

Winter 2017

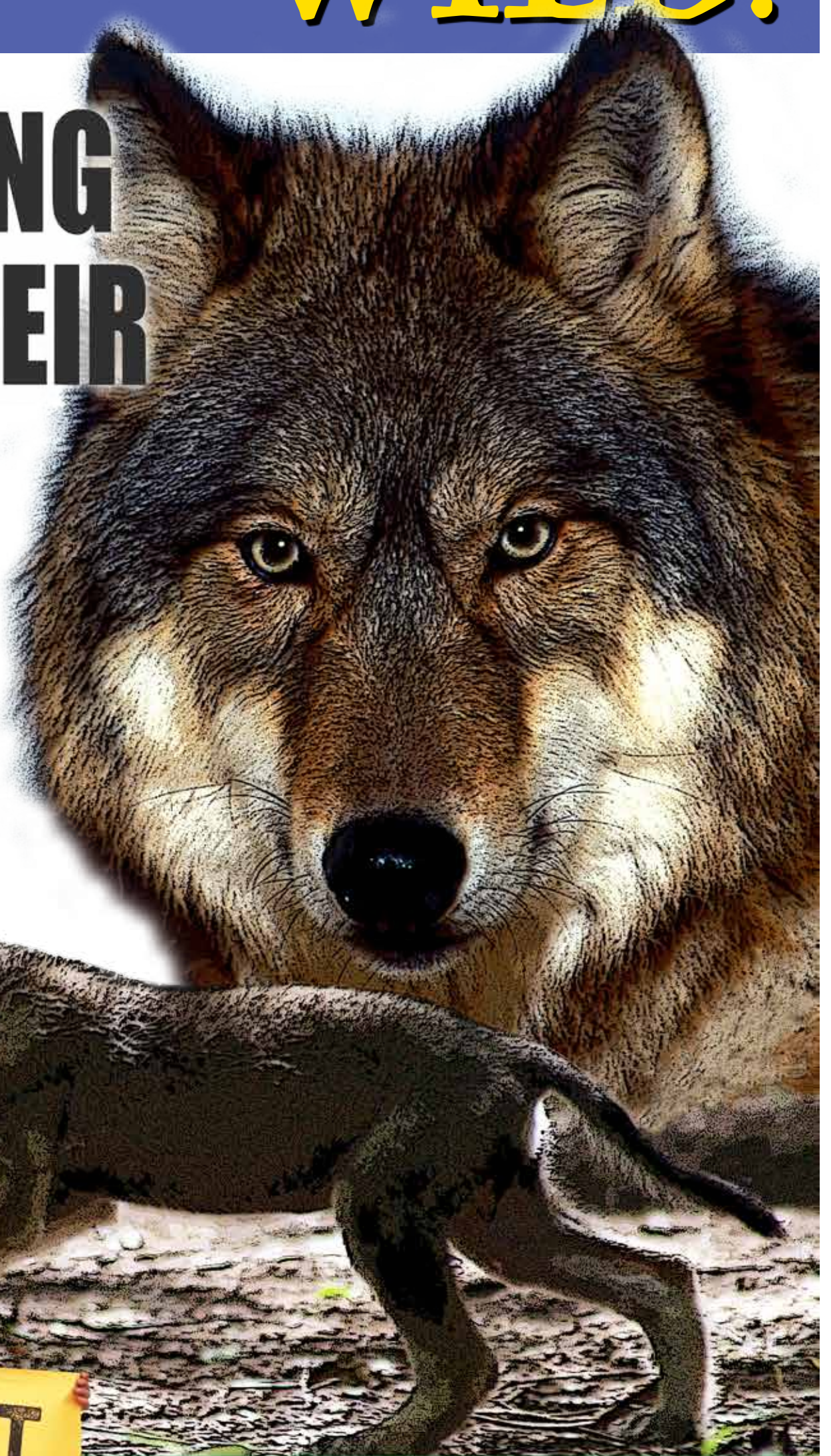
New Mexico

WILD!

The Semi-annual Publication of the
New Mexico Wilderness Alliance

FIGHTING FOR THEIR LIVES

OLD THREATS,
NEW HOPE
FOR WOLVES



**WE SUPPORT
OUR
MONUMENT**

**New Mexicans Speak Out
for National Monuments**

New Mexico **WILD!**

The Semiannual Publication of the
New Mexico Wilderness Alliance
VOLUME 14, NUMBER 2
WINTER 2017

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ON THE COVER: Large wolf head photo courtesy of Cleveland Zoo. Wolf puppy photo courtesy of Rebecca Bose, Wolf Conservation Center. Thanks to Nick Pincus for permission to use the photo of him holding a "We Support Our Monument" banner. Cover design by Lois Manno.

WINTER 2027

By Mark Allison, Executive Director



Defenders of Wilderness face mounting challenges to protect our natural treasures. Rather than dwell on today's challenges, Mark imagines what our world could look like 10 years from now to give us both hope and a sense of direction. We hope you will enjoy this look ahead to the year 2027.



As New Mexico Wild celebrates its 30th anniversary this year, I look back with pride on what we've accomplished together for New Mexico's Wilderness, water and wildlife in the last 10 years. Though the last decade began with an onslaught of threats, we not only persevered but found a way to gain ground on numerous fronts. Let's remember a few of the highlights from the last 10 years:

- In the face of unimaginable threats to our public lands and wild places from the Trump administration and the 115th Congress, the public became engaged in conservation issues like never before, rejuvenating old stalwarts, stirring new blood and fresh faces, and fostering innovative collaborations as people from all walks of life recognized a shared vision for the value of our disappearing wild places as part of our irreplaceable national and cultural heritage.
- As a result, we have tripled the number of our supporters and diversified our membership so that it truly reflects the face of New Mexico. In addition, people have dug deeper to more than double the amount of contributions we receive to do our work.
- This allowed us to increase our capacity in Silver City, Grants and Taos, adding additional organizers. Our legal staff has grown from one attorney to three, and we've developed a hard-won reputation for taking on and prevailing on important cases.
- These began with Mexican wolf recovery and national monument defense lawsuit victories, argued before the Supreme Court. (It is extraordinary to think that 10 years ago the lobo population was just 112. Today, 754 wolves roam free, having sufficiently recovered so that they were taken off the endangered species list.)
- After the Trump administration's abrupt end, the fever broke and we seized on the public's somber recognition that we'd been in a period of temporary national psychosis to re-engage with each other through fact-based, respectful, humble, scientifically informed conversations about our public lands consistent with our nation's values, traditions and institutions.
- 2018 of course was a highlight due to the introduction and unexpectedly quick passage of the Gila Wild and Scenic River bill on the 50th anniversary of the act, led by Sen. Tom Udall, D-N.M.
- We applauded the formation of the historic partnership between the All Pueblo Council of Governors and the Navajo Nation that resulted in a permanent mineral withdrawal within 20 miles of Chaco Canyon, not only for BLM lands, but also for the first time, BIA-administered lands. Similarly,



the permanent mineral withdrawal for greater Otero Mesa would not have been possible but for the leadership of the Mescalero Apaches. Oil and gas development no longer threatens these national treasures.

- We were gratified by our small role in spurring the Republican revolt of 2020, where new leadership emerged to take the party back to its conservation roots and once again make protection of our public lands a bipartisan affair.
- Permanently protecting the state's 57 languishing Wilderness Study Areas was certainly a hard-fought battle, but one well worth it and one made easier by having a prominent New Mexican serving as secretary of the Interior Department.
- 2024, the 100th anniversary of the administrative protection of the Gila as the world's first Wilderness, was remarkable, fulfilling Aldo Leopold's vision by adding nearly a million acres of Wilderness and special designations.
- New Mexico found ways to better promote outdoor recreation and celebrate our public lands and to have significantly increased tourism and visitation, resulting in economic growth for New Mexico.
- We're especially pleased at the role we played in bringing together economic development, tourism and conservation interests with gateway and land-based communities to collaboratively find new ways to significantly increase well-paying job opportunities for those most proximate to public lands.
- The Cultural Heritage Areas that we helped established in places like Taos County have resulted in a growing interest in the rich history and traditions that make New Mexico special and a source of pride for area residents.
- Our Wild Guide is now in its third printing, a necessity resulting from the numerous new protections we've won since 2017. Instead of the original 254 pages, it now is a hefty 400.
- Our humble but beautiful new headquarters that was donated to us has allowed us to use the funds we previously paid for rent to instead engage even more youth and provide them the opportunity to experience our public lands.
- Working with school districts, we are elated to see Wilderness ethics and the integration of experiential learning being taught throughout the state to cultivate the next generation of stewards.

And much, much more. Thank you to all our staff, board, volunteers, supporters, partners and elected leaders for having the vision, the stubbornness and the passion to make these conservation victories possible. Thanks to you, wild places and protected public lands endure for our grandchildren. You'll no doubt recall that 2017 was a particularly tough year, but instead of despairing, we rolled up our sleeves and redoubled our efforts. And while there were certainly setbacks and heartache these last 10 years, and many challenges remain, I couldn't be prouder to have worked with you shoulder-to-shoulder.

Finally, I'd like to thank the board of directors for granting me a sabbatical and I'm excited to depart to some undisclosed wild places tomorrow morning. See you in six months!

For the wild things,

Mark Allison, Executive Director

New Mexico Wilderness Alliance

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The New Mexico Wilderness Alliance is dedicated to the protection, restoration, and continued respect of New Mexico's wildlands and Wilderness areas.

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What is Wilderness?

The Wilderness Act of 1964 established the National Wilderness Preservation System to preserve the last remaining wildlands in America. The Wilderness Act, as federal policy, secures an enduring resource of Wilderness for the people. Wilderness is defined as an area that has primarily been affected by the forces of nature with the imprint of humans substantially unnoticeable. It is an area that offers outstanding opportunity for solitude or a primitive or unconfined type of recreation, and an area that contains ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value. Interested in advertising? Contact evan@nmwild.org





NORTHERN NEW MEXICO REPORT

Pecos Protection Update

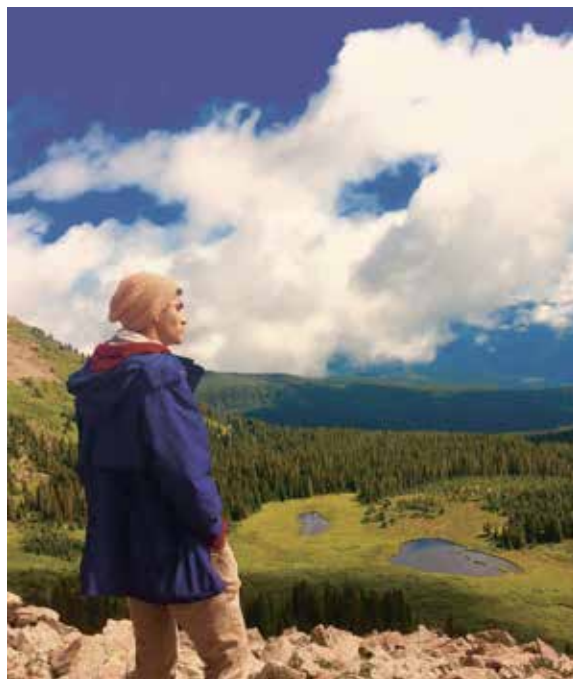
By John Olivas, Staff

The Protect the Pecos coalition, which is working to protect roadless areas adjacent to the Pecos Wilderness, has adjusted its strategy because of the current political climate. The coalition of conservation organizations, sportsman groups, businesses, faith community members and pueblos recently decided to delay asking the Taos County Commission to pass a resolution in support of the citizens' proposal, instead focusing on building its already broad base of support. Mora, San Miguel and Santa Fe counties already have passed resolutions in support.

The coalition also will submit a formal proposal to the state's Congressional delegation and ask them to endorse its proposal or introduce legislation as soon as it is advantageous. In the meantime, the coalition will continue to seek out common ground with those who remain skeptical or opposed to our proposal.

A poll from August of 2016 indicated that the clear majority of Taos County residents are supportive of protecting public lands in Taos County. The survey of 300 voters by pollster Stephen Clermont of Third Eye Strategies found that after hearing some background information, 78 percent support legislation to protect the roadless areas surrounding the existing Pecos Wilderness. This includes Hispanics and Anglos, and those who identify as Democrat, Republican or independent.

"Taos County has become a national model for its proud tradition of protecting public lands," said Ernie Atencio, Taos resident and board member of New Mexico Wild. "People in Taos County intuitively get the connection between our natural resources



Hiker above Serpent Lake in the Pecos Wilderness. Photo: John Olivas

and our rich cultural heritage – our natural and cultural landscape – it makes us who we are. It isn't surprising that they want to safeguard the critical watersheds adjacent to the Pecos and to make sure that future generations have the same opportunities for recreation and traditional uses as we have now."

The poll highlights the growing need for elected officials and county leaders to work with local communities, recreationists, conservationists and others who care about the viability of these areas. While our timeline may have been extended somewhat, New Mexico Wild and the Protect the Pecos coalition remain steadfast in our commitment to permanently protect these roadless areas through federal legislation. It is likely that our proposal to the delegation will include a combination of Wilderness and Special Management Areas. ▲

STEPS FOR FOREST PLANNING

1. **Scoping** (finding out what issues the public are concerned about)



2. **Assessment** (what are the current conditions on the forest?)



3. **"Needs for Change"** (document what kinds of management practices need to change in order for the forest to be where we want it)



4. **Inventory** (identify areas with Wilderness characteristics and river segments that may be eligible for Wild and Scenic designation)



5. **Draft Plan** (analyzes the potential impacts of management under a variety of alternatives)



6. **Final Plan** (will direct management of the forest for the next 20-30 years)

At almost all of these steps, the Forest Service will release documents to the public, hold public meetings and take public comment.

Columbine-Hondo Wilderness Signs Installed



Youth Corps participants from across the U.S. worked with New Mexico Wild Wilderness Rangers and the U.S. Forest Service to install the first wilderness boundary signs in the Columbine-Hondo Wilderness. Photos: USDA Forest Service

THANK YOU TAOS BLM

Thank you to Taos Bureau of Land Management Field Office staff for contributing their time, equipment and expertise to our data collection efforts in the Chama River Canyon Wilderness.

Bottom right: The Chama River Canyon float crew. From left to right: BLM Law Enforcement Officer Adam Hurt, New Mexico Wild Wilderness Ranger Zack Bumgarner, BLM River Ranger Eileen Weidner, Santa Fe National Forest Wilderness Fellow Lilliana Guzman and BLM Law Enforcement Officer Justin Dean. Below: Wilderness Fellow Lilliana Guzman and Wilderness Ranger Zack Bumgarner hitch a ride with expert boat captain and BLM River Ranger Eileen Weidner. Right: BLM Law Enforcement Rangers Adam Hurt and Justin Dean haul gear while on river patrol. Photos: Zack Bumgarner



Pecos Service Projects Create Better Trails, Signage



New Mexico Wild volunteers worked in several areas of the Pecos Wilderness, improving trail signage and other projects during the year. This is part of an ongoing effort led by staffers Bernard Tibbetts and John Olivas. Check our events page at www.nmwild.org for postings of upcoming opportunities to volunteer with us!



Wilderness Ranger Partnership Helps Improve Forest Stewardship

By Joelle Marier, Wildlands Coordinator

From May through September, six Wilderness Rangers were afoot across Wilderness areas in north-central New Mexico through a partnership between New Mexico Wild and the U.S. Forest Service. Maybe you saw them this summer? Energetic and enthusiastic, likely a little sweaty, maybe a bit dirty, donning New Mexico Wild baseball caps, carrying large packs and ready to assist you with information about Wilderness or just share a nice hello.

Over the past several months, their hard work has supported Wilderness stewardship objectives in Wilderness areas on the Cibola, Santa Fe and Carson National Forests. Data collection and public engagement were two of their main focus areas, but here are some other highlights and accomplishments from the field season:



First Wilderness boundary signs installed for the Columbine-Hondo Wilderness with youth from stewardship organizations across the U.S. Photo: Rhett Spencer



Ranger Zack Bumgarner cultivates new Wilderness stewards during an educational session on Wilderness ethics with Cottonwood Gulch Foundation trekkers outside of the Pecos Wilderness. Photo: Bernard Tibbets



Ranger Rhett Spencer recruiting Wilderness volunteers at the Taos Mountain Outfitters anniversary event. Photo: Rhett Spencer



Non-compliant trail markers removed from the Continental Divide Trail in the San Pedro Parks Wilderness (these will be replaced with wooden trail markers within the Wilderness boundary). Photo: Zack Bumgarner



Ranger Josh Parken assisting with the cross-cut saw competition during the 2017 Kid's Fish Fiesta at Eagle Rock Lake in Questa. Photo: Rhett Spencer



Ranger Jade McLaughlin works to douse an abandoned campfire in the Sandia Mountain Wilderness. Photo: Hailey Henck



Trash removed during the Taos River and Land Cleanup (in foreground) with Questa Ranger District staff, Questa/Taos Rocky Mountain Youth Corps, Student Conservation Corps and local community members. Photo: Josh Parken

BY THE NUMBERS

- Miles hiked = 2,165
- Bears encountered = 8
- Mountain lions seen = 1
- Rattlesnakes encountered = 7
- Potential forest fires prevented = 1
- Lost children returned to loved ones = 10
- Deadfall cleared = 254
- Number of volunteers and youth engaged = 187
- Volunteer hours contributed = 1,535

MEET THE RANGERS



From left: Jade McLaughlin and Hailey Henck, Cibola National Forest. Photo: Jade McLaughlin



From left: Luciano Naranjo and Zack Bumgarner, Santa Fe National Forest. Photo: Luciano Naranjo



From left: Josh Parken and Rhett Spencer, Carson National Forest. Photo: USDA Forest Service

Want to read more about our New Mexico Wild Wilderness Ranger adventures from the 2017 field season? Check out their blog at <https://medium.com/@JadeNMWILD>.



Jemez Geothermal Decision Still Simmering

By Judy Calman, Staff

In 2015 the Santa Fe National Forest began analyzing a proposal to allow leasing for geothermal development on 195,000 acres of the Jemez Ranger District, surrounding three sides of the Valles Caldera. With many of the same impacts to the landscape as oil and gas drilling, geothermal development in this area would likely be detrimental to a sensitive riparian area that houses several endangered species and would threaten one of the most beloved places in the state.

New Mexico Wild's position has always been that the Jemez is an inappropriate place for geothermal development. Even with significantly stricter limits on development than the forest is currently analyzing, the risks to groundwater, species, sacred sites and hot springs is simply too high.

During two comment periods associated with the development of its Environmental Impact Statement, the Forest Service received over 900 public comments. In what might be an unprecedented statistic, not a single comment advocated for geothermal development. Even the company that initially expressed interest was silent. We are now



San Antonio Hot Springs with families. Photo: Mark Allison

waiting for a final decision from the Forest Service, which we expect in the coming months. New Mexico Wild calls on the Santa Fe Na-

tional Forest supervisor to prohibit leasing and put the idea of geothermal development in the Jemez permanently to rest. 🐾

Public Access to Sabinoso Wilderness a No-Brainer

More than eight years after its creation, the 16,030-acre Sabinoso Wilderness in eastern San Miguel County remains landlocked, surrounded by private land with no public access. Recently, however, the possibility of bringing public

access to the Wilderness has placed Sabinoso in the spotlight.

The Wilderness Land Trust has offered to donate to the public 3,595 acres of adjacent private land known as the Rimrock Rose Ranch, which it purchased in 2016. We are now as close as ever to finally gaining public access to Sabinoso. However, this can only happen if Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke accepts the gift.

On July 29, Secretary Zinke toured the Rimrock Rose Ranch on horseback with Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, both D-N.M., along with Bureau of Land Management (BLM) staff and sportsman and conservation advocates. John Olivas, traditional community organizer for New Mexico Wild led the 10 riders.

Secretary Zinke was invited to tour the ranch by Sen. Heinrich to highlight the im-

portance of gaining access to the Sabinoso Wilderness – sportsmen would gain access to an area that has never been open to hunting, San Miguel County would benefit economically from increased visitation to the area by hikers and campers, and the public would be able to enjoy lands that have been inaccessible since the BLM public land system was created in 1946.

An Aug. 9 Interior Department press release stated: "Following a trip to New Mexico, Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke today announced he and the Department – through the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) – intend to finalize the process to consider whether to accept the donation of 3,595 acres (formerly known as the Rimrock Rose Ranch) that are adjacent to Sabinoso Wilderness to be included as part of the Wilderness."

New Mexicans are skeptical of that kind of Washington gobbledygook. A private owner wants to donate its land to the public so the public can finally gain access to this special place. Talk is cheap. New Mexico Wild calls on Secretary Zinke to accept this no-brainer deal immediately. 🐾



New Mexico Wild organizer John Olivas leads Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke on tour of Sabinoso Wilderness.

SOUTHERN NEW MEXICO REPORT - Gila Headlines

New Mexico Wild remains committed to our work in the broader Gila region. This past year, we have been finalizing our proposal based on the results of a four-year Wilderness inventory, evaluation and recommendation process, alongside our Wild & Scenic Rivers eligibility surveys and recommendations.

Between 2013 and 2017, our lead staff member, Gila Grassroots Organizer Nathan Newcomer, worked with and trained volunteers on how to conduct proper fieldwork to assess Wilderness characteristics and Wild & Scenic River eligibility. These volunteers have contributed over 15,000 hours of on-the-ground fieldwork in the Gila National Forest. Some 600,000 acres were inventoried for Wilderness, and 250-plus river miles were surveyed for Wild and Scenic designation.

The wild landscapes and rivers presented in our proposal meet the requirements and intent of Wilderness as outlined in the Wilderness Act of 1964 or the provisions defined in the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act of 1968. All the areas described in our proposal encompass a world-class landscape of biological diversity, scenery, geology, cultural values, ecological jumbling and wildness, as well as outstanding opportunities to experience solitude and unconfined primitive forms of recreation. The lands described in our proposal also meet the

U.S. Forest Service's criteria for lands that are suitable for Wilderness designation and that deserve protection from activities and uses that would degrade their Wilderness values and characteristics. Equally, the river segments outlined in our proposal are all free-flowing and possess numerous outstandingly remarkable values that are regionally and nationally significant.

We will continue to work with and urge the Gila National Forest to protect these landscapes and rivers by recommending them for Wilderness designation and to find these river segments eligible for Wild & Scenic designation in order to conserve the exceptional Wilderness experiences they provide.

A big thank you to all the volunteers who helped us to achieve this great success:

Madeline Alfero, Zack Bumgarner, Alison Boyd, Jeff Boyd, Liam Claus, John Conway, Phil Connors, Jess Demoss, Tom Dwyer, Elizabeth Edwards, Gary Edwards, Gerry Engel, Lisa Fields, Lita Furby, Steve Harris, John Kavanaugh, Warren Knowles, Richard Mahler, Steve Marlatt, Carol Martin, Richard Martin, Lawrence McDaniel, Jim McIntosh, Pamela Morgan, Brett Myrick, Ron Parry, Pete Rankin, Tamara Saimons, Miguel Schulte, Christina Selby, Stephanie Smith, Gill Sorg, Donna Stevens, Marcia Stout, Sonnie Sussillo, Dennis Switzer, Patricia Taber and Rachel Zollinger. 🐾



West Fork of the Gila River. Photo: Nathan Newcomer

BLM Evaluates Future Management of Wilderness-Quality Lands

Three of the seven Bureau of Land Management (BLM) offices in New Mexico are undergoing Resource Management Plan (RMP) revisions, which are similar to Forest Plan revisions. These plans govern the management of each BLM field office for 20 to 30 years. Like the forests, each BLM office must undertake an inventory of its land during plan revision to determine if areas contain Wilderness characteristics and then decide whether or not to manage those lands to protect their Wilderness values.

CARLSBAD

We expect the Carlsbad Field Office to release its Draft Resource Management Plan any month now, at which point there will be public meetings. The Carlsbad BLM office oversees Eddy and Lea counties and a portion of Chaves county. It also contains the Permian basin, a rich and extremely active oil field, making it the busiest BLM office in the country. But it also contains some truly special places like the area where the Delaware, Pecos and Black rivers meet, creating a unique and critical riparian area. Several areas near the Guadalupe Mountains contain Wilderness characteristics, and it contains habitat for the endangered sand dunes lizard. BLM land in Carlsbad also borders Carlsbad Caverns National Park.

We submitted data on lands with Wilderness characteristics totaling approximately 75,000 acres, (in addition to approximately 54,000



Despite heavy energy development, there are still lands with Wilderness characteristics on BLM lands in southeastern New Mexico.

acres identified by BLM), as well as nominations for four Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, consisting of nearly 500,000 acres. In a place undergoing such high levels of development, it is even more critical to protect the remaining pristine places.

FARMINGTON

While the Farmington BLM office finalized

its last RMP revision relatively recently (in 2003), it determined in 2014 that an amendment to that plan was warranted because of increased interest in development of the Mancos shale oil play, which had not been planned for in the previous RMP revision. This would also place the office in compliance with the 2012 BLM directive to re-inventory land for Wilderness characteristics.

Farmington completed scoping for this amendment late last year, and we expect the draft to be released in 2018. We submitted data for lands with Wilderness characteristics totaling just over 31,000 acres and we continue to work to support tribal communities in their efforts to protect sacred sites in the Greater Chaco area. New Mexico Wild will remain a strong advocate for public land protection as the process moves forward.

TRI-COUNTY (LAS CRUCES)

The Las Cruces office has been working on its RMP revision for Otero, Sierra and Dona Ana counties for quite a while now, but we expect it will release its inventory of Lands with Wilderness Characteristics (LWC) and hold public meetings this coming winter. The inventory is one of the last steps before BLM can adequately create a draft RMP for public review. Over the past five years, New Mexico Wild has conducted its own LWC inventory and submitted data to the BLM for about 500,000 acres of land we believe contain Wilderness characteristics. 🐾

Wolves Belong

By Judy Calman, Staff

Reinroduction and recovery of Mexican wolves in the wild comes with a diverse set of challenges from an unsupportive governor to poachers to an increasingly hostile Congress. New Mexico Wild continues its efforts to protect the wolf by advocating for Gila-area land and water protections, advocating for robust recovery through the Fish and Wildlife Service's management rules and regulations, and lawsuits when necessary.

LEGAL: MCKITTRICK

We are thrilled to announce that on June 21 we won our Federal District Court case against the U. S. Department of Justice (DOJ) over its so-called "McKittrick Policy," which directed its attorneys not to prosecute individuals for harming or killing endangered species unless they could prove the person knew the exact biological identity of the species s/he was harming. This was in direct conflict with the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and with the act's first 25 years of caselaw, which clearly state that the only requirements for prosecutions were that a person acted voluntarily and that an endangered species was harmed. Additionally, DOJ did not alert the public to the change in policy. This case was a major victory for us and for Mexican wolves, whose highest cause of mortality (by far) is illegal shooting.

In its decision, the court stated that, "Necessarily, the narrow construction of criminal liability under the McKittrick policy, which DOJ has consciously and expressly adopted, **is a complete abdication of DOJ's statutory responsibility under ESA.**"

We learned in August that DOJ is appealing

this case to the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals. New Mexico Wild will vigorously advocate for affirmation of the district court's ruling no matter how long it takes.

LEGAL: OTHER

New Mexico Wild is an intervening party in two other wolf-related cases. In one case, we intervened on the side of the Fish and Wildlife Service after the state of New Mexico sued the agency in 2016 to prevent wolf releases without a state permit. We agree with the service that a federal agency does not need New Mexico's permission to carry out a federal program on federal land. This case is pending in district court.

In the other case, New Mexico Wild joined an appeal of the Fish and Wildlife Service's 2015 Management Plan for Mexican wolves, this time opposing the service. We believed the plan did not do enough to support sustainable management of the wolf population and ignored crucial scientific input. The case is currently pending in Arizona.

RECOVERY PLAN

In mid-2017, the Fish and Wildlife Service released a draft wolf recovery plan with the steps necessary to declare the wolves "recovered" and no longer in need of ESA protection. The draft plan is deeply flawed, however. It allows critical management decisions to be placed solely in the hands of New Mexico and Arizona rather than the federal government — an alarming recommendation given both states' longtime opposition to wild wolves. It also creates a "cap" of 325 wild wolves, despite the best available science determining that at least 750 wolves are necessary for population stabil-

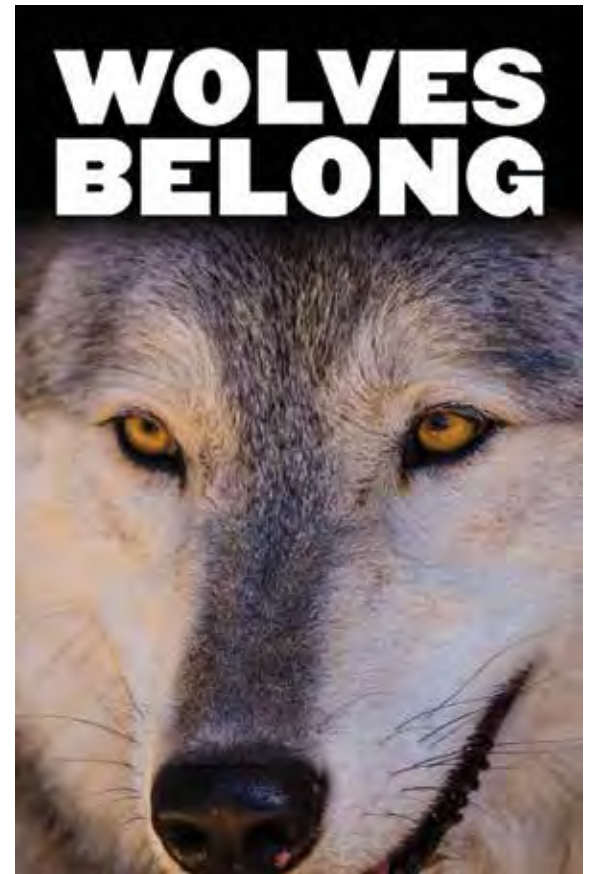


Photo: Gary Cascio

ity. Lastly, it allows the U.S. wolf population to be delisted if certain benchmarks are met in Mexico, even though the U.S. has a separate legal obligation to recover endangered species within its borders.

We submitted comments on this plan in August and expect the service to issue a final decision in the next few months. If the final recovery plan does not have significant improvements, we will evaluate next steps, which may include legal action. 🐾

ECOFLIGHT

Thank you to EcoFlight for helping us provide key decision makers with a bird's-eye view of the special New Mexico public lands we're working to protect.



From Left: Bruce Gordon, owner and operator of EcoFlight, at the Cavern City Air Terminal in Carlsbad. Photo: Joelle Marier; Aerial view of unique Guadalupe Mountains terrain. Photo: Bruce Gordon, EcoFlight; Aerial view of well pads interspersed with residential and agricultural lands in Loving, New Mexico. Photo: Bruce Gordon, EcoFlight; Top right: A web of well pads and roads stretch into the outskirts of the Guadalupe Mountains. Photo: Bruce Gordon, EcoFlight

A Case of Monumental Meddling

By Mark Allison, Executive Director



Competing Visions for Our Future. Photo collages of Rio Grande del Norte and Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monuments by Lois Manno

In April, President Trump issued an executive order instructing Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke to conduct a “review” of all national monuments greater than 100,000 acres designated since 1996 or where there was “(in)adequate public outreach and coordination with relevant stakeholders” and to make recommendations about whether to rescind their designations or make other alterations to their boundaries or management. Both of New Mexico’s newly designated monuments – Rio Grande del Norte (RGDN) in 2013 and Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks (OMDP) in 2014 – were on the list. President Trump never should have ordered the review; neither of our new national monuments should have been included on the list, as they are settled, and our position is that there should be no changes at all in their status.

Secretary Zinke held a 90-day public comment period. Unsurprisingly, both monuments again enjoyed widespread support from the surrounding communities and from New Mexicans in general. City councils, religious leaders, county commissions, tribes, land grant heirs, ranchers, hunters and anglers, business owners and others reiterated their enthusiastic endorsement of the monuments.

New Mexico Wild submitted technical comments and, through our supporters, generated 7,000 public comments by the July 10 deadline.

Of the comments that mentioned a specific monument, Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante in Utah and Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks in New Mexico were the most-often mentioned. Utah, California and New Mexico had the highest number of comment submissions. New Mexico had the most comments submitted per capita of any state (97,000). Nearly 93 percent of the comments received for OMDP opposed the executive order and wanted to see no changes to the monument.

Of those comments related to RGDN, nearly 98 percent opposed the executive order.

Thank you, New Mexicans, for making your voices heard!

Secretary Zinke paid a visit to Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks in July, but chose to spend most of his time meeting with the few opponents of the monument behind closed doors and talking with Gov. Susana Martinez and Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N.M., both monument-haters, while snubbing 600 supporters who filled the Las Cruces Convention Center on a weeknight on short notice, who waited in vain for him to show them the respect to hear their thoughts on the matter. The secretary didn’t even bother to visit Rio Grande del Norte.

Secretary Zinke made his recommendations to President Trump on Aug. 24, however the report was kept secret from the public – and now we know why. On Sept. 17, the report was leaked to the press. The 21-page document was cynical, disingenuous and Orwellian in every way imaginable. It was based on false premises and was convoluted, contradictory and whiny. Just a few of its problems include:

- It is based on a willful misreading of the Antiquities Act and its application over the last 100 years, and it attempts to narrow and redefine the criteria around which monuments can be created.
- It claims that the Antiquities Act “is not a substitute for a lack of congressional action” when in fact the act was created to protect sensitive public lands precisely when Congress couldn’t or wouldn’t take timely action.
- The review claims that it was conducted to “ensure that the local voice was heard” when in reality New Mexico’s monuments happened after more than a de-

cade of conversation and consultation with all stakeholders. The review process, on the other hand, was a complete sham.

- The review states on the one hand that monuments “curtail economic growth” and on the other, complains that economic growth associated with increased visitation is somehow an unwelcome burden.
- It acknowledges that the public is overwhelmingly in favor of the monuments but whines that the community response was the result of a “well-orchestrated national campaign” organized by nongovernmental organizations. Apparently, the energy industry – with three paid lobbyists in D.C. for each member of Congress – just can’t get a fair shake against the might of citizen conservationists.

continued on page 20

Monumental Difference

This president has chosen to defend statues erected as symbols of white supremacy during the Jim Crow era honoring treasonous confederate war leaders who took up arms against the United States of America for the cause of preserving the evil of human bondage while simultaneously considering abolishing and significantly harming numerous national monuments that celebrate and protect the best of our collective historic, cultural and natural heritage. The former is deeply hurtful and offensive to many. The latter is embraced overwhelmingly. The former is an affront from the past; the latter is protecting our future.

VETS CALL FOR PUBLIC LANDS PROTECTION

New Mexico Wild member Brett Myrick, a retired U.S. Navy SEAL, is making sure Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke knows where 37 active and retired military leaders stand on his decision to remove protections for national monuments, including Grand Staircase-Escalante and Bears Ears in Utah and Cascade-Siskiyou in Oregon.

Myrick hiked through Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument with Zinke during his visit to the area in August. An outspoken public lands advocate, Myrick went a step further in writing a letter to Zinke to express grave concern about protections for national monuments.

Three dozen other active and retired Navy SEALs, Special Operations Forces members and other military leaders signed the letter.

In the letter, Myrick and his fellow service members ask Zinke, himself a former SEAL, to remember that the military has a strong culture of stewardship of nat-

ural resources and remind him of the role protected public lands play in getting military families outdoors. As the military leaders put it "Public lands are a physical manifestation of 'America the Beautiful,' representing one of the reasons we chose to serve our country."

"We believe that you, an avid outdoorsman and former military leader, must also feel the same way about the value of our nation's public lands," the letter states. "That is why we were shocked to hear of your efforts to remove protections for magnificent national monuments like Bears Ears.

"Our commitment to protect the U.S. includes American landscapes, natural areas, and cultural sites. ... As you know, the military has a strong culture of stewardship of natural resources and enjoying the outdoors. Protecting public lands through the creation of national monuments helps create and support that culture." 🐾



Interior Secretary Zinke (left) and Brett Myrick in Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument.

August 30, 2017
Honorable Ryan Zinke
Secretary of the Interior
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Mr. Secretary,

Like you, we are veterans who have served in the United States military. Our experience shaped who we are today and the things we value as Americans. We imagine that your own remarkable experience as a Navy SEAL influences how you approach situations today in your important role as Secretary of the Department of Interior.

Today we come together to express concern over your current direction on public lands, including your recommendation to remove protections for existing national monuments, such as Grand Staircase-Escalante, Cascade-Siskiyou, and Bears Ears. Public lands are a physical manifestation of "America the Beautiful," representing one of the reasons we chose to serve our country.

Our commitment to protect the U.S. includes American landscapes, natural areas, and cultural sites. For over 100 years, the Antiquities Act has been a successful tool for conserving places that we cannot afford to lose, including historic military sites. Iconic sites like the Grand Canyon and Statue of Liberty were protected using the Antiquities Act by Republican and Democratic presidents. Reversing our nation's unique heritage of protecting public lands for all Americans to enjoy is a large step in the wrong direction.

As military leaders, we value spending time in the great outdoors with our families, to recreate on public lands between in our free time and between deployments. As you know, the military has a strong culture of stewardship of natural resources and enjoying the outdoors. Protecting public lands through the creation of national monuments helps create and support that culture.

We believe that you, an avid outdoorsman and former military leader, must also feel the same way about the value of our nation's public lands. After you were confirmed as Secretary, you stated: "Without question, our public lands are America's treasure." That is why we were shocked to hear of your efforts to remove protections for magnificent national monuments like Bears Ears. We strongly urge you to change your current course on public lands and take a longer-term view of your role as Secretary of the Interior and steward of our nation's public lands.

Sincerely,

Petty Officer Second Class Brett Myrick, SEAL
Team 5
UNITED STATES NAVY
Captain Joshua Weinberg, SOF
UNITED STATES ARMY
Sergeant First Class Jason Cain, SOF
UNITED STATES ARMY
Specialist Jeffrey A. Danovich, SOF
UNITED STATES ARMY
Lieutenant Colonel Rob Mishev
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
Lieutenant Commander David Callaway
UNITED STATES NAVY
Lieutenant Commander Julia Chen
UNITED STATES NAVY
Captain Nicholas Bender
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
Captain James Cahill
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

Captain Christopher M. Coulon
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
Captain Teresa Fazio
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
Captain Derrick Gay
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
Captain Janessa Goldbeck
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
Captain Bradley C Kuczynski
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
Captain Thomas O'Brien
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
Captain Margaret Seymour
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
Captain Christopher Stevenson
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
Captain Andrea Witt
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
Captain Cameron Witt

UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
Captain Emily Miller
UNITED STATES ARMY
Captain James Perkins
UNITED STATES ARMY
Captain Andrew Person
UNITED STATES ARMY
Captain Jon Powers
UNITED STATES ARMY
Captain Dennis Shorts
UNITED STATES ARMY
Captain Erik Kristopher Norell
NATIONAL GUARD
Lieutenant Alex Cornell du Houx
US NAVY, US MARINE CORPS
First Lieutenant Jessie Connatser
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
First Lieutenant Stephanie Kline
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

Staff Sergeant David R Anderson
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
Staff Sergeant Elizabeth O'Herrin
NATIONAL GUARD, US AIR FORCE
Petty Officer First Class Gary Gadwa
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD
Hospital Corpsman First Class Jesse Medlong
UNITED STATES NAVY
Sergeant Kristofer Goldsmith
UNITED STATES ARMY
Sergeant Elena Kim
UNITED STATES ARMY
Sergeant Reese Cooper May
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
Petty Officer Second Class Jess Flora
UNITED STATES NAVY
Specialist Ross Cohen
UNITED STATES ARMY

The views expressed here are individuals' own and do not necessarily represent the views of, and should not be attributed to, the Department of Defense, United States military, or any service branch.

LAS CRUCES STANDS STRONG FOR OMDP



Background image: the exterior of the Las Cruces courthouse became a huge tribute to Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument during the July 22nd rally, thanks to unique large-format projection. Photo: Russ Smith; Above left: Award-winning artist Bob Diven has been the Sunday editorial cartoonist for the Las Cruces Sun News for more than a decade. See more of his work at bobdiven.com. Above right: Mayors Ken Miyagishima (Las Cruces), Nora Barraza (Mesilla), and Diana Murillo-Trujillo (Anthony) showed their support for Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks.

RALLY FOR THE RIO: CELEBRATING RIO GRANDE DEL NORTE NATIONAL MONUMENT





OUTDOOR RECREATION IN ORGAN MOUNTAINS DESERT PEAKS NATIONAL MONUMENT



A vital resource for Southern New Mexico

Outdoor Recreation is Growing

102% **65%** 
INCREASE of NEW MEXICO RESIDENTS
 in monument visitation FROM 2015 TO 2016 PARTICIPATE IN OUTDOOR RECREATION EVERY YEAR!

A STRONG ECONOMIC ENGINE FOR NEW MEXICO

 **\$9.9 BILLION** annual consumer spending¹
\$2.8 BILLION annual wages and salaries¹
\$623 MILLION annual local and state tax revenue¹

MORE THAN TWICE 
 as many jobs in New Mexico depend directly on **OUTDOOR RECREATION** than on the energy and mining sectors combined¹

 **19%** of 2015 private wage & salary employment in Doña Ana County was **IN THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR**²

OMDP NATIONAL MONUMENT SUPPORTS a wide variety of recreation opportunities:



170 MILES of multi-use trail

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICIALS AGREE:

Access to trails and open space offer positive benefits including lower levels of mortality and illness, higher levels of outdoor physical activity, restoration from stress, a greater sense of well-being, and greater social capital.

Protected public lands safeguard important natural assets and cultural landmarks, **stimulate** tourism and recreation, and **attract** new residents, businesses and investment.

Center top: Las Cruces Convention Center was the backdrop for large-format projection images. Drone photo courtesy of Bryndon Gardner. Center middle: Boxing Champ Austin "No Doubt" Trout joins New Mexico Wild to fight for monument protection. Center bottom: 600 monument supporters filled the Las Cruces Convention Center—Interior Secretary Zinke was a no-show. Bottom row: Monument supporters held signs outside of Secretary Zinke's closed-door meeting with opponents. Photos courtesy of Friends of Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks.





Monuments in Cibola County Boost Local Economy

By Lois Manno, Staff

The landscape of Cibola County represents a fascinating blend of fire and water. El Malpais National Monument, for example, is made up of relatively young lava flows (3,000 to 7,000 years old) that cover the floor of a broad valley flanked by ancient sandstone bluffs. These were formed by an inland sea 290 million years ago.

That same sandstone forms the great promontory of El Morro National Monument. Over the centuries, those who passed by stopped to camp at the shaded oasis beneath these cliffs. They left the carved evidence of their passing -- symbols, names, dates and fragments of their stories that register the cultures and history intermingled on the rock.

Today, visitors continue to enjoy these unique places, bringing economic benefits to the county and its communities. A National Park Service report released earlier this year shows that the 216,862 visitors to El Morro and El Malpais in 2016 spent nearly \$13 million in communities near the parks.

That spending supports 210 jobs in the area. “El Malpais and El Morro National Monuments welcome visitors from across the country and around the world,” said Superintendent Mitzi Frank. “We are delighted to share the story of these places and the experiences they provide. We also feature the parks as a way to introduce our visitors to this part of the country and all that it offers. National park tourism is a significant driver in the national economy, returning more than \$10 for every \$1 invested in the National Park Service, and it’s a big factor in our local economy as well. We appreciate the partnership and support of our neighbors and are glad to be able to give back by helping to sustain local communities.”

Economic benefits like these are not unique to Cibola County; the story is the same across our state. According to the Outdoor Industry Association, 65 percent of New Mexico residents participate in outdoor recreation each year, generating \$9.9 billion in consumer

spending annually and 99,000 direct jobs. The high quality of life associated with outdoor recreation opportunities attracts and sustains employers and families. More than twice as many jobs in New Mexico depend on outdoor recreation than on the energy and mining sectors.

New Mexicans know how lucky we are to have public lands in which to recreate, and we must take seriously the threats to our precious national monuments. Fortunately, neither El Malpais nor El Morro are on the chopping block for downsizing, but you never know what could happen next month or next year. New Mexico Wild will continue to fight against misguided policies that put public lands at risk in our state. ▲

The south side of Inscription Rock in 1873, at what is today El Morro National Monument. Photo: Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons. Below right: Courtesy of New Mexico Bureau of Geology & Mineral Resources.

65%
OF NEW MEXICO
RESIDENTS PARTICIPATE
IN OUTDOOR RECREATION
EACH YEAR

Communities across New Mexico recognize that outdoor recreation supports health, contributes to a high quality of life and — perhaps most importantly — attracts and sustains employers and families. Investing in outdoor infrastructure attracts employers and active workforces, ensuring those communities thrive economically and socially.



More than twice as many jobs in New Mexico **DEPEND ON OUTDOOR RECREATION** (99,000) than on the energy and mining sectors combined (35,000)¹

Visitors to El Morro and El Malpais national monuments spent nearly \$13 million in communities near the parks.

IN NEW MEXICO, OUTDOOR RECREATION GENERATES:

\$9.9 BILLION
IN CONSUMER SPENDING ANNUALLY



99,000
DIRECT JOBS



\$2.8 BILLION
IN WAGES AND SALARIES




\$623 MILLION
IN STATE AND LOCAL TAX REVENUE





WILDERNESS FAQs





Pecos Wilderness boundary sign. Photo: Vincent Franzen, www.ultrazona.com


 **WHAT IS A WILDERNESS AREA?** The Wilderness Act of 1964 defines wilderness as “an area where the earth and community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain” and “an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions.” There are currently 765 designated Wilderness areas, totaling 109,129,657 acres, or about 4.5 percent of the area of the United States.


 **WHAT QUALIFIES A PLACE TO BECOME WILDERNESS?** The following conditions must generally be present for an area to be included in the National Wilderness Preservation System: 1. the land is under federal ownership and management, 2. the area consists of at least 5,000 acres of land, 3. human influence is “substantially unnoticeable,” 4. there are opportunities for solitude and recreation, and 5. the area possesses “ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.”


 **WHO DECIDES WHAT PLACES ARE WILDERNESS?** Designated Wilderness is the highest level of conservation protection for federal lands. Only Congress may designate Wilderness or change the status of Wilderness areas. Wilderness areas are designated within existing federal public land. Congress has directed four federal land management agencies—the Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Fish and Wildlife Service and National Park Service—to manage Wilderness areas to preserve and, where possible, to enhance their Wilderness character.


 **HOW MUCH WILDERNESS EXISTS IN NEW MEXICO?** Approximately 1,695,598 acres are protected as Wilderness in the state. Though this seems like a lot, New Mexico actually ranks next to last among Western states in the percentage of its land designated as Wilderness, at roughly 2 percent. On average, Western states (not including Alaska) have 5 percent of their land designated as Wilderness.


 **WHERE WAS THE FIRST WILDERNESS AREA ESTABLISHED?** The Gila Wilderness in southwestern New Mexico was the world's first designated Wilderness area, created on June 3, 1924. It's ironic that the state where Wilderness got its start now is lagging behind in total acres of Wilderness created.


 **WHY IS WILDERNESS IMPORTANT?** Through the Wilderness Act, Congress recognized the intrinsic value of wildlands. Some of the tangible and intangible values mentioned in the Wilderness Act include “solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation,” as well as “ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.” Wilderness areas provide habitat for wildlife and plants, including endangered and threatened species.


 **CAN I HUNT AND FISH IN A WILDERNESS AREA?** Hunting and fishing are allowed in Wilderness areas, subject to applicable state and federal laws.


 **IS GRAZING ALLOWED IN WILDERNESS?** Livestock grazing is permitted where it occurred prior to an area's designation as Wilderness. On rare occasions, Congress prohibits grazing in Wilderness at the time of designation.


 **CAN I DRIVE IN A WILDERNESS AREA?** The Wilderness Act generally prohibits the use of motor vehicles in Wilderness. The law contains special provisions for motor vehicle use when required in emergencies or as necessary for the administration of the area. Motor vehicles may also be permitted for special uses such as to access a private inholding, to support grazing or to exercise valid existing rights.

 **CAN I BIKE IN A WILDERNESS AREA?** The 1964 Wilderness Act prohibits motorized or mechanized forms of recreation, and this includes bicycles. Instead, visitors are required to walk or ride horseback.

 **HOW DOES WILDERNESS HELP WILDLIFE?** Habitat fragmentation caused by roads, power lines, fences, dams and other structures seriously affects the ability of animals to move through their ranges. The roadless quality of Wilderness preserves large tracts of habitat needed for healthy populations of animals that need space to roam, like large predators, migratory species and herd animals.

 **DOES A WILDERNESS AREA INCREASE THE RISK OF FIRE?** Wilderness areas are to be primarily affected by the forces of nature, though the Wilderness Act does acknowledge the need to provide for human health and safety, protect private property, control insect infestations and fight fires within the area. Wilderness areas are managed under the direction of the Wilderness Act, subsequent legislation (such as the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act) and agency policy.

 **I LIVE IN THE CITY ... WHY DOES WILDERNESS MATTER?** Wilderness protects open space, watersheds, natural soundscapes, diverse ecosystems and biodiversity. The literature of Wilderness experience frequently cites the inspirational and spiritual values of Wilderness, including opportunities to reflect on the community of life and the human place on Earth. Most Wildernesses are also carbon sinks that help combat climate change. Wilderness provides a sense of wildness, which can be valuable to people whether or not those individuals actually visit Wilderness. Just knowing that Wilderness exists can produce a sense of curiosity, inspiration, renewal and hope.

 **HOW CAN I LEARN MORE ABOUT WILDERNESS?** Join the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance! We are your most complete resource for information about wildlands and Wilderness areas in the state. As a member you'll get our newsletters, E-news, action alerts and notices about hikes, service projects and special events. You can help us Keep it Wild! Join on our website at www.nmwild.org or use the convenient mail-in form on page 23. 📌

Board of Directors Updates



NANCY MORTON, MS, RN, INCOMING BOARD CHAIR

Nancy is a nurse and recently retired from the College of Nursing at the University of New Mexico. She's been a volunteer Wilderness activist for more than 40 years. A founding board member of New Mexico Wild, Nancy has served as secretary and part of the executive committee. Nancy's message: "Our worst fears

for the natural world after the recent election have proven true. The 'review' to extinguish Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks and Rio Grande del Norte and other monuments across the West, the silencing and defunding of the EPA and other agencies, and the denial of climate change are just the most obvious of the local, national and global threats our current government is to the world. As our executive director, Mark Allison, says, 'We're a million-dollar organization with a priceless agenda.' We have a talented, committed membership. One of my goals is to find more ways volunteers can meaningfully participate in meeting the challenges we face." Other officers elected were Todd Schulke as vice chair, Roberta Salazar-Henry as treasurer, and Joe Alcock as secretary.



SALLY A. PAEZ, MEMBER

Sally is deeply committed to New Mexico, where she has lived for 28 years. She earned a law degree from the University of New Mexico in 2009 and practices law in Santa Fe. In law school, Sally completed the Natural Resources Law Certificate Program and served as student editor-in-chief

of the Natural Resources Journal. Prior to law school, Sally earned a B.S. in biology from the University of New Mexico, where she focused on biodiversity, conservation and ecology. Sally spends her free time exploring the outdoors with her husband, Danny. She loves to hike and backpack and to observe and photograph the natural world. Sally believes Wilderness conservation is critical for maintaining biodiversity and healthy ecosystems, and she is passionate about ensuring that current and future generations will be able to experience the benefits of spending time in wild places.



RENEE FRANK, MEMBER

Renee has a B.S. in biology and an MBA from Auburn University in Alabama. She began her career with the USDA Soil Conservation Service and moved to Las Cruces 37 years ago, working at White Sands Missile Range and then in several local hospitals in human resources and general management. After seeing her two daughters off to college, she went into real estate and became the first certified

EcoBroker in Las Cruces, dedicating her real estate practice to learning about and educating others about green, environmentally friendly homes, energy efficiency and sustainable living. Having learned to love the outdoors as a child, hiking, swimming and horseback riding in beautiful natural environments, she became a staunch advocate for the protection of our public lands through Wilderness and national monument designations.



ANN WATSON, MEMBER

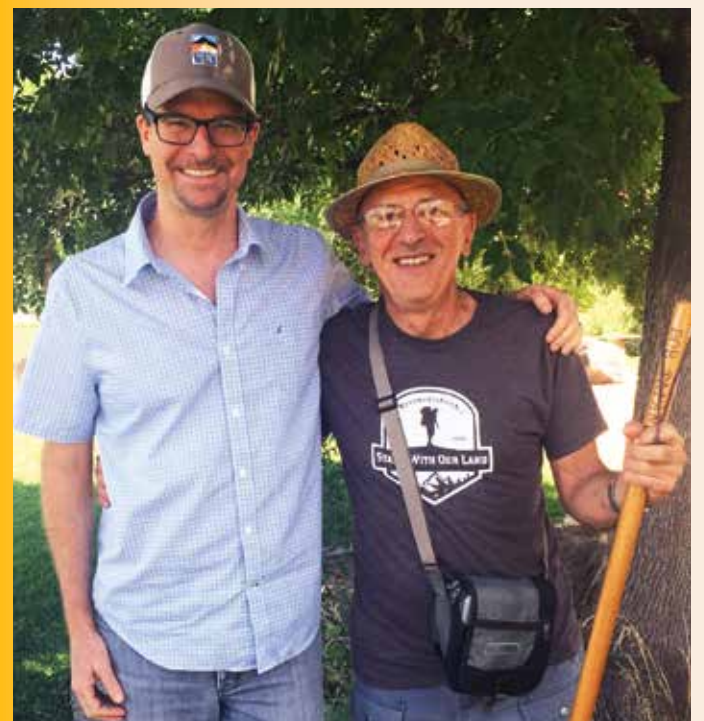
Ann is employed with the Bureau of Indian Affairs at the Zuni Agency as the natural resource manager and oversees the operation of the natural resources, agriculture and environmental management system programs. Ann's ecological expertise is in

the fields of fishery biology and riparian and watershed management. Prior to the BIA, Ann was employed by the Santo Domingo Tribe, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Tucson and the Bureau of Land Management in Wyoming. Ann has worked on a variety of range and wildlife issues on public lands and helped initiate the native Colorado River Cutthroat Trout Restoration Project. She worked with the Middle Rio Grande Conservation Working Group to help manage for the endangered Rio Grande silvery minnow. Ann has traveled extensively around the world and enjoys skiing, cycling, hiking and camping throughout the Southwest. As a native New Mexican, she understands the current public lands management issues in the state. She enjoys working to help educate the public on the importance of protecting our valuable natural resources for future generations.



Incoming board chair Nancy Morton and outgoing board chair Ken Cole.

Thanks Ken Cole for serving as New Mexico Wild chair for six years, and thanks for continuing to serve on the board.



Incoming secretary Joe Alcock thanks outgoing board member Bob Tafanelli.

Thank You Coreworks!

COREWORKS
Alchemy in Motion

COREWORKS Alchemy in Motion
330 Adams St SE
Albuquerque, NM 87108
505.239.7285
coreworkspilates.com

Kayakers Paddle All 50 States



Robert and Susan Kissell joined Quiet Waters Paddling for one of the New Mexico Wild fundraiser floats. The couple has a goal of kayaking in all 50 states, and New Mexico marks number 49! We were happy to have them on the trip and wish them luck as they complete their goal in Hawaii.

Thank You Community Partner!



**USDA
Forest Service
Southwestern
Region**





UNM Wild Students Step Up for Wilderness

By Luisa Pennington



The University of New Mexico Wilderness Alliance welcomes New Mexico Wild Associate Director Tisha Broska and Executive Director Mark Allison at its Sept. 12 meeting to speak on the importance of public lands.

New Mexico Wild, the Albuquerque Wildlife Federation, Telluride Mountain Film, the UNM Mountaineering Club, the UNM Biology Undergraduates and the UNM Southwest Film Center among others, UNM Wild is truly dedicated to the spirit of education, conservation and exploration of the great outdoors.

Wild works with the UNM Southwest Film Center to bring renowned adventure and educational films from Telluride, Colorado, to Albuquerque.

For many of its members, UNM Wild is an excellent opportunity to make a difference. "I enjoy being outdoors and this group can help me get out more. Plus, I get to conserve the Wilderness so that future generations, and my own kids, can enjoy it in the way that I have," said new member Keith Flynn.

With membership increasing rapidly, UNM Wild has the numbers and the drive to work on the preservation of New Mexico land. The student group kicked off the fall semester by gathering to discuss conservation and public lands advocacy in the Land of Enchantment. Working in part with organizations such as

UNM Wild planned to volunteer at the Valles Caldera National Preserve's Elk Festival on Sept. 30. The volunteers were to run an educational booth on wildlife native to the park. UNM Wild is also beginning to organize the annual Telluride Mountain Film Festival, which will take place in the spring and is one of the larger projects the group takes on. UNM

The group's meetings are open to all members of the UNM community. Meetings are held at 7 p.m. every other Tuesday in the Student Union Building; new members and new ideas are always encouraged. Open to volunteer opportunities and excited about partnership with New Mexico Wild, UNM Wild anticipates a productive year protecting New Mexico Wilderness. 🏔️



THE BADDEST ZOMBIE APOCALYPSE BUG-OUT VEHICLE OF ALL TIME GIFTED TO NEW MEXICO WILD!

Thanks to the generosity of Sue and Fred Gunkle, New Mexico Wild is the proud new owner of a rugged, self-contained adventure camper. This completely customized 1998 Dodge pop up camper was designed after decades of lessons learned while exploring the West's public lands. Complete with solar panels, a freezer and an oven, "the beast" as we affectionately call it, can safely get us to and back from the remotest trailhead.

New Mexico Wild will use the beast as a support vehicle for our Forest Service rangers and field staff throughout the state as they inventory and monitor public lands, provide outings for our members and work with volunteers on stewardship projects. We also plan to take it to events to draw attention to the importance of our wild lands and waters.

It doesn't move fast, so be sure to give us a friendly wave when you pass us on the road. Thanks Sue and Fred for this wonderful donation!



NEW MEXICO WILD ANNUAL MEETING & HOLIDAY PARTY

December 1ST | 7:00 - 10:00 Pm

HOTEL ANDALUZ

125 2nd Street NW | Albuquerque, NM 87102

RSVP to (505) 843-8696 X0 or email evan@nmwild.org

Light Hors d'oeuvres
Silent Auction | Live Music | Cash Bar

NEW MEXICO WILD HOLIDAY PARTY

December 9TH | 6:00 - 9:00 Pm

MESILLA VALLEY BOSQUE STATE PARK

5000 Calle del Norte | Mesilla, NM 87045

RSVP to (505) 843-8696 X0 or email evan@nmwild.org

Light Hors d'oeuvres

NATIONAL FOREST UPDATES

New Mexico's National Forests Plan for the Future



Photo: Jim O'Donnell

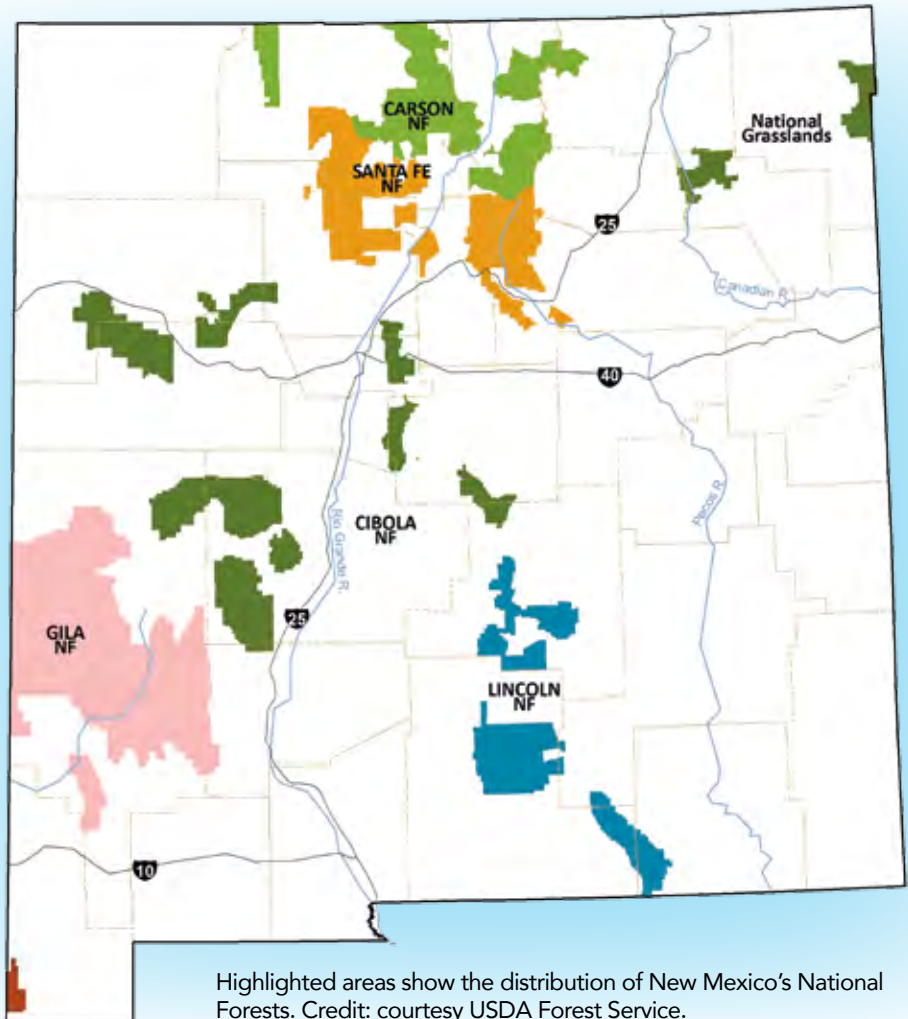
All five of New Mexico's national forests are currently undergoing revision of their forest plans, which govern administration and management for 20 to 30 years. As part of plan revision, forests are required to inventory their lands for areas that contain Wilderness characteristics and to decide whether or not to manage those areas to preserve their Wilderness character. Below we outline where each forest is in the process and when the next opportunity for public engagement will likely be.

CIBOLA NATIONAL FOREST

The Cibola National Forest, which is scattered through central New Mexico and includes the Sandia Mountain Wilderness adjacent to Albuquerque, is the furthest along in its plan revision. Last year, it released its Preliminary Draft Alternatives, outlining the plans it is considering. New Mexico Wild submitted data on over 250,000 acres we believe contain Wilderness characteristics. Many areas in our proposal were not included in the Cibola's Draft Preliminary Alternatives. We expect the draft plan to be released in the spring of 2018, at which point there will be public meetings and a comment period.

SANTA FE NATIONAL FOREST

Last winter, the Santa Fe National Forest held open houses and public workshops about its Draft Wilderness Evaluation maps and potential alternatives. Overall, we are encouraged by the approach the Santa Fe has taken on both its Wilderness inventory and its continual public outreach. The Santa Fe will not be releasing Preliminary Draft Alternatives but is



expected to release its draft plan sometime in early 2018, at which point there will be additional public meetings and an opportunity for public engagement.

CARSON NATIONAL FOREST

The Carson National Forest recently released a Preliminary Draft Plan with some alternative "themes." The Carson has done a good job of continuously involving the public. Unfortunately, the draft plan did not include an outline of where the forest is in terms of Wilderness inventory and evaluation, nor did it mention several proposals submitted by conservation organizations, including a special management scheme for Valle Vidal and extra protection for wetland/riparian areas.

We will continue to advocate for rigorous wilderness inventory and inclusion of other good conservation measures for special places in the Forest. We are expecting the Carson's draft plan before the end of 2017, at which point

there will be additional open houses and opportunities for public comment.

GILA NATIONAL FOREST

The Gila National Forest is currently in its Wilderness evaluation phase and is developing potential alternatives by hosting a series of intensive public meetings. Over the past several years, we have been inventorying the Gila for Wilderness characteristics and will submit this data to the forest in the coming months. We are expecting a draft sometime in 2018.

LINCOLN NATIONAL FOREST

The Lincoln National Forest will be the last in New Mexico to complete its revision. It is still in the information-gathering stage and will use collected data to complete an assessment, analyzing the forest under its current management. It will use the assessment to begin the formal NEPA process, in which it will develop alternatives for forest management over the life of the new plan. ▲



FAREWELL TO JIM FISH

One of New Mexico's great Wilderness fighters died on a hike in the Ignacio Chavez WSA between Grants and Cuba on June 5, 2017. Jim Fish was the key leader of the NM Wilderness Coalition in the 1980s, the precursor to New Mexico Wild, and edited the historic Wildlands: New Mexico BLM Wilderness Coalition Statewide Proposal in March 1987. Though Jim was born and raised on a ranch, he believed that livestock grazing irreparably harmed and was inconsistent with Wilderness. He worked to link grazing retirement and Wilderness area designations. He devoted himself to his Anasazi Fields Winery in Placitas. He also worked in energy research at Sandia Labs and was an accomplished wood sculptor and poet.

Photo: Bill Diven. Courtesy of Sandoval Signpost (sandovalsignpost.com)

- The report breathlessly asserts that monuments restrict “traditional uses,” which it defines as “grazing, timber production, mining, fishing, hunting, recreation and other cultural uses.” With respect to grazing, fishing, hunting, recreation and other cultural uses, he is dead wrong. With respect to commercial logging and mining operations, since when are they “traditional uses!?” And, of course they’re restricted, Sherlock. The purpose of creating a national monument is to preserve the area’s cultural, prehistoric and historic legacy and its diverse array of natural and scientific resources and to protect them from threats – like oil and gas drilling, mining and timber production.

More specific to New Mexico’s national monuments, and perhaps even more galling, is that the recommendations for RGDN and OMDP are predicated on basic factual errors. As Sen. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., highlighted in a Sept. 19 Energy and Natural Resources Committee hearing, the report claims:

- Roads were closed since the designation of RGDN
- Ranchers have stopped ranching since the designation of RGDN because of road closures
- OMDP abuts the U.S.–Mexico border
- Monument proclamations need to be amended to protect hunting and fishing rights

False, Wrong, Incorrect and Untrue.

If the facts don’t support the conclusion you want to make, I guess Secretary Zinke thinks it is OK to just lie. I’d expect more honor from a former Navy SEAL.

The witness Sen. Heinrich was questioning, John Ruhs, acting deputy director of operations at the Bureau of Land Management, admitted that BLM staff were not even asked to fact check the sloppy and falsehood-ridden report before it was sent to the president of the United States. Strange?

Perhaps, unless this whole exercise has nothing to do with national monuments or public sentiment and everything to do with politics and favors for the extractive industry.

While this national monument review never should have been ordered, the fact that the recommendations do not include boundary reductions for either RGDN or OMDP as anticipated must be seen as a direct result of the overwhelming community support the administration heard from New Mexicans. I honestly don’t think they were prepared for the community reaction.

So, while we are happy about that victory, Zinke does recommend opening the monuments to drilling, mining and logging – heavy commercial industrial activities that would decimate the very cultural, historic and natural resource values that the monument designations intend to protect. “No one loves their public lands more than I,” Secretary Zinke said. “You can love them as much, but not more than I do.” Maybe he does love public lands, but perhaps for all the wrong reasons.

New Mexico Wild calls on President Trump to side with the people and reject Secretary Zinke’s recommendations. The president ignores, contradicts and humiliates his cabinet secretaries routinely – why not now? President Trump can choose to side with voters rather than the radical proposals of Rep. Steve Pearce, D.C. lobbyists and special interests.

While we hold out hope that President Trump will do the right thing, any presidential action that removes protections will be met with immediate legal action by New Mexico Wild.

The Antiquities Act has been an important conservation tool used by presidents of both parties for over 100 years. New Mexico Wild is prepared to take legal action so that our monuments and the integrity of the act will endure beyond the cynical and short-sighted attacks of this administration. If you see a court case call “New Mexico Wilderness Alliance et. al. v Trump,” you’ll know that the president chose poorly. 🐾



If you are a New Mexico Wilderness Alliance Member, you are eligible to join **The Power of WE®**.



nusenda.org

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Citizen Eyes and Ears Needed: Protecting New Mexico’s public land is a big job, and we need your help!



New Mexico Wilderness Alliance does its best to ensure that federal agencies are managing our public lands in accordance with the law and to let them know when there are problems on the ground.

You can help us by being our eyes and ears. When you see violations or abuse in New Mexico’s designated Wilderness areas and other protected places, please let us know so we can report it to the responsible agency.

Some common problems are:

- ATVs or mountain bikes in designated Wilderness areas
- Broken fences
- Illegal wood cutting
- Cows in rivers and streams

To report a violation, please visit nmwild.org/violation. Thanks for helping us keep the Wild West wild!

Earth Matters Radio



Gila Organizer Nathan Newcomer interviews Staff Attorney Judy Calman as part of New Mexico Wild’s weekly Earth Matters Radio Show on Gila/Mimbres Community Radio. Credit: Kyle Johnson, GMCR.org

Albuquerque Pride Parade



New Mexico Wild staff, board and volunteers turned out proudly in support of gender equality at the Albuquerque Pride Parade on June 10. Wolf ears were worn, wrist bands were passed out, and a great time was had by all!

Get your New Mexico Wild hat!

Order online for \$20 at nmwild.org/shop



New styles! Knit Beanies! Camo!

Looking to volunteer in wilderness?

Check out our website at nmwild.org for upcoming volunteer service projects.



Photos: Mark Allison

WILDERNESS



land untrammeled



WILDERNESS: land untrammeled Art & Poetry Exhibit

Lovers of Wilderness gathered at Page Coleman Gallery on Friday, October 13 for a special event benefitting New Mexico Wild. WILDERNESS: land untrammeled is an exhibit featuring Wilderness-inspired visual art and poetry. Organized by Collective Perception, a group of community-minded artists, the show includes work by 50 visual artists and 20 poets. Three large-format prints by well-known photographers David Muench, Irene Owsley, and Wayne Suggs were raffled off. The show will be on display through December 9, Saturdays from 11am-5pm.

A special Wilderness poetry reading happens on Saturday, November 11 from 2 to 4pm at Page Coleman Gallery, 6320-B Linn Ave NE, in Albuquerque. New Mexico Wild thanks Collective Perception, Page Coleman Gallery, and all the artists and writers who contributed work to the exhibit. Part of the proceeds will go toward our work to protect New Mexico's Wilderness, wildlife, and water.

Aspens Teach Us Resiliency: A Special Outing



New Mexico Wild held a Fall retreat, *Aspens: Living Wisdom for Navigating Turbulent Times*, a partnership with Larry Glover of Wild Resiliency Institute and Cheryl Slover-Linnett of Lead Feather. The aspen grove, the world's largest known individual life form, offers us a primeval and imaginative window into our own deep identity and nature, and into a dynamic vision of resilience in the face of disruption.

Become a Wild One! Monthly giving is the most effective way to support our work.



PHOTO: MIKE GROVES, ORGAN MOUNTAINS, NM

- Your monthly donation helps us keep working all year long.
- Your credit card is automatically billed each month, nothing to remember or mail.
- You set your donation amount—as little as \$10 a month makes a difference!
- Change your donation amount or cancel at any time.
- Your membership in New Mexico Wild never expires—you are renewed automatically.
- Monthly donating saves administrative time and paper.
- Donate at a level of \$20 or more monthly to receive free gifts.
- As a Wild One monthly donor, you are the backbone of our membership!

Join now and you'll receive our quarterly newsletter, e-news and action updates, invitations to special events, member discounts, and more!

Help us speak with a louder, stronger voice in support of protecting New Mexico's Wilderness, Wildlife, and Water.



New Mexico Wild is the premier wilderness organization in New Mexico. Become a Wild One! Sign up at www.nmwild.org



If you...

- Hike or backpack
- Camp or climb
- Hunt or fish
- Kayak or canoe
- Stargaze or study plants
- Photograph or paint
- Enjoy beauty outdoors
- Love clean water
- Want to breathe fresh air
- Crave wide open spaces



... then you belong in the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance.

You can help keep New Mexico Wild!

We advocate for the protection of New Mexico's wildlands and wilderness areas. Education, service projects, public outreach, special events and grassroots support of citizen wilderness proposals are all ways the Wilderness Alliance strives to protect the rarest and most special of landscapes: those that remain relatively untrammelled by man.

As a member, you'll receive our quarterly newsletter, e-news and action updates, special advisory newsletters, invitations to members-only events, member discounts and more. Your support is vital to our work.

The Wilderness Alliance is the only nonprofit organization exclusively focused on protecting wilderness areas, wildlands and critical habitat in the state of New Mexico. We push hard for protection for the critically-endangered Mexican gray wolf, we hold land management agencies accountable for following the law, and we build broad grassroots community support for wilderness protection.

Please join us—together we will continue the fight to keep public lands in public hands.



www.nmwild.org

New Mexico Wilderness Alliance **Yes! I want to support Wilderness in New Mexico!**

I want to join the Wild Ones as a monthly donor.
Bill my credit card for the amount selected below.

- Protector \$10 monthly (\$120 Annual)
- Advocate \$20 monthly (\$240 Annual)
- Defender \$40 monthly (\$480 Annual)
- Wilderness Warrior \$83 monthly (\$1,000 Annual)
- Other amount _____

I want to support New Mexico Wild with a single gift.

- \$25 \$100 \$1,000
- \$35 \$250 Other amount _____
- \$50 \$500

Join at a higher level and enjoy these great gifts!

Give \$100 or more to receive a Wolf Stamp from our collectible series.

Give \$240 or more to receive a Wolf Stamp and a copy of our book *Wild Guide: Passport to New Mexico Wilderness*.

Give \$480 or more to receive a Wolf Stamp, a *Wild Guide*, and a hat with our New Mexico Wild logo!

Give \$1,000 or more to receive a *Wild Guide*, a hat with our New Mexico Wild logo, AND a matted selection of Wolf Stamps!

YES! My donation amount qualifies me to receive a gift. Please send it.

PAYMENT OPTIONS: Enclosed is my check payable to New Mexico Wilderness Alliance. Please charge my credit card.

Card #: _____ Exp. Date: _____ CVV# _____

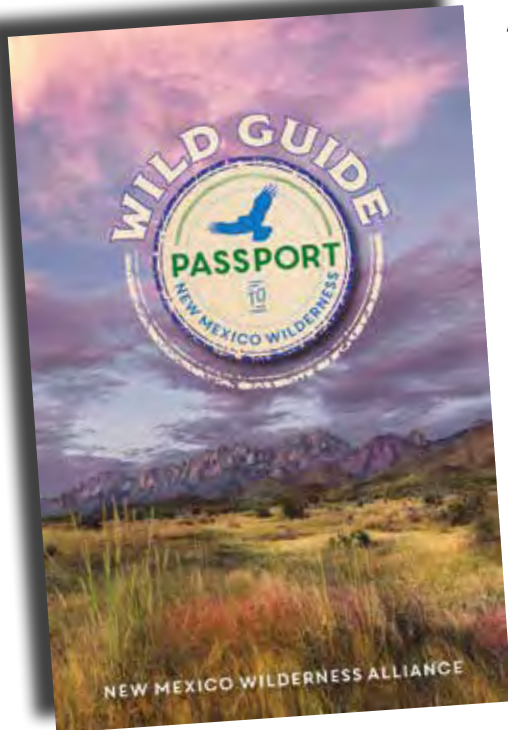
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This comprehensive guide to New Mexico's protected wildlands is the only book that features each of the state's designated wilderness areas and wilderness study areas as well as other treasures, such as the new Rio Grande del Norte National Monument and Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument.



On October 9, approximately 100 Nusenda Credit Union employees volunteered to help clean up the La Cueva and Juan Tabo picnic areas in the Sandia Mountains. Crews spent several hours picking up trash, removing graffiti, and other work, followed by a pizza party and free Wild Guides for everyone. Way to show The Power of WE, Nusenda!




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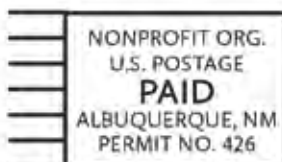
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New Mexico Wilderness Alliance
P.O. Box 25464
Albuquerque, NM 87125
Not a member yet? Go to nmwild.org.



El Malpais National Monument lava and sandstone.
Photo: Wiki Commons