



Rio Grande Sierran

NEWS OF THE RIO GRANDE CHAPTER OF THE SIERRA CLUB

JULY/AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2011

Choosing pollution



Photo courtesy Scott Mosher/scottmosher.com

The EPA last year proposed pollution controls at San Juan Generating Station, above, to reduce nitrogen oxide emitted by the facility by 80 percent. A state board has voted for an industry-backed plan that would instead reduce nitrogen oxide by just 20 percent.

New Mexico's Environmental Improvement Board supported EPA plan for coal facility last year, but new board wants weaker controls

By Juan Reynosa
Associate organizing representative

In the last issue of *The Sierran*, I wrote about the Environmental Protection Agency's proposal to install pollution controls on two coal plants in New Mexico's Four Corners region (San Juan Generating Station and Four Corners Power Plant). The EPA's proposal for selective catalytic reduction controls would reduce the amount of nitrogen oxide (NOx) emitted by 80 percent.

More rollbacks: Decision to scrap Energy Conservation building code will prompt waste, higher utility bills, more pollution: **Page 3**

NOx mixes with other particulate matter to form ground-level ozone, which not only produces haze in the region that affects surrounding national parks, but also has negative health consequences, including respiratory illnesses and heart disease.

The EPA plans to release its final ruling on San Juan Generating Station on Aug. 5, and we have helped to let the EPA hear the voices of concerned community members who want the strongest pollution controls on the plant. Whether it is because their health and their family's health is jeopardized by the plant or because the surrounding environment and air are being tainted by coal pollution, many community members want these pollution controls

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Your photo on our banner?

We're looking for a new background for our banner, above, and we're taking submissions from members. Ideally, we'd like a photo that features both the Rio Grande and this region's gorgeous mountains. We'll give you credit, and thousands of readers will see your work every issue. E-mail submissions to monablaber@gmail.com.

INSIDE



N.M. opts out of wolf program

Despite testimony and a rally by wolf supporters, New Mexico Game Commission votes to withdraw from wolf-reintroduction program. **Page 5**

Trapping on N.M. public lands

Club activists have led a campaign to tell New Mexico Game and Fish commissioners that trapping on public land is irresponsible and should be prohibited; Game Commission to decide on July 21 in Clayton. **Page 5**

Have fun, save cash and energy

Dexter Coolidge: "Last year we took the leap to heat the whole house with solar thermal ... I am exhilarated by the results." **Page 12**

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Explore, enjoy, and protect the planet



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Photo by Shrayas Jatkar

Sharon Gross, commercial property owner and Sierra Club activist, speaks in support of energy efficiency at an Albuquerque public hearing on June 2.

Citizens decry board's vote to revoke cost-saving codes

By Shrayas Jatkar
Associate organizing representative

New Mexico's Construction Industries Commission voted in June to scrap the 2009 New Mexico Energy Conservation Code (NMECC) that was adopted in 2010 after a long series of open and public hearings that included input from stakeholders across the state.

At the same time, the Commission voted to adopt a code that would meet the bare minimum federal standards without any of the New Mexico-specific features that were incorporated into the 2009 NMECC.

"Today's action by the Construction Industries commissioners shows a blatant disregard for public process and the efforts of hundreds of New Mexicans who participated in the open and fair code-development process that lasted over a year," said Tammy Fiebelkorn of Southwest Energy Efficiency Project (SWEET). "This rollback was developed in secret by CID staff under direction from the administration with no public input and no consideration of the extensive technical, energy-use and financial analyses that were undertaken to develop the 2009 NM Energy Conservation Code."

The 2009 code would have helped residents and businesses save money on monthly electric and gas bills by reducing their energy consumption by approximately 20 percent. According to SWEET, the residential code would have resulted in an average net savings of nearly \$14 per month for each homeowner, which adds up to \$66 million statewide over a 10-year period. Furthermore, the 2009 NMECC would have

The residential code would have resulted in an average net savings of nearly \$14 per month for each homeowner, according to the Southwest Energy Efficiency Project.

improved property values for homeowners and lowered barriers to homeownership for low-income New Mexicans.

The move to scrap the 2009 code can be traced to Gov. Susana Martinez's Small Business Friendly Task Force, appointed in January. Two members of the secret task force—Albuquerque architect Dale Dekker and Albuquerque mechanical contractor Kevin Yearout—now serve on the Commission at the Governor's pleasure. A third member of the task force is Superintendent of Regulation & Licensing Department J. Dee Dennis, who issued the order to CID and RLD staff to develop the rollback proposal and to keep that development process a secret.

The task force issued a report in early April that contained recommendations for amending the state building code that are identical to the motions made at the Construction Industries Commission meeting later that month.

But the Commission's vote will actually burden small businesses and households with rising utility bills and a more polluted environment.

Hundreds of concerned New Mexican consumers, property owners, builders including Santa Fe Home Builders Association and U.S. Green Building Council-N.M. chapter, as well as members of Sierra Club and Environment New Mexico, attended public hearings to tell the Commission to maintain the 2009 NMECC. Likewise, more than 250 builders in nine rural communities

who attended trainings on the 2009 NMECC conveyed their support and enthusiasm for the new code during the training sessions in April and May.

"New Mexicans were very clear in written and verbal comments to the Commission that they wanted the state to maintain the 2009 NM Energy Conservation Code," said Sanders Moore of Environment New Mexico. "This would have meant less air pollution, decreased water use, fewer emissions that contribute to climate change, and a more sustainable future. It's alarming that the Commissioners ignored the will of the people and took these benefits away from all New Mexicans."

The Commission's decision was a severe blow, but Sierra Club and partners are not giving up that easily. Given the Commission's behavior and actions, this campaign is no longer just about energy efficiency measures that save consumers money and help improve our environment; it's now a matter of transparency in government and respect for due process as well. Next steps, including legal action, are being discussed with partners in SWEET and Environment New Mexico. To get involved in this campaign and/or for more information, please contact Shrayas Jatkar (505-243-7767, shrayas.jatkar@sierraclub.org). Check out our timeline to navigate all the twists and turns in the story about our New Mexico energy-conservation code: www.nmsierraclub.org/gov-hands-off-our-building-codes.

Continued from Page 1: State considered information provided by PNM, not EPA

installed and have spoken up to the EPA.

Yet New Mexico Gov. Susana Martinez is again using her position to throw a wrench in the implementation of environmental safeguards. With a newly reorganized State Environment Department and a newly re-appointed state Environmental Improvement Board (EIB), the governor has decided to fight the EPA's proposal on the San Juan Generating Station.

While last year's Environment Department agreed with the EPA's proposal for San Juan Generating Station, the governor's reorganized department decided to revise the state implementation plan for the regional haze rule.

Now the Environment Department has decided that a much lesser option for pollution controls, known as selective non-catalytic reduction, would work instead of what the EPA is proposing. These new controls would only result in a 20 percent reduction of NOx, versus the 80 percent reduction in NOx that the EPA's recommended controls would provide.

The department based its decision on information provided by PNM, the major owner of San Juan Generating Station, and claimed that the EPA's pollution controls would cost too much. Yet at no time were the EPA's calculated costs figured into the department's data. If they had been, they would have shown that the selective catalytic reduction proposed by the EPA is not only affordable, but the only technology that can clean up the emissions sufficiently.

And don't just take my word for it: The EPA feels the same way. On May 13, the EPA sent the state Environment Department a letter expressing serious concerns with the department's proposal, saying that unless these concerns were addressed it would not be able to propose approval of the state's plan.

Nevertheless, in June the Environment Department's proposal was heard in front of the newly appointed Environmental Improvement Board and was approved unanimously after only two days of hearings. And thus the state has had a change of heart about how air should look in New Mexico.

In my mind, the state's view seems a little hazy; many others like the EPA's clearer and more transparent vision. Stay tuned for the EPA's final ruling in August, and how the state's proposal has played (or not) into it.

Message from the Chair: Caring for the commons

One of the reasons I love New Mexico is the combination of cultural diversity and beautiful places. The proximity of many wild outdoor opportunities close to cities allows a nearby respite—most of the time.

In mid-June, my wife, Linda, and I took a short backpack up to La Vega, in the Pecos Wilderness. Our starting point was the base of the Santa Fe ski basin, which at over 10,000 feet is very cool compared to the city heat of pre-monsoon June.

On the way in, Linda commented about the smell of smoke. Some hikers returning from the summit of Santa Fe Baldy reassured us that we must be smelling the Waldo fire, over 200 miles away, as nothing was evident from higher up the mountain. But little wisps of smoke in the sky, mixed in with some tiny clouds, left me wondering. Arriving at La Vega, a small meadow and marsh area, we spotted only one tent. A young man crossing the meadow looked dismayed: A fire nearby. Steady winds of 20 mph with 40-mph gusts, headed directly toward us from where he spotted fire. A quick dash into the meadow confirmed his fear. After weeks of work and volunteer activities, I was inclined to stay. Finding a great campsite, well established so we would not be dam-



John Buchser,
Chapter chair

aging fragile alpine meadows, we started to settle down. Smoke started drifting into the meadow. Another quick dash into the meadow. It looked like the fire was 3 miles away, and it had grown at least 10-fold in an hour. My wife's recent recovery from back surgery left me loaded down with a heavy pack and wondering how fit either of us was for an immediate evacuation. It did not, however, look like we had a choice. The fire was moving parallel to the trail, and we had to go toward it to return to our vehicle. We wondered about the others we had spotted hiking in, including a group of backpackers with an 8-month-old child in a tented carrier.

In large part due to the efforts of a dozen air tankers and helicopters, the growth of the fire was restrained enough for us to evacuate safely. All the folks we had seen backpacking in made it out safely. Both my body and my brain took a few more days to recover.

The immediate cause was likely someone who felt they could safely manage a campfire despite a ban. Overgrazing in the 1800s followed by a policy of fire

suppression in the last century, combined with the Southwest's normal variability in climate, have created large areas at great risk of large fires. Thirty years ago, Forest Service fire specialist Bill Armstrong predicted we would have a lot of big fires. His biggest fears were for the area around Los Alamos and the Santa Fe watershed. Change has been tough and steady; recovery from two centuries of poor practices is not easy.

Foremost, the Sierra Club is engaged in getting folks connected with our wild places. This creates a desire to understand them. As we attempt to protect the places we love, we apply the best information and processes. The forests are our watersheds, and they have a particularly key role in maintaining our existence over the long run. We have the technology to pump water out of the ground, but we are diminishing that resource at a steady rate. The coal that powers those pumps fouls our air. Let us not continue to pollute our air and poison our water by burning coal. These technologies will continue; they have their place and time. Renewable technology's time has come.

Yes, we must let our forests burn. That is their way. Many little fires. Let us change our ways. Management of the commons requires we learn and change.

Meet our senior organizer manager

By Steve Thomas

Sierra Club Western Region Director

Roger Singer has recently been promoted to Senior Organizing Manager in the Western Region. Roger has 16 years of experience with Sierra Club, beginning his Club career in Boise, Idaho, then as a Northwest regional manager based in Seattle.

More recently, he has been doing excellent work for us in Colorado, recently playing a key role in retiring 1,000 MW of coal-based energy at three coal plants in the Denver/Boulder area. He also led a Sierra Club public-lands protection campaign that helped

establish over 500,000 acres of wilderness and 280 river miles of wild and scenic rivers in the Owyhee Canyonlands of Idaho.

"New Mexico has some of the best wild lands and wildlife habitat left in the country, along with amazing potential to become a national leader in utilizing clean, renewable energy," Roger said. "I'm honored to get to work with this team."

Roger will manage organizing staff in Colorado, New Mexico and Utah. He lives with his wife and two sons in Golden, CO, and will be in New Mexico regularly. Please join me in welcoming Roger.

Chapter meeting

The Chapter's quarterly Conservation and Executive Committee meetings will be held October 8-9 at the Sevilleta Wildlife Refuge. Contact Conservation Chair Ken Hughes or Chapter Chair John Buchser (see directory) for more information. Carpooling is encouraged.

Election of chapter and groups

Every year you, our members, have an opportunity to run for election, either for your local group or for our chapter. (If you don't want to take that big a step, there are many opportunities to contribute less time and find out if a leadership role is right for you).

If you want to become involved, our bylaws require us to set a schedule for the election. The schedule will be posted on our website, nmsierraclub.org/excom-election-2011.

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Letters mailed to D.C. offices take up to six weeks due to screening procedures, so consider sending letters to state offices to expedite delivery.

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N.M. Game Commission ignores public

By Mary Katherine Ray
Chapter Wildlife Chair

An item on the New Mexico Game Commission's June 9 meeting agenda said the Department of Game and Fish was seeking "guidance" on the wolf-reintroduction program.

Not knowing what form that might take, wolf supporters gathered before the Game Commission meeting, waved signs and cheered for wolves as Game Commissioners drove in. Speakers at the rally included a wolf-country campground owner and a mom who lives on the Gila Forest boundary who wants wildlife diversity including wolves in the world for her kids. A mammologist spoke about the ecological importance of wolves and even a hunter spoke about supporting wolf recovery.

When the wolf agenda item was up that afternoon, the Department presented the costs of the program since 1999. In more than 11 years, the Department of Game and Fish has spent only about a half-million dollars, and the federal government \$1.4 million. The Department share amounts to \$42,000 a year, a paltry sum considering its annual budget of nearly \$40 million. But it was clear this was shaping up to be a question about money, or more importantly, about whether the Department should spend even a dime on any creature that can't be shot by hunters.

During the meeting, 16 people stood up and spoke in support of wolves, citing their importance as keystone carnivores to maintain ecosystem health, their ability to keep herds healthy, the desire to be able to see and hear wolves in their native habitat, and about working to find creative solutions to conflicts with ranchers. Commissioners were reminded that a 2008 poll showed that 69 percent of voters supported wolf reintroduction.

The anti-wolf factions were represented by the usual fear-mongering: Wolves will eat or are eating all the elk, and ranchers are going out of business. (Remember, the population in the entire region hovers around 50 wolves.) Not only will wolves eat the children, the children have been traumatized by



Photo by Mary Katherine Ray

Nearly 100 wolf supporters gathered before work and the Game Commission meeting on June 9 at the New Mexico Farm and Ranch Heritage Museum in Las Cruces. Later that day, Game commissioners voted to withdraw from the wolf-reintroduction program.

Wildlife and wildfires

As I write, the Wallow fire has just burned its way across the forest of Eastern Arizona and into the Gila of Western New Mexico. Given how big the fire is and how much smoke is being spread all over the country, one might expect the news for wildlife would be bleak. But according to an Arizona Game and Fish official, wildlife know what to do in a fire, and usually larger animals just move and birds fly away.

Small mammals can burrow underground and even just a few inches below the surface offers sufficient safety while the fire burns across the land overhead. While it appears as if the fire is completely catastrophic, it is actually burning in a mosaic pattern, devastating some areas while sparing others entirely. There are areas within the burn where wildlife can seek refuge at least for a time.

The territories of three wolf packs have been in the path of the fire, but all the wolves are accounted for, and the dens with this year's pups appear to have been spared. Still, the ability of these packs to survive in the vastly altered landscape is uncertain. An event like this fire does serve to remind us how fragile the small wolf population is. With so few individuals, it wouldn't take much to devastate them. Never was it more clear that there need to be more wolves out there so that if some are lost there is redundancy for backup.

— Mary Katherine Ray

the presences of wolves. (For the record, the number of children or adults eaten by Mexican wolves in the entire known history of the species stands at zero.)

What happened next was swift but sure. Commissioner Salopek of Las Cruces made a motion to withdraw from the Mexican Wolf Reintroduction

program effective June 30, 2011. It was quickly seconded by Commissioner Bidegain, the representative from Tucumcari who is also on the Board of the New Mexico Cattlegrowers Association. The Commissioners one by one then all voted to withdraw from the program.

It isn't clear what this means for

wolves. The reintroduction program is not suspended by this vote. N.M. Game and Fish simply won't be participating in it. It won't be helping mitigate depredations or advising and helping ranchers. It also won't be involved in consultation about policy. The agency is required by law to continue to provide law enforcement for wolves, but it has walked away from the table where the other cooperating agencies still sit with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The other agencies still are the Arizona Department of Game and Fish, the U.S. Forest Service, USDA Wildlife Services (the predator-killing agency) and White Mountain Apache tribe.

Commissioners violated their own public-notice policy, which had been discussed that very morning and for which it was settled that 21 days was sufficient time to alert the public to proposed action. The public notice of this act was less than 60 seconds. The Commission had the appearance of wanting to avoid scrutiny and just get it done. It also had the appearance of having been decided long before the meeting opened. What was sorely lacking was consideration of the public, of the environment, conservation and wildlife protection.

Thousands ask commission to ban traps on public lands

Mary Katherine Ray
Chapter Wildlife Chair

In response to a trapping rule review, thousands of petition signatures, e-mails, and letters have been sent to New Mexico Game and Fish asking that leg-hold traps, snares and other body-crushing traps be prohibited from New Mexico's public lands.

A myriad of problems plague the practice of trapping in New Mexico, including: cruelty and animal-welfare concerns; the state's failure to account for and mitigate against the numbers of species trapped; the absence of conservation plans; and the resulting threat imposed on wildlife populations by the demands of the fur market. Traps are indiscriminate and put non-target wildlife and hikers at risk. Trappers have failed to comply with reporting requirements, and no one is

monitoring them to ensure traps are checked daily.

Now, the Department of Game and Fish has scheduled the Game Commission meeting at which commissioners will be presented with their proposals for a vote on July 21 in Clayton, N.M., a small town practically on the Oklahoma border, hundreds of miles from any large population center, ensuring that there will be as little public participation and scrutiny as possible at this hearing.

In response to our petitions, however, the Department, as required when a "substantive number" of comments are received, has included a "citizen's alternative" that prohibits traps from all of New Mexico's public land. Nevertheless, the Department had made it clear that it does not support this alternative in spite of the tremendous public outpouring. More-

over, it recommends abolishing the trap ban in the Gila as well. The Cooperative Research unit that was contracted to study the potential for different types of traps to harm wolves has concluded its study, but so far, it is not being made available to the public. Game Commissioners will be voting without the public having access to the findings.

The agency has made it clear that the outpouring from the general public is not worthy of consideration compared to its trapper clientele.

We are on Facebook as Trap Free New Mexico. Please visit and share. Of course, you will also find reams of information about trapping at our chapter Website: www.nmsierraclub.org/wildlife. It is not too late to add your protest by signing the petition online.

'Gasland' screenings and beyond

By Susan Selbin

Hydraulic fracturing—or “fracking”—as part of drilling to extract natural gas, is used in more than 30 states, including New Mexico. This process forces water infused with dangerous chemicals into deep shale deposits, fracturing the deposits to release the gas. Fracking is recognized to have resulted in contaminated water, serious health issues for humans and domestic animals/wildlife, and damage to the natural landscape as well as the property of those involved.

France and South Africa have put a moratorium on fracking. The documentary *Gasland* played a part in the South African decision.

The Sierra Club and New Mexico Wilderness Alliance hosted a screening of the award-winning documentary at Albuquerque's Guild Cinema on May 22. The 90 viewers were fired up, resulting in additional house-party screenings in June and other screenings planned for July around New Mexico.

Get involved!

If you would like to host a *Gasland* screening in your home or other venue, or if you'd like to get further involved to work on action related to fracking, please contact Susan Selbin at 242-6058 or sselbin@hotmail.com.

Food & Water Watch, Conservation Voters New Mexico, Drilling Mora Country, Drilling Santa Fe, Environment New Mexico and the Sierra Club also sponsored a *Gasland* screening on June 21.

As one viewer wrote, “This is a life-changing documentary that powerfully presents the consequences of our nation's unrelenting pursuit to harvest natural gas.”

While viewers get informed, engaged and enraged after viewing *Gasland*, many want to do more than just sign petitions. Your participation is welcome!

Activist DeChristopher speaks in Santa Fe

By Lora Lucero

Tim DeChristopher admits that he didn't really plan to purchase 22,000 acres near Moab and the Canyon Lands National Park in Utah when he entered the oil and gas auction on Dec. 17, 2008.

His goal—to creatively disrupt the process by just speaking his mind—was itself disrupted when he was asked if he wanted to be a bidder. Seizing the opportunity, Tim became bidder No. 70. On March 3, 2011, a jury found him guilty of making false statements and violating the Onshore Oil and Gas Leasing Reform Act. Tim faces up to 10 years in prison and a \$750,000 fine, and expects to be sentenced in July.

At the invitation of New Energy Economy, DeChristopher spoke to 200 to 300 people in Santa Fe on June 13. Although I admire his courage and spontaneity, I was not convinced that civil disobedience is an effective way to make meaningful change. After listening to Tim, I am now convinced that more people—myself included—must follow in his footsteps.

DeChristopher acknowledges that while the prospect of going to prison is terrifying, “staying on the path that we are on now, that to me is a more terrifying situation.” Check out Tim's Peaceful Uprising: www.peacefuluprising.org.

The time for civil disobedience, direct action, creative disruption, whatever we call it, has come. Sierra Club members know the dire threat our planet is facing from climate change. We also know there is an important role for inside action, such as influencing Congress to pass the Waxman-Markey Climate Change Bill in 2009.

Working from the inside must be balanced with disrupting from the outside. There is a legitimate and urgent role for peaceful civil disobedience when (1) our current elected officials have failed to act after repeated calls for action; (2) planetary survival trumps man-made laws and policies; and (3) a white, educated, privileged woman (me) who peacefully bucks the system might make more of a ripple.

Bill McKibben, Naomi Klein, Wendell Berry, James Hansen, Maude Barlow and others are calling for direct action in Washington, DC, in August, which may lead to arrest. I plan to attend: www.tarsandsaction.org/sign-up.

Several Sierra Club members attended DeChristopher's speech, including staffer Shrayas Jatkar, who said, “Many of Tim's insights made me uncomfortable and challenged me to think about how to be more effective in my work. For instance, I'm more compelled to find ways to address adaptation in

our clean-energy campaigns after hearing about Tim's encounter with a climate scientist who admitted to her generation's failure to reign in emissions.

“Despite any differences in tactics, I left the event feeling that the Sierra Club's choice in its most recent strategic brief is in line with the sentiment of the public and leaders of a climate-justice movement: that we must ‘diminish the power of the coal and oil industries.’”

“Tim's actions are certainly compelling and inspiring to read about,” said Roger Singer, Sierra Club regional senior organizing manager. “They clearly fall outside of Sierra Club's mission program that states that we employ ‘all legal means’ in our conservation advocacy work. That said, we all work toward similar goals, if by different means. Sierra Club and other partnering conservation groups had filed legal actions against these O&G leases and won an injunction in January 2009. In February, Interior Secretary Ken Salazar withdrew them from consideration,” Singer said.

While Tim's tactics brought more public attention to the issue, the lasting protections for these natural landscapes clearly required action from within the system as well as outside.

Volunteers needed

Chapter Fundraising Team members This crucial team needs additional members to enable our chapter to expand its environmental efforts in the critical months ahead! Experience in fundraising for nonprofits useful, but any level of experience OK. Contact John Buchser jbuchser@comcast.net, 505-820-0201.

Treasurer for Rio Grande Chapter: Bookkeeping experience valuable; working experience with Quick Books system useful. Position opens Jan. 1.

Treasurer helper: Bookkeeping experience required, working experience with Quick Books system useful. Open now, this position assists treasurer in keeping our accounting accurate and up to date. Contact Mark Jones 505-662-9443, jonesmm1@comcast.net.



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.

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Photo by Jeff Potter

70 acres lie empty at the former Los Angeles landfill, where the city of Albuquerque spends hundreds of thousands of dollars in remediation costs each year to capture airborne and water-borne pollution.

What the trash left behind

Vacated Albuquerque landfills leave environmental legacy to deal with for decades

By Jeff Potter
Central Group

Out of sight but not out of mind? A large city such as Albuquerque vibrantly breathes, consumes and creates multitudes of waste daily, yet we citizens go on unaware of the cumulative effect. According to the City of Albuquerque Environmental Health Department, the city pledges to “monitor, characterize and, if necessary, clean up eight additional former City-owned and/or operated landfills to protect the environment and the public’s health and safety.”

One such former landfill is located east of the Albuquerque Metropolitan Arroyo Flood Control Authority channel between two heavily used east-west corridors, Paseo del Norte and Alameda Boulevard. Given the extensive development of most available land in the area, the 70-acre section stands empty, and one might wonder why it hasn’t seen development. No doubt many who pass by in their hurried commute don’t realize the reason: What lies beneath is the former Los Angeles landfill and its environmental burden from millions of tons of waste decomposing for decades and inherent other problems.

In 1978, Albuquerque’s northern boundary was where the city decided to locate its municipal landfill. The site was chosen along Los Angeles Boulevard, which in 1990 became Paseo del Norte.

The site was typical for landfills in cities at that time—namely, an excavated, unlined pit that was filled with 2.8 million tons of unregulated refuse from 1978 to 1983. Nowadays, Albuquerque and Bernalillo County haul refuse well west of the city limits at the Cerro Colorado site. There were similar sites to the Los Angeles landfill near the present-day Mesa del Sol planned community, at the south end of Eubank Boulevard and also just east of Paseo del Volcan and I-40.

Despite rampant sprawl westward, the explosive growth of Albuquerque since the late 1970s has

Central Group

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Executive Committee

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Eva Thaddeus: Co-Chair, Secretary, Climate Change Chair evathad@nmia.com, 505-266-9646

David Ther: Treasurer, Outings Chair, Nominating grelbik@gmail.com, 505-260-1553.

Jeff Potter, 505/897-8621, jpotter@unm.edu

Tammy Fiebelkorn, Political Chair

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

enveloped what used to be barren fields between I-25 and the rural North Valley bottomland. The area has seen industrial, residential development, and the building of the important Anderson-Abruzzo Balloon Fiesta Park. The environmental risks associated with landfills include subsidence, methane gas and water pollution, and the Los Angeles landfill has seen issues with all of these.

The landfill emits a sizeable amount of methane gas; the city’s Environmental Health Department has installed a landfill gas-extraction system using 59 wells to capture the flammable methane. The first of its kind in New Mexico, the extraction system removes 3.4 tons of landfill gas daily. Gas removal diminishes the potential for landfill contaminants to travel as a gas and dissolve into the groundwater. It also protects the public’s health and safety from the potential for these gases to concentrate in enclosed areas where harmful vapors could be inhaled or an explosive situation could occur. The city has built a first-in-New Mexico gas-to-energy system that consists of a 70kW microturbine that captures the landfill gas and produces electricity. The microturbine was acquired and installed with the assistance of a Clean Energy grant from the New Mexico Department of Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources.

ment of Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources.

The landfill has also generated a plume of water-borne pollution that is moving south toward the aquifer. The city has installed collection wells and is re-injecting reclaimed water into the aquifer near the PNM Reeves Generating Station along El Pueblo Road. All told, the city spends several hundred thousand dollars a year in remediation costs.

Whether there is another, tragic legacy to the Los Angeles landfill remains unknown. According to a 2007 story in the former *Albuquerque Tribune*, Mary Carnes, 52, an environmental scientist with the city’s Environmental Health Department, was taking meter readings at the Los Angeles Landfill south of Balloon Fiesta Park and, while working in a pit in the ground, she died. A medical examiner’s report lists the cause and manner of Carnes’ death as “undetermined.” The Albuquerque Fire Department took air samples that didn’t show dangerous amounts of methane or hydrogen sulfide, gases that old landfills routinely emit. A separate report written for the city’s life-insurance company concludes that Carnes died due to lack of oxygen. The New Mexico Occupational Health and Safety Bureau leveled four citations against the city, all centering around a failure to classify the pit Carnes died in as a hazardous confined space. The state subsequently ordered the city to pay \$6,500 in fines.

Finally, since the Balloon Fiesta uses the area each fall as an RV parking area, any potential human hazard should be well disseminated to parking-area users. According to Steve Wentworth, an area resident and member of the Balloon Fiesta Park Commission, “During the Balloon Fiesta there is 24/7 monitoring by the Albq. Fire Dept. and contractors for the Environmental Health Dept. There have been no problems in all the years the Fiesta has used the area. Several hundred RVs and motor homes use the area and many use barbecues without negative issues.”

For more on Carnes: “Scientist’s mysterious death while working at landfill stirs conflict”: www.abqtrib.com/news/2007/may/29/scientists-mysterious-death-while-working-landfill/

How will climate change affect N.M.?

By Mona Blaber

Every study released lately seems to have worse news about climate change, but it's hard to translate the figures and statistics into any kind of idea of how life will change in New Mexico, or any region, in the coming decades. I asked University of New Mexico Earth and Planetary Sciences professor David Gutzler, who has researched climate variability in the West, about what these predictions mean for us.

Question: In October, a National Center for Atmospheric Research study predicted worse-than-Dust Bowl droughts, unprecedented drought, by the 2060s and earlier in the Southwest (and many other regions), even under moderate emissions scenarios. Does that study seem in line with research you've done?

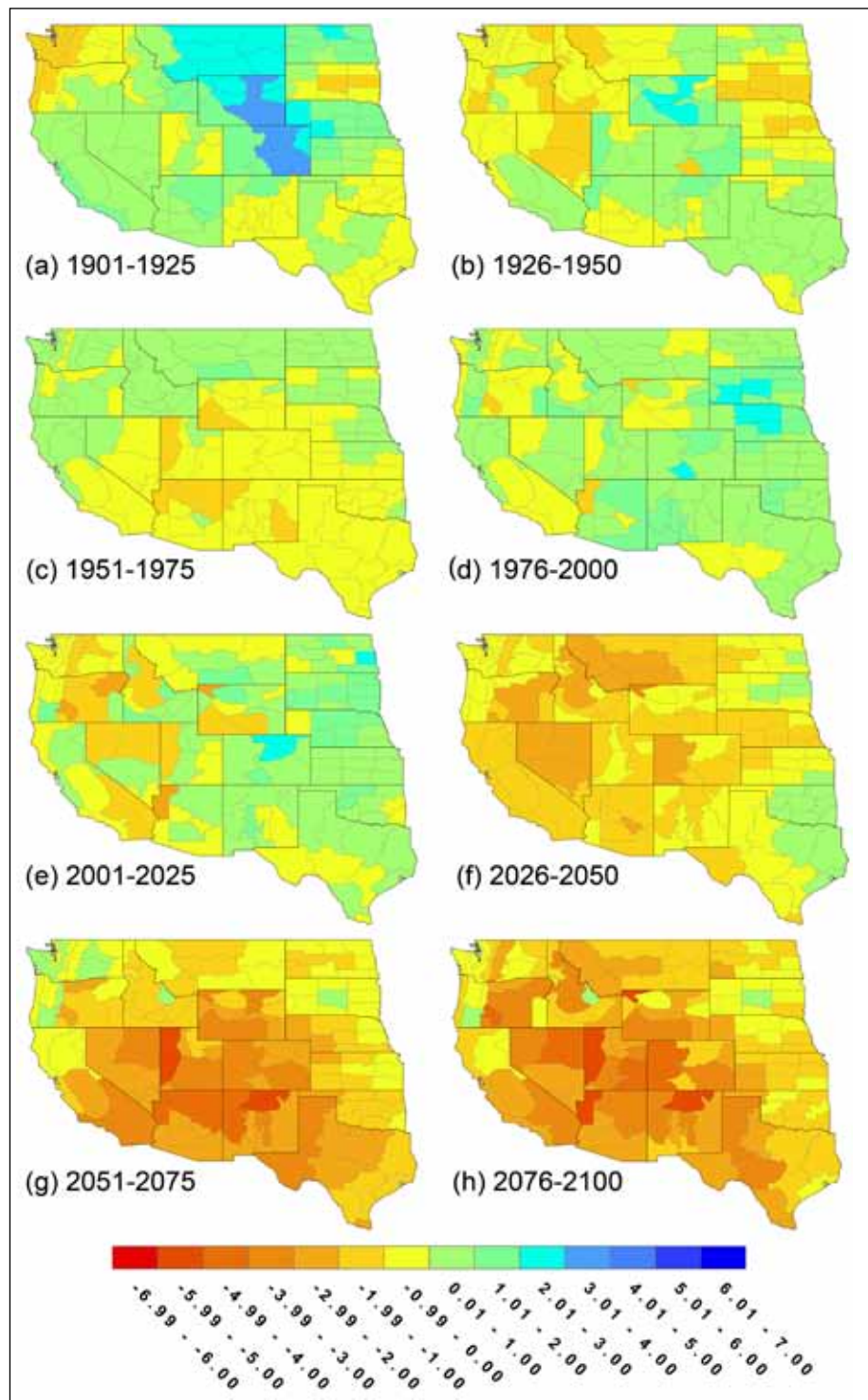
Gutzler: Yes indeed. Tessia Robbins, one of our star undergrads at UNM, and I published a paper last year on projected droughts in the western US. Consistent with Aiguo's (NCAR scientist Aiguo Dai) research, we find that the climate projections generated using a moderate greenhouse-gas-concentration scenario put the SW into a temperature regime outside the historical (20th century) range of variability by the latter half of this century. That rate of temperature increase drives Palmer Drought Index values into the "severe drought" category as the new climatic normal across the Southwest, by increasing evaporation off the surface.

Q: I hear about Dust Bowl conditions, and much of New Mexico and Texas is currently in extreme drought. Could conditions for farmers here be similar to the Dust Bowl in the next few decades? What changes can they expect?

A: Meteorological conditions are projected to trend toward those seen in the 1930s, or the 1950s in AZ and NM. However we need to be careful with terms like "Dust Bowl," because land-management practices contributed substantially to that terrible event. As a society we should anticipate the high likelihood of much warmer temperatures, combined with decadal episodes of reduced precipitation, and make sure that we don't repeat the land-management mistakes of the past.

Q: How would these drought conditions affect urban New Mexico residents?

A: Urban residents around here in the 20th century were buffered from



From "Climate variability and projected change in the western U.S.," Gutzler/Robbins
Palmer Drought Index averages for the West using actual figures through 2007 and projections for a mid-range emissions scenario. "0" represents normal moisture conditions; negative is drier. Minus-3, now considered severe drought, would be average conditions for much of New Mexico after 2050.

drought because cities largely (or completely) pumped groundwater for municipal usage. Our cities are now more vulnerable to drought, in three ways: (1) we know that in many places groundwater has been considerably depleted, so our buffer has been mined; (2) cities in the Southwest have many more people ... the huge growth in urban population took place largely during several decades of anomalously high-precip years in the late 20th century; (3) as noted above,

climate is trending toward warmer temperatures and more severe drought, making surface-water supplies more problematic right at the time when cities such as Albuquerque and Santa Fe are moving (at great expense) toward surface-water consumption. Note that only the last of the three reasons for increased water-supply vulnerability cited here is directly climate-related! Climate change is simply amplifying the increased vulnerability to water shortage that exists here anyway.

Q: We are still breathing smoke from the wildfire that started in Arizona, and the winds this spring seemed especially heavy and constant. Can we expect more and more of these conditions as the years pass?

A: Yes, increased wildfire activity is among the more confident projections we can make. The spring season, in particular—that's wildfire season here, as everyone now realizes if they didn't know it before this year—exhibits sharply rising temperatures and decreasing soil moisture in the Southwest. That's in the data record now, not just a hypothetical projection from a model. Coming at the end of a century of active fire suppression that increased forest fuel density, these conditions are conducive to explosive fire this time of year.

Q: What can we do to prepare? What can we do to prevent? Or do you think it's too late to stop warming, and we should concentrate on adapting?

A: Why set up a choice between preparation and prevention? Aren't we smart enough to consider both?

One big difference between preparation and prevention (in climate research jargon, we call these approaches "adaptation" and "mitigation," respectively) is that many potential aspects of adaptation can take place at the local scale, such as the measures adopted recently by the city of Chicago. Costs and benefits are easier to assess at the local level. That's why the Clean Air Act applied to local air pollution works effectively—citizens can make a direct connection between whatever costs and hassles they incur, and the resulting improvement in local air quality.

Effective mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions must be coordinated internationally, and politically that's much more difficult to implement. As we've seen, international mitigation efforts such as the Kyoto Protocol have so far failed completely, and discussion of a successor policy at the international level is paralyzed because nobody wants to be the first to implement a meaningful emissions reduction strategy. The argument for going first has to be based on the opportunity to become a leader in development of new energy sources. The New Mexico Environmental Improvement Board approved a pair of state policies last year based on that argument. It's obviously controversial. The new administration in Santa Fe is working to overturn the policies.

CCAIE: PNM fossil-fuel investments drive rate increases

By David Van Winkle

"PNM is currently seeking to raise its rates well over \$100 million per year, the largest increase in New Mexico history. At the same time, PNM is not doing nearly enough to mitigate this and future proposed rate increases driven by its continued investment in old, dirty fossil-fuel power plants," Don Hancock, Chairman of the Coalition for Clean Affordable Energy, said in April of proposed PNM rate hikes.

PNM proposes a rate increase of a total of \$156 million/year by 2013, a 20 percent jump in bills for customers. PNM had already raised electricity rates by 25 percent in the past few years due to investments in fossil-fuel infrastructure. Thus, PNM rates

will have increased 50 percent ($1.25 \times 1.20 = 1.50$) in just a few years. New Mexico ratepayers would be better served by a more much aggressive implementation of energy efficiency and clean renewable energy, says CCAIE.

PNM's proposed rate increase includes fossil-fuel-based cost increases of \$105 million (with \$85 million implemented between now and January 2012, plus another \$20 million in January 2013). Thus, electricity rates will have increased by 41 percent from fossil-fuel investments alone. And this does not include hundreds of millions already spent on those plants and charged to PNM customers.

However, by 2013, PNM's planned investment in energy efficiency is only \$27 million and renewable

energy only \$24 million, an almost trivial amount in relation to PNM's \$1 billion cost of service. This under-investment in new technology will cause ratepayer problems for the foreseeable future unless corrected by a more aggressive plan by the company in energy efficiency and clean energy.

"Investments in energy efficiency save ratepayers money," Tom Singer of Natural Resources Defense Council said. "It is well known in the utility industry that investments in energy efficiency are at least 50 percent cheaper than building new energy sources, such as power plants and transmission lines. We encourage PNM and the Public Regulation Commission to adopt more aggressive energy-efficiency measures to stop this upward spiral of rate increases."



Photos by Ken Hughes

The Sierra Club and many other organizations are working with the Bureau of Land Management on the serious illegal wood-cutting problem in the Badlands area.

Coalition works to protect Badlands

By Norma McCallan
Chapter Vice Chair

We are still awaiting publication of the new Resource Management Plan (RMP) from the Bureau of Land Management's Rio Puerco office, which we expect will provide some protections for unique Badlands landscapes.

It was first delayed last winter to incorporate Secretary Salazar's Dec. 23, 2010, Order 3310. The order initiated a new wildlands policy for the BLM, whose ability to designate wilderness areas had been severely curtailed by an under-the-table deal during the Bush administration.

Now the RMP is delayed again, since our new Congress inserted a rider in the appropriations bill that no funding was allowed in this fiscal year for BLM's wildlands, and the wording of the RMP must again be revised. The Sierra Club and many other organizations are working to ensure this rider does *not* carry over to the new (October 1) federal budget. Please urge your Congressional representative to block any effort to include this destructive rider in the next budget.

In the meantime, we have been working with the BLM on the severe illegal wood-cutting problem observed in recent months in the Badlands, where centuries-old ponderosa and juniper are being cut for firewood, their branches and still-green needles lying around the sawed-off stumps.

Representatives from the Sierra Club, Wilderness Society, Native Plant Society, New Mexico Mountain Club, Enchanted Lens Camera Club and various concerned individuals met recently with the BLM to discuss short-term solutions.

The BLM presented a list of ongoing and proposed actions, including surveillance cameras, increased signage, sale of firewood permits at the Forest office in Cuba while its own new Cuba office is under construction, establishment of a patrol contract with the Forest Service and Sandoval County Sheriff to provide increased law-enforcement presence, and initiating some permanent road closures. Several present volunteered to go into the Cuba schools to educate children on the importance of preserving these



Centuries-old ponderosa and juniper are being cut for firewood in the Badlands.

grandfather trees.

If you would like to be involved in making comments on the RMP or in joining a subcommittee of the Rio Puerco Management Committee that will be looking at both short- and long-term solutions to the woodcutting issue, please let me know: 505/471-0005, nmccallan@mindspring.com.

Since summer is not the best time to visit the Badlands, our next tour there will be to picturesque Penistaja on Sept. 24. See that date in the Northern and Central hike schedules

S.F. County adds to trail system

On April 26, Santa Fe County took a significant step in the southern part of the county to advance its slowly evolving county-wide trail system when the County Commission voted unanimously to purchase 160 acres just south of Golden. Once developed, the parcel is expected to function as a regional trail head and will also provide access to an adjacent 2,000 acres of BLM public land. The land purchased by the county lies in the San Pedro Mountains, east of Highway 14.

The San Pedros have been a major center of copper and gold production since 1839. The nearby mining town San Pedro vanished in the mid-20th century after the larger mines shut down. Small-scale and hobby operations continue in the San Pedro Mountains. Because of numerous privately owned and hazardous mining claims, the development of the public trail system in the San Pedro Mountains is not expected soon.

The newly acquired parcel fronts on Highway 344 but will also be accessible from Highway 14. A portion of the county-wide foot-bicycle-horse trail network, from Edgewood north to the east side of the San Pedros, is under development. Discussions are ongoing with Sandoval and Bernalillo counties for integration of Santa Fe trails with Sandia Mountain trails. For further information, contact SFC Community Planner Beth Mills at bmills@co.santa-fe.nm.us.

— Bill Baxter

Clair Tappaan Lodge activities abound

The Sierra Club's Clair Tappaan Lodge sits just above Donner Pass, at approximately 7,000 feet, and though it's busiest in the winter with the great skiing in the area, it's a place for activities in all seasons. You can hike—especially in summer, enjoying a refreshing swim in one of the many small lakes that dot the area—or drive to nearby Donner Lake and rent a pedal boat.

Or, if your favorite activity is to breathe fresh mountain air with a good book, a good view, or a good beverage, you could hardly do better than the Lodge. There's always great food, a hot tub to relax in, a nice fire in the community fireplace, or the quiet of the library. And the Lodge is now offering weekend specialty activities that people can reserve a space for.

In early fall, the Lodge will host a yoga retreat. Participants will do yoga outdoors, learn Tai Chi, take guided hikes, and enjoy the beautiful fall weather. On the same weekend, Sept. 16-18, the Lodge will host a fly-fishing weekend, designed for total beginners to learn all about tackle, rods, and reels, concluding with a fish-out.

These events and more can be found on the Clair Tappaan website: www.sierraclub.org/outings/lodges/ctl/.

— Olivia Diaz



PAJARITO GROUP

Join us for food, fun, planning and singing in Urban Park

By Jody Benson

Saturday, Urban Park, Sept. 10, 3 p.m.: Annual Pajarito Potluck Picnic: Beer and Burgers

It's not hopeless. Look at how the little Tea Party, with roughly a million (2010) registered members, control the political agenda. Granted, they have the wealth of the Koch brothers and the influence of the media, but the Sierra Club has 1,400,000 intelligent and dedicated individuals. And we vote, too.

As you hike, bike, boat, bird, or garden this summer, you'll probably spend time devising how to change the mind of a government so unenlightened that it would sacrifice the variety of life on Earth for the profit of a few. This picnic will be your opportunity to brainstorm your solutions with like-minded Sierrans. From these, the Group will choose its top priorities, develop a plan to implement the priorities, then assign tasks. It's not hopeless if we act.

Bring your favorite food to share, along with your own plate, cup, and utensils. The Pajarito Group Executive Committee will provide drinks (including beer) and burgers. This picnic is for the whole family. All tree-huggers, clear thinkers, guitar players, sopranos, and jugglers—no matter what political party—are welcome.

Did we mention there will be entertainment? Including some of the old classic songs, the words of which we're including here so that you can practice for the potluck:

They'll Be Cuttin' Down the Mountain

Sung to the tune of *She'll be Comin' Round the Mountain*

REFRAIN: They'll be cutting down the mountain when they come

Let's have mountaintop removal when they come
All the corporations know best what is in our nation's interest

And that thing is cheap power, so they come.
They'll haul coal away in big trucks when they come
They can run over the woodchucks when they come
It is all for my enjoyment, besides miners need employment

And it's all about cheap power, let them come.
My house has six computers, let them come.
And an entertainment center, let them come
Lights, a stove, refrigerator, and an airconditionator,

and everything needs power so they come.
I want to watch my TV so they come,
and fire up my Jacuzzi so they come
And when they come you ought'er
forget clean air and water
I'd rather have cheap power—let them come.
(Repeat refrain)

The Budget is a Moral Document

Sung to the tune of *My Funny Valentine*

My funny government
How's all the money spent?
Are you still funding the wars?
Ignore the environment
cover it in cement
but we will bankroll the wars.

Do you care for shrubs and trees
and turtles, birds, and bees,
or even families—do you care?

This is the prime issue, fund what we all value
Ensure the Earth stays its course,
and just stop funding the wars.

Life Forms

Sung to the tune of *That's Amore*

If we go up to Mars and find bacterias
are they life forms?

Or because they're so small they have no rights at all
as a life form?

Men decide when they colonize
he who gets the prize is the biggest and strongest.
We forget that the planet should belong
to the species there longest.

Oh while we're still on Earth we decide what has
worth as a life form

If you think that a shrew has less value than you
please recall
That all of Earth's systems are complex
and intertwined life forms—
so we had better think before we have extincted all
live forms.

PAJARITO GROUP DIRECTORY

riogrande.sierraclub.org/pajarito/mainpaj.asp

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Notices, Meetings and Events

Serve on Pajarito Group Executive Committee

The Pajarito Group has named a Nominating Committee for our next group election. If you are interested in running for our Executive Committee (Ex Com), please contact one of them by August 26. The Ex Com is the governing body for each Group and oversees all its activities and campaigns, so it is a good way to get really involved in the local Sierra Club.

Members of the Nominating Committee are: Jody Benson, 505-662-4782; Chuck Pergler, pergler@att.net; and Lyn Jones, 505-662-9443.

Meetings

As in every July and August, the Pajarito Group will have no Open Meetings in the library. This is our time to enjoy our incomparable climate and backyard access to our canyons and mountains.

Adopt a Trail: Quemazon

Don't forget that we have adopted the Quemazon Trail.

It's simple to care for our new charge; just pay attention. Keep a litterbag in your pocket, and as you walk it, de-litter it, toss off downfall, note erosion, and report big problems (those that take a chain saw or crew of volunteers)

to 663-1776. For more information, please see www.losalamosnm.us/parks/trailsPages/Adopt-A-Trail.aspx.

Serve on Los Alamos County Boards

Five Los Alamos County Board positions are open; three are of particular interest to environmentalists: Environmental Sustainability, Parks and Recreation, and Transportation. Public service is not just drudgery and hard work; it's rewarding. You can effect real change. Change starts at home, but the "butterfly wingbeat" you accomplish here can change the winds at the national level.

Please either call 311 for information

or visit: <http://www.losalamosnm.us/gov/bcc/Pages/default.aspx>.

VCNP Hiking Shuttle

The Valles Caldera National Preserve has opened up the Caldera to several hiking routes. For \$10 per adult, \$5 for children under 15, participants can hop a shuttle at the staging area (either Valles Caldera or Banco Bonito) and be shuttled to a hiking location.

Please visit the webpage for details. www.vallescaldera.gov/comevisit/hike/hike_viewall.aspx

Outings

Please check the Outings listings for adventures in our area.

River locations not in compliance on E. coli

By Eric Patterson

Director, Water Sentinels, Rios de Taos

Water Sentinels of Rios de Taos started its 2011 sampling season May 24. At least three locations on the Rio Pueblo and Rio Fernando have been found to be out of compliance with e. coli standards. Sentinels are anticipating extending sampling to the Red River this year to monitor expected progress in reclaiming the Moly Mine Superfund site.

Fishing derbies for kids

Water Sentinels-Rios de Taos co-sponsored a fishing derby for kids at Eagle Rock Lake near Questa on June 4. Co-sponsors included New Mexico Game and Fish, BLM, U.S. Forest Service, and the Enchanted Circle Chapter of Trout Unlimited. About 70 youngsters showed up, along with parents and grandparents. The BLM had a fish-cleaning station, while TU tied flies for participants and had an excellent exhibit of living stream invertebrates. Water Sentinels donated Sierra Club T-shirts, Sierra Club backpacks, and fishing rods to young fishermen.

On the same day, at Lake Maloya in Sugarite Canyon State Park on the other side of the Sangre de Cristos, the Water Sentinels-Rios de Taos and the Enchanted Circle Chapter of Trout Unlimited co-sponsored another fishing derby for kids. Co-sponsors included the Raton Rotary Club, BLM, and Department of Game and Fish. Under the supervision of Jim Morgan, member of both Sierra Club and board of directors of ECTU, participating kids were able to win T-shirts, fishing rods, and junior Trout Unlimited memberships.

Annual Taos River Clean-up Day

On Saturday, June 11, Water Sentinels-Rios de Taos, along with Amigos Bravos, Rocky Mountain Youth Corps, USFS, BLM, and Centinel Bank co-sponsored Taos' fourth annual river-clean-up day. This year it became the "Annual Taos River and Land Community Service Day." One hundred seventeen community volunteers cleaned up parks, rivers and illegal arroyo dumping sites in Taos County. Two tons of trash and 95 bags of recyclables were picked up, and 10 trees



Eric Patterson

Planting a tree in Fred Baca Park. Water Sentinels-Rios de Taos has sponsored several community events, including park and river clean-ups and fishing derbies, this spring and summer.

were planted. Each participant received a Sierra Club T-shirt. Over the last four years, citizen participation has increased and the amount of trash in our rivers has decreased. Let's hope these trends continue!

Enchanted Circle Chapter of Trout Unlimited fundraising banquet

On June 10, the Enchanted Circle Chapter of Trout Unlimited held its annual fundraising banquet at the Red River Convention Center. The keynote speaker was John Nichols, veteran fly fisherman, environmentalist, community activist and author of *The Milagro Beanfield War*.

Although the membership of Trout Unlimited is mostly fly fishermen, its primary function is cold-water conservation.

Fishermen are often the first people to notice river and stream degradation and report it to organizations such as Sierra Club, Water Sentinels, or Amigos Bravos. The funds raised at last year's banquet were used for stream restoration and youth education and helped sponsor New Mexico's first Casting for Recovery event held last fall.

Fourteen breast-cancer survivors from our area were treated to a free weekend of luxury accommodations, fly fishing, and fly-fishing lessons at the Phil-mont ranch. The responses of the participants were so overwhelmingly positive that TU has decided to repeat the event this fall. If you are a breast-cancer survivor or know a breast-cancer survivor, you can get more information about this program at castingforrecovery.org.

For more information or to get involved, contact Eric Patterson at eepatt@gmail.com

DON'T FORGET!

In March we sent out an appeal to each of our members, asking for contributions directly to our Chapter. These contributions really do make a difference to us, and are an important part of our Chapter's budget. When you make a donation to the Chapter, you support the Sierra Club's work in our own backyard. You allow us to continue our work to protect wilderness and wildlife, to improve the quality of life in our cities, and to promote the enjoyment of nature.

Please be as generous as you are able - and remember, these funds directly affect your way of life in your neighborhood.

Contributions, gifts and dues to the Sierra Club are not tax-deductible.

Donate at nmsierraclub.org/donate or send your check made out to Sierra Club Rio Grande Chapter: 28 Cedar Dr. Roswell, NM 88203

Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

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NORTHERN GROUP

My solar-thermal adventure this winter

Or, How to reduce your carbon footprint, send less money to Middle Eastern kleptocracies, reduce pollution from the Canadian tar sands, and save a ton of money while having fun

By Dexter Coolidge
Executive Committee



Dexter Coolidge

nightmare. It is larger than we need, has high ceilings, many large windows and skylights, only one small south-facing window, uninsulated hot-water pipes under the slab (a heat sink when the circulator is on), and a 20-year-old

We had reduced our propane use by 1,460 gallons, over 85 percent, saving \$3,800 at current prices. At this rate, the system will pay for itself in just over 10 years. Since we expect it to run 25 years, we will have many years of free energy after that. Just as important, we reduced our output of global-warming carbon dioxide by 20,936 pounds per year. (This compares to an estimated 11,000 pounds saved by our photovoltaic system in the first year.)

The savings from the new heating system is equivalent to driving 43,000 miles less per year in a 30-mpg car! It means less oil from the tar sands, and less oil money going to the Koch brothers and Middle East kleptocrats.

We have had other benefits. We used to keep our house at 65 degrees through all the colder months. Now, with only minimal use of our boiler, we can keep it at 70 degrees for all but the two or three coldest months. We used to be Spartan in our use of hot water, because of the heat loss in our uninsulated pipes. Now we hardly think about it—we have all we need.

Of course, not everyone will save as much, because not everyone has such a deep hole to dig out of. But then their upfront costs will be less, too. Also, this was an unusually sunny winter, which makes a difference. On the other hand, over time I expect the dollar savings to go up as the price of oil goes up.

And I have had the most fun playing with the controls, trying to maximize our savings.

We all know the advantages of putting in solar photovoltaic panels and how easily they pay for themselves, what with tax credits and additional REC payments from the electric utilities. (See the example calculation on the Sierra Club website. The payback for PV is less than 10 years.) It has also been clear for some time that solar panels to heat domestic hot water can pay for themselves, since the investment in the panels results in savings every month of the year.

Solar thermal for heating the house is, of course, used only part of the year. However, last year we took the leap to heat our whole house with solar thermal, with a boiler assist, largely for environmental reasons.

I am exhilarated by the results. The environmental impact has been far greater than I expected, and the dollar savings have astonished me.

First, the house: a heating and environmental

low-efficiency boiler for radiant heat in the floor. The boiler burns propane, which comes from oil; natural gas is not available here.

Over the prior five years it had used an average of 1,717 gallons of propane, which at the present price would cost \$4,500 per year.

We started with an energy audit, by Advanced Home Analysis. That gave us some tips about inefficient appliances and some leaky door frames. Then we installed a new high-efficiency boiler.

Finally, AMEnergy of Santa Fe installed 16 4-by-8-foot solar panels, a backup hot-water tank, and all the piping connections and controls. The 8-foot panels added to the cost, but are less visible than 10-foot panels. The pre-tax cost was \$60,300; after the 40 percent state and federal tax credits on the solar system, and 10 percent on the boiler, this came to \$38,370.

After a year of operation, we totaled up the results.

Northern Group Contacts

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Tom Gorman: 505 438-3932

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Taos Branch - Eric Patterson 575-776-2833 eepatt@gmail.com

Nominating Committee: Tom Gorman, David Van Winkle, Pat Carlton

Office Location

The Northern Group Sierra Club office is at 1807 2nd Street, Unit 45, Santa Fe, NM 87505.

Join us for fun at Sierra Club and Wine

5-7:30 p.m. Friday, September 16

The Commons, 2300 West Alameda, Santa Fe

Come join us for some drinks and snacks on Friday evening. Ray Powell, New Mexico Land Commissioner, will be our speaker.

Please RSVP so that we can buy the right amount of food and drinks to Alice Cox at 505-757-2145 or auntialice@cybermesa.com

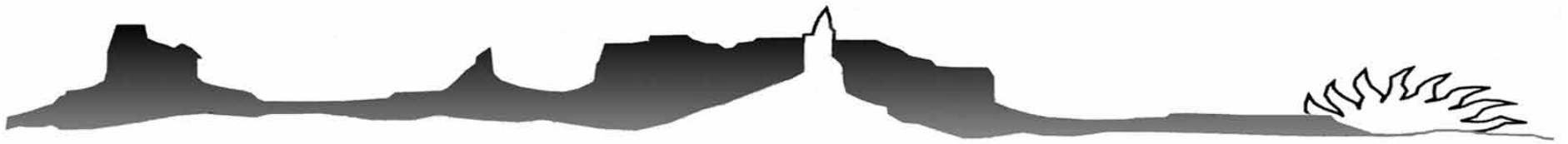
This is a member event, but memberships may be purchased at the door for \$15, which includes a Sierra Club rucksack.

Sign up for Outings e-mail newsletter

Tobin Oruch, the Outings Co-Chair for the Northern New Mexico Group, has created an excellent weekly e-mail on outings, Sierra Trail Mix.

The e-mail provides information on near-term outings plus useful outdoor information, such as trail conditions. He also includes photos from recent hikes to the beautiful locations that our outing leaders have recently visited.

To join, send an e-mail to northern.group.nm@sierraclub.org requesting to be added to the list. We now have about 200 people signed up for the e-mail; come join the fun.



NORTHERN GROUP



Submit ideas for a sustainable, urban St. Michael's Village in heart of town

By Brian Skeele

Imagine Santa Fe coming together and collaboratively designing a thriving, alive, and resilient neighborhood on St. Michael's Drive.

What would make the design of a St. Michael's Drive Sustainable Urban Village so compelling you'd move in?

Submit your contributions, art work, and articles by August 5.

Send submissions to skip@greenfiretimes.com or brian-vida@nm.net.

You may include up to 1,000 words per submission, preferably with images such as photos, drawings or illustrations.

Shorter "newsbite-sized" submissions are another option.

Overflow submissions will be excerpted in *Green Fire Times* and will also be posted on www.sustainablesantafe.com.

Envision to your heart's content. Later we work to make our ideas real ... sustainable.

Bits about our Northern Group

Volunteer needs

PR help: We need 1-2 people to help get out announcements of our public events. This is a key task for our environmental work, and our current volunteer leaves shortly! Contact Kia Mudge (474-6697) or Norma McCallan 471-0005.

Phone bank: We need several people to add to our cadre of people who would contact members by phone about various important issues. If you are interested, e-mail northern.group.nm@sierraclub.org.

Hike Book Distributor needed to assist Chuck Deucy in distributing our *Day Hikes* book to local bookstores, working on invoices, and following up on receipts.

Chuck is working two jobs now and needs help to fulfill book orders in a timely and accurate fashion. Contact him at 505-204-6859, deucyiii@yahoo.com, or Norma McCallan, 471-0005, nmccallan@mindspring.com.

Volunteer recognition party

The Northern New Mexico Group held its second annual volunteer-recognition party on May 6 with 70 people in attendance. Special guests/speakers included U.S. Representative Martin Heinrich, Santa Fe County Commissioner Kathy Holian, and City of Santa Fe Councilor Chris Calvert.

Meetings notice

Northern Group Executive Committee – the first Tuesday of every month: July 5, Aug. 2, Sept. 6, Oct. 4

Group Conservation Team – fourth Tuesday of every odd month: July 26, Sept. 27.

Northern Group Nominating Committee

The Northern Group has named a Nominating Committee (Dexter Coolidge, David Van Winkle

and Tom Gorman) for our next group election. If you are interested in running for our Executive Committee (Ex Com), please contact one of them by August 26. See their contact info on masthead.

The Ex Com is the governing body for each Group and oversees all its activities and campaigns, so it is a good way to get really involved in the local Sierra Club.

Santa Fe River clean-up

Santa Fe River Cleanup, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. July 16. Meet at the Closson Street Bridge where parking is available. Bring garden gloves and wear long pants. Leader will supply trash bags and gloves. Contact leader if you are planning on joining. Leader: Greg Lower, 699-6893, glower@lanl.gov.

Santa Fe River Cleanup, Aug. 20, 9-11 a.m. Meet at the Closson Street Bridge. Bring garden gloves; wear long pants. Leader will supply trash bags and gloves. Contact leader Kathleen David if you are planning on joining at 795-3286 or kdav40@gmail.com.

Betsy Fuller, a Northern Group founder, dies at 89

By Norma McCallan
Chapter Vice Chair

Betsy Fuller died peacefully on April 29, 2011, at age 89.

Born in St. Paul, Minn., on October 29, 1921, Betsy moved to Santa Fe soon after graduation from Mills College.

Betsy owned Travel Service Everywhere for many years and then taught in the Santa Fe schools. She was an avid hiker, backpacker and fisher, and she was one of the early activists in the Northern Group, which was established 1972-73.

She was both Secretary/Treasurer and Outings Chair during some of those early years, led many a day hike and backpack, and was a major force in putting together the first edition of our *Day Hikes in the Santa Fe Area* in 1981, including writing up several of the still-listed hikes. She had a great zest for the outdoors, its critters and its wildflowers.

Betsy led many a dayhike and backpack and was a major force in putting together the first edition of our 'Day Hikes in the Santa Fe Area' in 1981.

I remember her invitation just before my daughter went into the Peace Corps in 1986 to come see a "special surprise" in the forest east of Santa Fe. After tramping through the woods for a while, we came to an open meadow, where she showed us a spectacular clump of yellow Lady's Slippers in full bloom—the only time I have ever seen that rare plant in New Mexico!

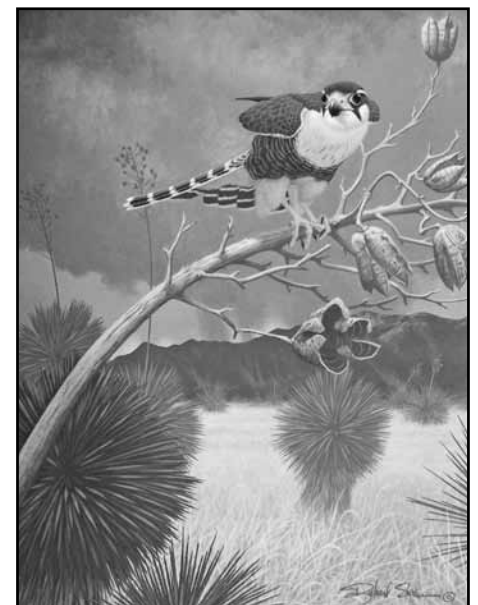
Betsy's energy and enthusiasm were valuable assets to the young Northern Group. Thank you Betsy, and rest in peace.

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, Spotted Owl, Swainson's Hawk shown here, 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) to make your donation and get a Richard Sloan print.

—Dan Lorimier

Swainson's Hawk



Mora County citizens take leadership

By Kathleen Dudley

Co-founder, Drilling Mora County

In July 2009, during a public community meeting on oil/gas development in Mora County, a Royal Dutch Shell spokesperson stated they would drill here in 2010. Whether that was a threat, an act of intimidation, or a hope on the part of SWEPI, a Denver-based Shell subsidiary, is unknown. But today, there has been no movement by the oil industry to apply for permits in Mora County. And no drilling is taking place.

It is easy to speculate the reasons. During the past four years since the first mineral leases were signed by KHL land men in October 2007, Mora County citizens have worked steadfastly to keep industry at bay by building countywide awareness through grand-scale county public meetings, monthly educational forums, and persistently active participation in County Commission and Planning and Zoning meetings.

The baseline water-well testing throughout Mora County's Las Vegas basin, wherein wells were sampled in 2010 for a myriad of chemicals normally used during drilling and hydraulic fracturing, represents the first legally defensible data prior to drilling for natural gas across the United States and puts industry "on notice" that any contamination via their drilling will be clearly evident should they attempt to drill here.

Nationwide, there is a movement by the Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund (CELDF), an environmental law firm in Pennsylvania, to help communities draft local community-rights ordinances that protect their inalienable rights to clean water, air, land and most importantly, their right to local self-governance. This model is spreading like wildfire across the country. And now in New Mexico, communities are grasping their rights to pass and enforce these local ordinances that challenge 225 years of state and corporate dominance.

The Town of Wales, N.Y., passed the most recent ordinance in June, called "Town of Wales Community Protection of Natural Resources," which bans natural-gas drilling and hydraulic fracturing within their community. This is the fifth such community to ban "fracking" outright since October 2010 and representing five of 130 CELDF Community Rights Ordinances in communities today.

This is an empowering process that gives citizens an avenue to say "no" to unjust laws that have prevailed throughout history in which corporate rights overpower those of people and ecosystems. We can



Chacón Harvest, © 2011 Sharon Stewart/freedart@nmmt.net

Mora County citizens have worked steadfastly to protect their land, water and air by building countywide awareness through public meetings, educational forums, and persistent participation in County Commission and Planning and Zoning meetings.

call this our first People and Ecosystem Movement in the history of the United States, thanks to CELDF and the many courageous community elected officials and citizens who are adopting these Community Rights Ordinances.

Add up all this burgeoning awareness and the national citizen outrage at the growing evidence of the corporate industry's devastation, and it is no surprise to see the people in Mora County continuing to find ways to protect their communities from industry's advances. There is nothing the oil industry can bring

to Mora County that will keep the water clean, or the children's legacies intact. It is clear today that oil and gas drilling is equated with ruined water sources and depleted supplies. This knowledge is powerful.

In the words of John Pilger, director of the new film *The War You Don't See*, "We ought never to be agents of power, always of people." And so grows the new People and Ecosystem Movement across the U.S.

www.drillingmoracounty.blogspot.com
drillingmoracounty@gmail.com

To Contribute to the *Rio Grande Sierran*

The *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) 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.

For extra copies, e-mail monablaber@gmail.com.

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texas.sierraclub.org/el Paso

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Creator of map of S.F. mountains dies

By Janet Peacock

Bill Drake, the author of the “Map of the Mountains of Santa Fe and the Pecos Valley” and the founder of Drake Mountain Maps, died recently at his home in Santa Fe from leukemia.

Bill was born in Wellington, New Zealand, in 1941 and lived there until 1992, when he moved to Santa Fe to share his life with his new wife, Janet Peacock, a longtime Santa Fe resident and Sierra Club member.

Bill began his mapping career in New Zealand when he was 18, taking a job with the Ministry of Lands and Surveys, which was responsible for producing maps of New Zealand. He worked there

for more than 30 years, eventually becoming chief of topographical mapping for the country. He was instrumental in designing the relief-shaded format of the maps that are still the standard for the New Zealand mountains and backcountry.

When Bill moved to Santa Fe, he was disappointed that none of the local maps showed the topography using relief shading. Since he was interested in exploring the local mountains and surrounding areas, he decided to produce his own map of the area using the format he had developed in New Zealand.

The map was hand-drawn and compiled without the use of digital technology, and Bill checked the accuracy of virtually all the trails, dirt roads, and other features by hiking and biking them himself.

The first edition of the “Map of the Mountains of Santa Fe” was published in 1995. It was revised and expanded several times, with the final edition being produced in 2001.

In 2009, Bill decided to retire from the mapping business, and the last copies of the map were sold to local Santa Fe shops.

In addition to the Santa Fe map, Bill produced three maps of areas in Colorado — “Map of the Mountains of Silverton, Telluride & Ouray,” “Map of the Mountains between Silverton and Durango” and “Map of the Mountains of Telluride.” The first two of the Colorado maps are still being reprinted and sold by a company that bought the printing rights for these maps from Drake Mountain Maps.

More Outings, continued from Page 16

venture! 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).

30 Moderate/Strenuous hike up the Big Tesuque to Tesuque peak (12,040'). 6-7 miles, 2000-2300' gain, some very steep sections. Early start time, limit of 10 people and 1-2 dogs. Miguel DeLuca (505-820-0042).

31 Moderate Hike in Jemez, limit of 12. Norbert Sperlich (505-474-4354).

31 Strenuous Hike to Pecos Baldy Lk with Trailrider's Wall option, 15 or 18 miles, 2,600 or 3,000' gain, 1-2 dogs. Robert Reifel (505-984-1253).

August

6 Moderate hike on top of Sandia peak, 5 miles, 500' gain. Limit of 10 people, 1-2 dogs. Miguel DeLuca (505-820-0042).

7 Very Strenuous Hike to Wheeler Peak, 13,161'. 11-14 miles, 4300' gain, very early start, optional overnight Sat. Royal Drews (505-699-8713).

13-14 Strenuous 14er trip to San Luis Peak, 14014' near Creede. Gradual and beautiful 10 miles on trail, 3,900' gain. Car-camp at Willow Ck trailhead for early start; high-clearance vehicles help. Mary Thompson (505-469-9499, mxtmary@yahoo.com).

13 Moderate Hike to Puerto Nambe, 8 miles, 1200' gain, 1-2 dogs, Les Drapela (505-438-3306)

13 Moderate/strenuous hike to Santa Barbara Divide from Jicarita's north T/H. 8 miles, 2000' gain, w/ possible Jicarita (12,835') option for some. Alan Shapiro (505-424-9242, Nm5s@yahoo.com).

14 Strenuous Hike in Jemez to Los Griegos and Cerro Pelado. 12 miles, 2700' gain. Some steep, off-trail sections. Limit of 12, 2 dogs. Norbert Sperlich (505-474-4354).

20 Moderate hike on Rio En Medio (past waterfall) with optional dip in pool. 8 miles, 1000' gain, 1-2 dogs ok. Dan Rusthoi (505-690-8967).

21 Easy-Moderate Hike to East Fork, Jemez. 4 miles RT, 300' gain. 30% of time in water between ankles and knees. Lunch on rocks near waterfall. Wear sandals, water shoes, or old sneakers, bring walking stick. Michael Goldey (505-820-7302, m.goldey@



Photo by Larry Saine

Outings participants on Hermit Peak in June.

Santa River cleanup and vegetation maintenance

9 to 11 a.m. July 16 and August 20

Meet at the Closson Street Bridge where parking is available. Bring garden gloves and wear long pants. Leader will supply trash bags and gloves.

Confirm prior to cleanup date to:

July 16: Greg Lower (505-699-6893, glower@lanl.gov)

August 20: Kathleen Davis (505-795-3286, kdav40@gmail.com).

mindspring.com).

21 Moderate/Strenuous hike to Nambe Lake, 11,800'. 7 miles, 2100' gain. Some steep, rocky sections. Marcia Skillman (505-699-3008, marciaskillman@hotmail.com).

27 Moderate hike to Cerro Grande Peak in Bandelier, 4 miles, 1300' gain, great vistas at top. Norma McCallan (505-471-0005).

28 Moderate Bike and hike. Bike from Terrero to Holy Ghost trailhead, 6 miles RT, 500' gain. Then a 6 mile RT hike on lightly used trail with 1,000' gain. 2-3 dogs trained to stay with biking owner OK. Page Press (505-946-0169).

September

3 Check website or weekly outings email for last-minute addition.

3-4-5 Labor Day celebration up Telluride way with a climb of Wilson Peak, 14,017'. Probably new Silver Pick/Rock of Ages trail to RoA saddle and then Class 3 scramble to the summit. 8 miles, 3600' gain, some exposure. See great beta on summitpost and 14ers.com. Royal Drews (505-699-8713).

3-4-5-6 Trail maintenance on Dominguez trail between Santa Barbara Cyn and Trampas Cyn in Pecos

wilderness to remove deadfall on reconstructed sheepherder's trail restored by Sierra Club two decades ago. Join us for some or all. Base camp 5 miles up West Fork Santa Barbara Ck. John Buchser (505-820-0201, jbuchser@comcast.net)

4 Fun with fungi—Moderate hike, maybe toward La Vega, hoping for mushrooms. Up to 7 miles, 1200' gain. Art Judd (505-982-3212).

5 Strenuous loop hike to Penitente Lake and Deception Pks. 11+ miles, 3100 ft. gain. Limit 12, 2 dogs. Dag Ryen (505-466-4063).

10 Moderate/Strenuous hike on Tesuque Creek with loop back on Chamisa and Burn Trails 232 & 399, 9 miles, 2000' gain, 1-2 dogs ok. Dan Rusthoi (505-690-8967).

11 Strenuous hike to Cerro Pederal near Abiquiu, 7 miles, 1800' gain, scramble to top. Marcia Skillman (505-699-3008, marciaskillman@hotmail.com).

17 Moderate Hike on Apache Canyon Loop, 6.5 miles, 800' gain, 1-2 dogs. Dan Rusthoi (505-690-8967).

17 Strenuous Hike to Latir Wilderness near Questa, probably including Venado Pk., 15-17-mile loop, 3500-3700' gain, 10-12 hours hiking, optional car camp or motel Fri. night

or very early start. High clearance carpooling needed. 1-2 dogs. Robert Reifel (505-984-1253).

18 Moderate Hike to Deer Trap Mesa in Los Alamos 5 miles RT, 500' gain. Stroll along a mesa top, narrow at times, great views. Some rock scrambling and minor climbing. Michael Goldey (505-820-7302, m.goldey@mindspring.com).

18 Strenuous Hike from Holy Ghost to Stewart Lake, 13 miles, 2200 ft; Daisy Levine (505-466-8338).

24 Moderate hike in Penistaja Badlands, near Cuba, with guest leader Tom Petencin. Badlands topography, rimrock and petrified wood. 4- to 6-mile offtrail loop to see petrified stumps and logs, mudstone hills. Nice overlooks from rim. Less than 500' gain. Bring 2L of water. Carpooling via Bernalillo. Norma McCallan (505-471-0005).

24 Strenuous hike up Jicarita Peak, 12,835. 11 miles, 2900' gain. Very early start time, 4-hr RT drive. Limit 10. Miguel DeLuca (505-820-0042).

25 Moderate/Strenuous Hike in Jemez. 9 miles, 2000' gain. Some steep off trail sections. Limit of 12. Norbert Sperlich (505-474-4354).

25 Strenuous hike to beautiful Trampas Lakes, 11 miles, 2450' gain. Rochelle Gerratt (505-795-3254).

October

1-2 Strenuous Hike to Ladron Pk (9210') from the east side. 3300' gain, offtrail and tough, unforgettable. Camp or stay in Socorro Sat nite, Sun hike and drive back. Michael Di Rosa (w: 505-667-0095, h: 505-663-0648).

2 Moderate/strenuous Hike from Apache Springs to Upper Frijoles to Ponderosa CG in Bandelier; 9+ miles, 1000 ft. gain. Limit 12. Dag Ryen (505-466-4063).

Central Group September

24 Badlands hike—Penistaja. Nice Badlands topography, rimrock, and petrified wood is exposed at the Southern edge of this quessa. 4- to 6-mile loop, up to rim for nice overlooks. Less than 500' gain. Bring at least 2L of water. Northern Group's Norma McCallan will co-lead. Tom Petencin, tompeten@msn.com, 271-9928.



Robert Reifel

On July 23, Pajarito Group's Michael Di Rosa will lead a 13- to 15-mile hike to the 12,000-foot-high Latir Wilderness, pictured here in December. For details on that hike and many more, read our Outings listings.

Outings: July, August, September

Pajarito Group

July

2 Very Strenuous Hike to **South Truchas Peak**. 13 miles, 4000' gain, off-trail, rough. Michael Di Rosa (w: 505-667-0095 or h: 505-663-0648).

23 Strenuous Hike to Latir Wilderness. 13-15 miles, 3000-3500' gain. Car camp at Cabresto Lk or Questa motel on Fri nite or very early start. High clearance carpooling needed. Michael Di Rosa, (w: 667-505-0095 or h: 505-663-0648)

August

27 Hike Coyote Call and Rabbit Ridge Trails in the Jemez Mts. Easy/moderate, 5-6 miles. Great views of the Valles Grande in the Valles Caldera National Preserve. Ilse Bleck (505-662-2368, ibleck@yahoo.com).

Northern Group

July

2 Strenuous hike to North Truchas Peak by way of San Leonardo Lakes, a walk in greenery before ascending "Sheep's Head" ridge for a view of Hades. About 11 miles RT with net climb of 4000+', mostly off trail with scree scrambling. Michael Di Rosa 505.231.9629/mddbbm@gmail.com. 6:30 a.m. start from Santa Fe is likely.

3 Moderate/Strenuous Hike to Nambe Lake, 11,800'. 7 miles, 2100' gain. Some steep, rocky sections. Les Drapela (505-438-3306).

4 Strenuous Hike to Santa Fe Baldy, 12,622'. A Sierra July 4 tradition!



John L. Pitts, Serenepix

A group on San Antonio Peak in June. Check the Northern Group July 9 listing for another hike on San Antonio Mountain.

14 miles, 3600' gain, Dogs ok. Dan Rusthoi (505-690-8967).

9 Moderate/Strenuous Hike to San Antonio Mtn (10,900'), near Colorado border. 6+ miles RT, 2300' gain. Mostly off trail. Alan Shapiro (505-424-9242) Nm5s@yahoo.com.

10 Moderate/Strenuous Hike on Ravens Ridge to Deception Pk, 12,000'. 6 miles, 1800' gain. 1-2 dogs max. Royal Drews (505-699-8713).

16 Strenuous Hike to Trampas Lakes and Hidden Lake, 13.5 miles, 2700 ft, breathtaking beauty. Daisy Levine (505-466-8338).

17 Moderate Hike to Hamilton Mesa, 6 miles, 900' gain. Great 360-degree views, pleasant walking, usually a cool breeze. Dogs OK. Michael Goldey (505- 820-7302, m.

goldey@mindspring.com).

17 Strenuous Hike, maybe Lobo Pk .12,115' via Italianos and return down Gavilan. 12miles, 3500' gain, 1-2 dogs, Tobin Oruch (505-820-2844).

23/24 Car camp at Trujillo Meadows C.G. at 10,000' Cumbres Pass, moderate dayhikes (about 8 miles). 1st day north on the Continental Divide Trail, 2nd day an exploratory hike south on newly built section of the C.D.T. trail. Fantastic views. Significant elevation gain. Dogs ok. Leave Friday evening. Norma McCallan (505-471-0005).

23 Strenuous Hike to Latir Wilderness. 13-15 miles, 3000-3500' gain. Car camp at Cabresto Lk or Questa motel on Fri nite or very early start. High clearance carpooling needed. Michael Di Rosa, (w: 667-

NOTICE: Due to wildfires and overall dry conditions, the Santa Fe National Forest, Bandelier National Monument and Valles Caldera have issued many trail closures as we go to press. Please see nmsierraclub.org/outings for the most up-to-date information. Tobin Oruch publishes a weekly e-mail with the latest information. If you would like to be added to the e-mail list, send an e-mail to northern.group.nm@sierraclub.org.

OUTINGS NOTE: Check Group websites for updated 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, unfavorable conditions, or insufficient number of participants. Unaccompanied minors need written permission from a parent or guardian—ask leader for form. Dogs permitted only if so noted in write-up. Always call leader ahead to confirm participation and details.

505-0095 or h: 505- 663-0648)

24 Strenuous Hike to Stewart Lake from Pecos side, 10-12 miles, 2100' gain. Marcia Skillman (505- 699-3008, marciaskillman@hotmail.com).

29-30-31 Colorado 14er Ad-

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