Teresa, NM has been delayed until 2011. And some residents of Marfa, TX are protesting the proposed location of 1000 three-storied mirrored dishes for a concentrated-solar energy plant on 200 acres two miles from town. Concerns are noise as well as visual pollution. Marfa has some of the darkest skies in the nation.
- El Paso Water Utilities’ (EPWU) newest open space project, the 200 acre Palisades located at the southwestern tip of the Franklin Mountains, is being planned to give hikers and bikers legal access to more arroyos and trails as well as to allow natural water flow during El Paso’s monsoon season. The utility also announced plans to generate electricity from methane gas produced at its sewage plants, saving \$22 million over 20 years. The equipment will be purchased with federal stimulus money.
- Mayor John Cook is pushing the addition of a 19-mile stretch of the Rio Grande to the Texas Paddling Trails system. The stretch from the NM state line to American Dam near ASARCO would feature five designated put-in and take-out areas for canoes and kayaks and only cost about \$21,000 to develop.
- City Council has at least temporarily saved the El Paso Regional Group’s former Environmental Center from destruction. A fast-food restaurant had been proposed there. The solar house was run by Sierran John Sproul as the city’s first recycling site in the 1980’s. Maintenance and management proved to be an unsustainable drain on Group resources.

## El Paso Group Directory

<http://texas.sierraclub.org/el Paso>

### Executive Committee

<b>Chair: Laurence Gibson</b>	915/309-5419	lgibson@utep.edu
<b>Vice-Chair: Gil Pinon</b>	915/471-5336	gpinon@episd.org
<b>Secretary: Ann Falknor</b>	915/833-9162	afalknor@sbcglobal.net
<b>Treasurer: Kathy Sunday</b>	915/584-9301	sundayt@zianet.com
<b>Bill Addington</b>	915/539-4158	aguavida@valornet.com
<b>Bob Geyer</b>	915/834-8242	
<b>Terry Sunday</b>	915/584-9301	sundayt@zianet.com
<b>Liz Walsh</b>	915/584-1471	ewalsh@utep.edu

### Committee Chairs

<b>Chapter Delegate</b>		
<b>Bill Addington</b>	915/539-4158	aguavida@valornet.com
<b>Editor, Outings</b>		
<b>Laurence Gibson</b>	915/309-5419	lgibson@utep.edu
<b>Inner City Outings, Membership</b>		
<b>Ted Mertig</b>	915/852-3011	tmertig@earthlink.net
<b>Outings</b>		
<b>Rollin Wickenden</b>	915/855-6697	rwickgila@aol.com

## Pajarito Group

- Sat., 7/17 • Strenuous hike in Santa Barbara area** – Call for details. Michael Di Rosa (w: 505/667-0095, h: 505/663-0648).
- Sat., 8/14 • Hike along the streams and meadows of the Grass Mountain area of the Pecos Wilderness** – Strenuous, ~10-mile one-way hike with car shuttle, possible 2000' cumulative climb. Michael Di Rosa (w: 505/667-0095, h: 505/663-0648).
- Sat., 8/28 • Hike Coyote Call and Rabbit Ridge Trails in the Jemez Mountains** – Great views of the Valle Grande in the Valles Caldera National Preserve. Easy/moderate, ~5-6 miles. Ilse Bleck (505/662-2368, ibleck@yahoo.com).
- Sat., 9/18 • Hike along the Cañones Creek National Recreational Trail, north of the Valles Caldera** – Moderate/strenuous ~9-mile one-way with car shuttle, 2000' cumulative climb. Michael Di Rosa (w: 505/667-0095, h: 505/663-0648).

## Northern Group

- Sat., 7/3 • Strenuous hike to Santa Fe Baldy** – 14 miles RT, 3600' gain. Dogs OK. Dan Rusthoi (505/690-8967).
- Sun., 7/4 • Moderate hike to Cerro Grande, highest peak in Bandelier** – 4 miles RT, 1300' gain. Short but steep. Limit of 12. Norbert Sperlich (505/474-4354).
- Sat., 7/10 • Strenuous hike to Hermit Peak and El Porvenir Canyon** – 14+ miles, 2900' gain. Many stream crossings, bring extra footwear (Texas, sneakers). Dogs OK. Bogdan Mihaila (505/795-3316).
- Sun., 7/11 • Fun with fungi** – Moderate hike from Ski Basin to Nambe River and beyond, hoping for mushrooms. Art Judd (505/982-3212).
- Sat., 7/17 • Santa Fe River cleanup** – See p. 11.
- Sat., 7/17 • Moderate/strenuous hike near Gorieta** – Some steep off-trail sections through dense vegetation, great views once you reach the ridge top. 6 miles RT, 1200' gain. Dogs OK. Page Press (505/946-0169, page\_press@hotmail.com).
- Sat., 7/17 • Strenuous hike in Santa Barbara area** – Call for details. Michael Di Rosa (w: 505/667-0095, h: 505/663-0648).
- Sun., 7/18 • Moderate/strenuous hike to Nambe Lake** – 7 miles RT, 2100' gain. A few steep, rocky sections. Dogs OK. Alan Shapiro (505/424-9242, nm5s@yahoo.com).
- Sat., 7/24 • Strenuous hike to Lobo Peak** – 11 miles RT, 4000' gain. Very early start (6ish). Steep climb to an isolated 12,115' peak. Glorious views of Taos Plateau, Rio Grande Gorge, Latir Peaks, and Wheeler Peak area. Marcia Skillman (505/699-3008, marciaskillman@hotmail.com).
- Sun., 7/25 • Moderate hike to Hamilton Mesa** – 6+ miles RT, 900' gain. Wildflowers galore, panoramic views. Michael Goldey (505/820-7302, m.goldey@mindspring.com).
- Sat., 7/31 • Strenuous Three Peaks Loop** – Penitente, Lake Peak, Deception Peak. 11 miles RT, 3100' gain. Early start. Limit of 10. Dogs OK. Miguel DeLuca (505/820-0042).
- Sat.-Sun., 7/31-8/1 • Learn more about the Columbine Hondo WSA, north of Taos, which we hope to make a Wilderness in 2011** – Join John Olivas and members of the NM Wilderness Alliance on Saturday for a moderate hike up Columbine Canyon with lush meadows & forested washes. Optional car camping at Columbine Campground on State Rd. 38, east of Questa, on Fri. & Sat. nights, with

exploratory moderate hike on Sunday. Norma McCallan (505/471-0005, nmccallan@mindspring.com) for reservations; contact John Olivas (575/387-2665, john@nmwild.org) for further info on this important campaign.

- Sat., 8/7 • Moderate hike to La Vega** – 7 miles, 1500' gain, dogs OK. Alan Shapiro (505/424-9242, nm5s@yahoo.com).
- Sun., 8/8 • Easy/moderate hike to East Fork of the Jemez River** – 4 miles RT with ~8 short & easy river crossings. May climb rock face overlooking the river gorge (sneakers useful) for lunch. Michael Goldey (505/820-7302, m.goldey@mindspring.com).
- Sun. 8/8 • Strenuous hike to Los Griegos, Cerro Pelado, and Keddy Lake in Jemez** – 11+ miles RT, 2600' gain. Some steep off-trail sections. Dogs OK. Norbert Sperlich (505/474-4354).
- Fri.-Sun., 8/13-8/15 • Colorado 14er Adventure! Mount Yale (14,196') near Buena Vista** – Strenuous 7 miles, 4300' gain, scramble to top. Royal Drews (505/699-8713).
- Sat., 8/14 • Moderate/strenuous hike to Nambe Lake** – 7 miles and 2100' gain, some steep. Early start, limit of 10, dogs OK. Miguel DeLuca (505/820-0042).
- Sat., 8/14 • Strenuous hike along the streams and meadows of the Grass Mtn area of the Pecos Wilderness** – ~10-mile one-way hike with car shuttle, possible 2000' cumulative climb. Michael Di Rosa (w: 505/667-0095, h: 505/663-0648).
- Sun., 8/15 • Moderate hike to Cerro Grande and Valle Grande** – 6-7 miles, 2000' gain, Cynthia Good (505/699-2717).
- Sat., 8/21 • Moderate hike along Rio Mora in the Pecos** – 7-8 miles, partly off-trail, 1500'-2000' gain, dogs OK. Page Press (505/946-0169).
- Sat., 8/21 • Santa Fe River cleanup** – Meet at Closson Street Footbridge. Wear long pants and bring work gloves and water. Kathleen Davis (505/795-3286, kdav40@aol.com).
- Sun., 8/22 • Easy/moderate hike along Rio En Medio to the Falls** – ~5 miles, 500' gain, dogs OK. Dan Rusthoi (505/690-8967).
- Sun., 8/22 • Hike to Wheeler Peak (13,161')** – Very strenuous, 11-14 miles, 4300' gain, early start. Bogdan Mihaila (505/795-3316).
- Sat., 8/28 • Easy sunset hike with potluck in Diablo Canyon in Buckman area** – Hike to the river and dine. 6 miles RT, 400' gain, walking in sand. Bring a headlamp or flashlight. Rochelle Gerratt (505/795-3254).
- Sun., 8/29 • Strenuous hike to Lobo Peak (12,115') in Taos Ski Valley** – 10 miles, 3800' gain, dogs OK. Tobin Oruch (505/820-2844).
- Fri.-Mon., 9/3-9/6 • Colorado 14er Adventure! Mt. Sneffles (14,156') near Ouray** – Strenuous, 8 miles, 3000' gain, scramble up a packed scree field, a 600' boulder-filled couloir, crux move with exposure through a notch, and final scramble to the top. Royal Drews (505/699-8713).
- Sat., 9/4 • Strenuous hike to Jicarita Peak (12,835')** – Very early start, limit of 10. Dogs OK. Miguel DeLuca (505/820-0042).
- Sun., 9/5 • Moderate hike to Round Mtn from Jack's Creek CG** – ~8 miles, 2000' gain, dogs OK. Les Drapela (505/438-3306).
- Sun., 9/5 • Hike to Wheeler Peak (13,161')** – Very strenuous, 11-14 miles, 4300' gain, very early start, optional overnight Sat., 9/4. Marcia Skillman (505/699-3008, marciaskillman@hotmail.com).
- Sat., 9/11 • Easy/moderate tour of Cejita Blanca Badlands near Cuba** – Explore with Mike Richie, Asst. Leader, a "new" badlands, replete with colorful

rock formations, amusing hoodoos, gigantic iron concretions eroding from the soil, and an impressive grove of large grandfather junipers. All off-trail, some steep areas. Several high-clearance vehicles needed; driving via Bernalillo. Norma McCallan (505/471-0005).

- Sat., 9/11 • Moderate hike to Rim Vista/Salazar on Continental Divide near Ghost Ranch** – 8 miles, 1700' gain, dogs OK. Dan Rusthoi (505/690-8967).
- Sat., 9/11 • Hike in the Latir Wilderness near Questa, includes Venado Peak & Latir Peak** – Strenuous, 17-mile loop, 3700' gain, 10-12 hours hiking, camp or motel Fri. night, dogs OK. Robert Reifel (505/984-1253).

\*\*\*September outings continue on page 13.\*\*\*

## Central Group

- Sat., 9/11 • Desert Exploratory Hike** – Explore the desert canyons, mesas, arroyos, and badlands that can be found on New Mexico's public lands. Many are 1.5- to 2.5-hour drives from Albuquerque, but well worth the travel, if you enjoy colorful, rocky, and sparsely vegetated landscapes. Mostly off-trail. Capable children welcome. No pets. RSVP by 3:00 p.m. the day before. Tom Petencin (505/271-9928, tompeten@msn.com).
- Sun., 9/26 • Desert Exploratory Hike** – Tom Petencin (505/271-9928, tompeten@msn.com).

## Southern Group

- Sat., 7/17 • Hike from Springtime Campground in the San Mateos** – Beautiful wooded area, where we hope to see some great wildlife, spectacular views. Moderate to strenuous, 5 miles, about 1600' gain. Kass Akers (575/430-1834).
- Sat., 7/24 • Hike Sawyer's Peak** – ~9 miles RT, interesting warblers and ladybugs. Margot Wilson (575/744-5860).
- Sat., 7/31 • Hike to Indian Creek in the San Mateos** – Beautiful views, old log cabin remains, and spectacular views of Skeleton Ridge. 8 miles, 600' gain, then drop into valley. Steep switchbacks, strenuous. Kass Akers (575/430-1834).
- Sat., 8/14 • Hike Railroad Canyon to wilderness boundary** – 6 miles, 1600' gain with wet foot crossings. Spectacular views, well worth the climb. Kass Akers (575/430-1834).
- Sat., 8/28 • Exploratory hike to an old mining ghost town in the San Mateos under Vicks Peak** – Strenuous, 5-6 miles, 700' gain. Kass Akers (575/430-1834).
- Sat., 9/18 • Monticello Box hike** – Enjoy big cottonwoods, migrating birds, and stunning cliffs and bluffs in late summer glory. We will try our best to ignore the exploratory beryllium drilling that will be underway. Easy 4-mile RT. Dogs OK on leashes. Mary Katherine Ray (575/772-5655).
- Sat., 9/25 • Hike Blue Mtn from Springtime Campground** – Steep long trail out of canyon but worth the effort. Margot Wilson (575/744-5860).

## El Paso Group

- Sat./Sun., 8/7-8/8 • Springtime Campground car-camp/day hike San Mateo Mountains, Cibola National Forest** – Unique in the SW for having several lean-to structures. Easy to strenuous, hike as far as you want. Bring all camping gear and water. Rollin Wickenden (rwickgila@aol.com).

**OUTINGS NOTE:** Check all Group's websites for updated or new outings information. All mileages are round trip. Participants must sign a liability waiver. Bring water, lunch, sturdy hiking boots or shoes, and clothing suitable for the weather. Leader reserves right to turn away anyone whose experience or equipment appears unsuitable. Leader may

alter destination or cancel trip due to weather, other unfavorable conditions, or insufficient number of participants. Unaccompanied minors need written permission from a parent or guardian to participate – ask leader for form. Dogs permitted only if so noted in write-up. Always call leader ahead to confirm participation and details.