

New Mexico

Spring/Summer 2022

The Semi-annual Publication of the
New Mexico Wilderness Alliance

WILD!

THE WATER ISSUE



**Exclusive Interview:
A Conversation with
Melanie Stansbury**

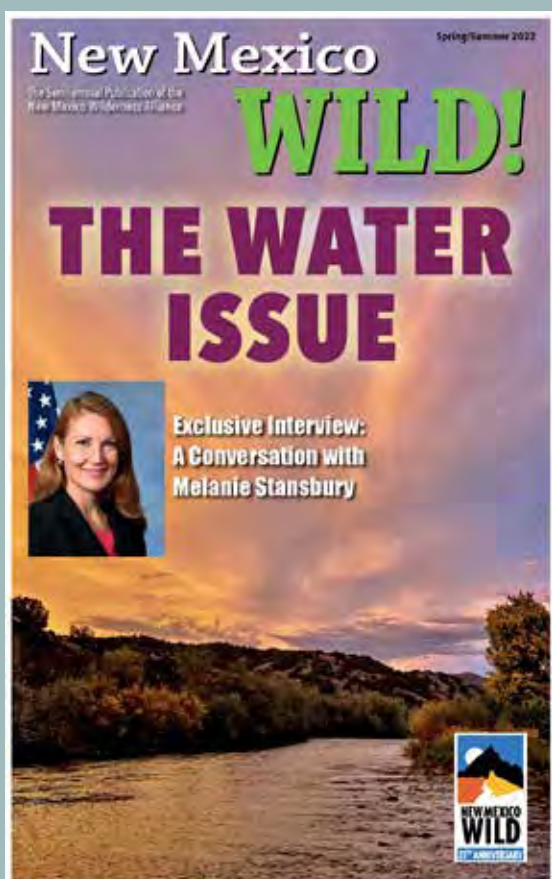


New Mexico **WILD!**

The Semiannual Publication of the
New Mexico Wilderness Alliance
VOLUME 19, NUMBER 1
SPRING 2022

Inside This Issue:

From the Executive Director	2-3
A Conversation with Melanie Stansbury	4-5
The Gila River Remains a Wild & Free Powerful Resource.....	6
New Mexico's <i>Acequias</i> Can Be Instrumental in Combating Climate Change.....	7
Critical Watershed Protection Efforts in Northern New Mexico.....	8
Tribal Nations are Locked Inside the U.S. Water Regime.....	9
Supreme Court Rules in Favor of Stream Access!.....	9
Push for ONRW Protections Continues.....	10
Upstream and Downstream of the Roundhouse: New Mexico Water Policy Updates	11
2022 Mexican Wolf Conservation Stamp Winners	11
New Mexico Wild 25th Anniversary Timeline	12-13, 14-15
Gila Region Report.....	16
The Wilderness Defenders Program.....	17
New Mexico Brings the Adventure	18
Wild & Scenic River FAQs	19
"A Matter of Life and Death" New poll shows concern about environment among Latino voters	20
New Mexico 2022 Conservation in the West Poll	20
Ralp Vigil Receives Living Land Award	21
UNM Wilderness Alliance.....	21
Welcome and Farewell to Staff	21
Upcoming Events.....	22
Membership Options	23



ON THE COVER: Rio Grande River near Pilar.
Photo by Garrett VeneKlasen
Inset: Representative Melanie Stansbury

25 YEARS OF KEEPING NEW MEXICO WILD

As always, it is my pleasure to share with you our latest newsletter. This one is special for at least a couple of reasons. First, we're devoting the issue to water. The challenges and our responses to water scarcity, quality, access, equity, policy reforms, and management will be even more central to our work in the years to come. With the Southwest in the midst of a 1,200 year "mega-drought," it is essential that we address this new reality in a manner that takes into account conservation values, including wildlife, and the cultural heritage of New Mexico, a heritage that is inseparable from water.



Executive Director Mark Allison presents 25th Anniversary walking stick to Edward Sullivan, New Mexico Wild's first Executive Director. Staff photo

Water issues will increasingly test our politics, our coalitions, and our relationships. It will require all of us to be at our very best, our most respectful, and our most creative. Based on our experience at New Mexico Wild, working with communities and stakeholders throughout the state, I believe New Mexico is up to the task and that together we can perhaps even chart a blue path forward for our neighboring states. We're eager to do our part.

Second, we are celebrating our 25th year anniversary this year. New Mexico was one of the last of the Western states to have a statewide "professional" wilderness group. Given the occasion, I think it appropriate to brag a little on our accomplishments—as you'll see inside, they are impressive.

At a recent retreat with the board of directors and staff at the Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge—the first in-person retreat in nearly three years—we were able to spend a little time looking back so we could look forward to the future. We were thrilled to be joined by former board members, supporters and friends, our very first Executive Director Edward Sullivan, and New Mexico's senior U.S. Senator, Martin Heinrich.

I was certainly struck by the vision and passion of our founding mothers and fathers; humbled by a sense of obligation for us to live up to that original vision; and, perhaps not so humbly, proud to say that in important ways, New Mexico Wild has grown and matured to surpass some of the founders' "wildest" dreams.

The world is certainly different than it was twenty-five years ago. The work of conservation is as important as ever, of course, and the urgency even more so. New Mexico Wild remains laser focused on protecting wild places and wild creatures, even as the manner in which we do our work has necessarily become more sophisticated, utilizing a much broader array of tools and strategies. Nearly sixty years after the passage of the Wilderness Act, we still believe that federally designated Wilderness is the gold standard and most durable of protections. We also believe that it is critical legislation to safeguard traditional uses in perpetuity, including hunting, fishing, and herb gathering. It is also a critical tool for protecting cultural resources, sacred sites, public access, and opportunities for primitive recreation from threats like logging, mineral development, road building, development, and transmission lines.

To address today's challenges, we need a whole toolbox of ways to conserve wild public lands, waters, and wildlife. That means we are working at local, state, and federal levels. It means we work for other legislative designations, but also on policy reforms and budget issues. It means we act as watchdogs to hold our state and federal environmental and land management agencies accountable. It means we forge partnerships with those same agencies to use our staff and volunteers to help them steward the lands, and we advocate that they have the resources and staffing they need to do their jobs.

We better understand the need for listening, for having ongoing conversations, and for recognizing that natural and cultural landscapes are inextricably linked. I think we've also become better partners, particularly regarding rural and traditional communities, including land grant-*mercedes*, *acequias*, and Hispano communities.

As a statewide group, we acknowledge that all the lands that we work to protect are the ancestral homes of our state's first inhabitants. We honor the Indigenous peoples, past and present, that have protected and stewarded these lands since time immemorial. The twenty-three tribes of New Mexico, comprised of Apache, Navajo,

BY MARK ALLISON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

and Pueblo nations, continue to guide our work in protecting and restoring wildlands and wilderness areas.

During the retreat, we reviewed a timeline of the last twenty-five years, marking some of our major achievements. I mentioned Senator Heinrich above—what may come as a surprise is that he was one of our founding board members. We never needed to convince him of the value of conservation—he decided to enter public service in the first place largely because of his conservation values.

Our record of achievement stacks up against any of our conservation counterparts in other states in the West, even though some of those groups have been around twice as long. To be fair, we have benefited from a federal congressional delegation which, with a few exceptions, understands the importance of protected public lands. None more so than Martin Heinrich. When you look at the timeline of conservation wins inside this issue, it is not an exaggeration to say that these impressive accomplishments would not have been possible without his public support, his sponsorship, and his behind-the-scenes leadership. These accomplishments include historic landmark legislation like the John D. Dingell Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act of 2019, which created thirteen new wilderness areas in New Mexico, the most since 1980. It also includes the Great American Outdoor Act of 2020, which fully and permanently funds the Land and Water Conservation Fund at \$900 million per year—an effort spanning decades. It also provides nearly \$10 billion over a five-year period to address a backlog of deferred maintenance projects for the National Park Service, and with Senator Heinrich's advocacy, other federal public land agencies. Senator Heinrich makes us proud. And being able to tell people he is a former board member is kind of cool!

At the retreat, we asked people to dream into the future and to write a newspaper headline five or ten (or more) years from now about what they would like written about New Mexico Wild. The pace and scale of change in the next twenty-five years is scarcely imaginable to us right now. We need to be asking the right questions and to be having the right conversations. Let us know what your dreams are for New Mexico Wild and send us the headline you'd like to see.

With gratitude,



Senator Martin Heinrich at New Mexico Wild's 25th Anniversary Celebration. Staff photo



Former New Mexico Wild Board Members, Dave Foreman, Jim Hickerson, Bob Tafanelli, Dave Parsons, Doug Chinn, Joe Alcock (current board member), Wesley Leonard, Jeff Regenold, Hamish Thomson, Todd Shulke (current board member), and Bob Howard. Staff photo

New Mexico Wilderness Alliance

ALBUQUERQUE OFFICE

505-843-8696 | news@nmwild.org | www.nmwild.org
317 Commercial Avenue NE, Suite 300 | Albuquerque, NM 87102

SANTA FE FIELD OFFICE

341 E. Alameda St.
Santa Fe, NM 87501
505-216-9719

LAS CRUCES FIELD OFFICE

300 N. Main Street
Las Cruces, NM 88001
505-843-8696

SILVER CITY FIELD OFFICE

301 W College Ave. #14
Silver City, NM 88061
505-250-4225

MISSION STATEMENT

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

NEW MEXICO WILDERNESS ALLIANCE STAFF

Albuquerque Office

Mark Allison, Executive Director
Tisha Broska, Deputy Director
Sarai Cajiao, Digital Communications Coordinator
Brittany Fallon, Policy Director
Logan Glasenapp, Staff Attorney
Joey Keefe, Communications Coordinator
Keegan King, Advisor
Lois Manno, Grants Manager
Devon Naples, Executive Assistant
Kerry Renshaw, Administrative Assistant
Will Ribbans, Wilderness Stewardship & Outreach Manager
Terry Richey, Fundraising and Marketing Advisor
Suzanne Soto, Operations Manager
Emma Yoder, Volunteer & Outreach Coordinator

Northern New Mexico

Julian Gonzales, Northern New Mexico Grassroots Organizer
Darrin Muenzberg, Northern New Mexico Traditional Communities Coordinator
Garrett VeneKlasen, Northern Conservation Director
Ralph Vigil, Northern New Mexico Organizer

Gila Region

Nathan Newcomer, Grassroots Coordinator

Las Cruces Office

Nathan Small, Wilderness Wrangler

WILDERNESS RANGERS

Cibola National Forest: Brennan Davis, Walker Martin

Santa Fe National Forest: Jesse Furr

BLM Taos District: Rhett Spencer

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Wendy Brown, Chair
Todd Schulke, Vice Chair
Ken Jones, Treasurer
Joe Alcock, Secretary
Ernie Atencio
Kenneth Cole
Sam DesGeorges
Carol Johnson
Keegan King
Brian O'Donnell
Sally A. Paez

NEWSLETTER STAFF

Lois Manno, Art Director/Designer
Mark Allison, Executive Editor
Joey Keefe, Managing Editor
Tania Soussan, Editor
Sarai Cajiao, Newsletter Staff

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 Suzanne@nmwild.org



Painting by Rick DeMont

NEW MEXICO WILD EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

A Conversation with Melanie Stansbury

New Mexico Wild Executive Director Mark Allison recently sat down with Rep. Melanie Stansbury, D-N.M., for a virtual interview to discuss her work in Congress to protect New Mexico’s water and other natural resources.

Mark Allison: Thank you, Congresswoman, for joining us this afternoon. You pulled off an amazing victory last June when you won the special election to fill the 1st Congressional District seat of Deb Haaland, who left, of course, to become President Biden’s Secretary of Interior. What was it like going from being in the state Legislature to then almost immediately serving in Congress and joining your new colleagues mid-term?

Rep. Stansbury: First of all, it’s such an honor to be able to serve after Secretary Haaland. She left huge shoes to fill. And I think one of my biggest priorities has been to try to honor the work that she did and carry on and provide continuity. She was a huge advocate on tribal issues, the missing and murdered Indigenous women and relatives issue, and also on climate issues.

I had previously worked in Washington, D.C., on the Hill for a couple of years in the Senate Energy Committee. I worked during the Obama

administration in the White House Office of Management and Budget on science and conservation initiatives. And so, I knew my way around Washington, but it’s very different to come back as a member of Congress and to have the sense of responsibility for carrying the voices and stories and priorities of your communities into the halls of Congress every day.

MA: You’ve already received some very positive attention for your expertise on climate change, energy transition and water issues, and your committee assignments certainly reflect that. I saw that you received the Outstanding Public Official award from the U.S. Water Alliance. And you had a really flattering article in Politico recently, where it referred to you as a “super freshman” and somebody to watch on climate. These are big, seemingly intractable issues. Can you tell our readers how you came to be so passionate about them?

RS: As a native New Mexican, I’ve worked on water and natural resources issues my entire life. From the time I was a small child, I’ve always been passionate about science and sustainability. Throughout my career, my work has been at the nexus between science, sustainability, and social justice—tying that thread together and trying to understand how we live sustainably in this beautiful mountain desert ecosystem, where our communities have lived for centuries.



Rep. Stansbury, Rep. Teresa Leger Fernandez, and Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland at an event at Chaco Culture National Historical Park in November 2021. Photo: Office of Rep. Melanie Stansbury



Rep. Stansbury studies water samples on the banks of the Rio Grande. Photo: Office of Rep. Melanie Stansbury

We are seeing a rapidly changing climate, and many of our communities are struggling economically. So, a central question that has motivated my entire life's work since the time I was a little kid has been: how do we conserve our water and natural resources?

After receiving my undergraduate degree in ecology, I worked as a science teacher in schools all over the state. I worked with tribal communities and down south on the border. I worked up north in little villages, up in the mountains and in schools in Albuquerque and Santa Fe. It was through this amazing job that I got to meet kids all over the state who asked the same question everywhere I went, which was, "Why do we manage water this way if it's not good for rivers and it's not good for our people?"

I've spent a lot of my career trying to understand that question and trying to understand how we can transform the way that we manage our resources more sustainably. We have our water, our land, our ways of life, our cultures, and our heritage, and we need to build new opportunities for our communities so that we can live here in this beautiful place for generations to come. It's the thread that ties my life's work together.

MA: A report was recently released that concluded that the Southwest is in a 1,200-year "mega drought," and that a large portion of that is because of human activities. For readers who aren't "water nerds," what are the most important points to understand about our path forward around drought and water policy?

RS: That the science is clear. Climate change is already here and it's already transforming our water systems in New Mexico. In order to address this change, we are going to have to adapt the way that we're managing water, the way in which our infrastructure is built, the way in which we're using science and technology, and the way in which we draw on our traditional ways of managing water.

We also must address the ways in which we protect and restore our natural systems and our rivers. It's really going to require a fundamental rethink of how we manage water at a policy level. A lot of my work has been focused on that question: "How do we transform our water management and policy so that we can not only survive the change that is happening, but build more resilient, thriving communities through that change?" The climate crisis is so massive and difficult to address, it's important to break it down into three areas of action.

On one hand, we must address the climate crisis. We have to address the chemistry of climate change globally. And that means being aggressive and cutting our carbon footprint and carbon emissions across every sector of our society, because we must prevent our planet from crossing a threshold.

Second, climate change has already altered our global system and it's already impacting New Mexico, as that study reveals. So, in order to get through the change that's already here, we must adapt our systems. We have to use the most up-to-date science and technology and tools to manage water in real time. We will need to rebuild our infrastructure so that it's more resilient, and we're going to have to work with our traditional communities, our Tribes and our Pueblos, and our *acequia* communities to make sure that our infrastructure is resilient. And we're going to have to make fundamental changes in how we use water across every sector of our society.

Finally, the other big piece of the climate puzzle is addressing the economics, and in New Mexico, where so much of our economy is dependent on resource extraction, we must look toward the future generation and how to diversify our economy. How do we build more sustainable, local economic development? The communities that are on the front lines and are dependent on these jobs need to have sustainable livelihoods and viable economic opportunity going forward.

MA: What role do you see for groups like New Mexico Wild and grassroots organizing and community building? What should we really be paying attention to? And how can we best advocate to our policymakers and elected officials?

RS: I think the most important thing that local organizations can do is to make their voices heard in the public policy process and ensure that those voices really represent your members and that the people who take an interest in these issues are also well-represented in the policies and platforms that you're advocating for.

Story continued on page 18



Rep. Melanie Stansbury sat down with New Mexico Wild for a virtual interview in February 2022. Staff photo.



The Gila River Remains a

Wild and Free

Powerful Resource

BY KAT JACARUSO, CONTRIBUTOR

On a hot, stagnant day in May 2016, our team set off on a trip that had been two years in the making. The 16-day expedition would string us along the last free flowing watershed in New Mexico, the Gila River. Our packrafts—inflatable boats designed to reach remote places—would serve us well for the varied 87 miles of trails and water.

Our group of four college students were driven to pursue adventure in the Gila Wilderness because this wild river was in danger. The Gila River Diversion Project, a proposal to dam the Gila River, had been threatening the watershed since 2004.

The thought of navigating the wild Gila by packraft, for perhaps the last time, captivated us. But more motivating was the hope that our stories would join the countless others shared by stewards of this special place, articulating the value of the greater Gila ecosystem, and catalyzing some measure of protection.

The Gila is an example of how, without rigorous levels of protection afforded through legislation like the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, even land and rivers that have been protected in the past are vulnerable to power grabs that are not in the interest of local communities.

My first days in the Gila Wilderness were remarkable. The early, clear sunlight beamed me into what felt like another country as we approached the trailhead. The ponderosa pines and rounded river stones designed new memories for me, architecture guided by new smell and sight, intriguing and raw.

Navigating along Turkey Feather Creek and then into our packrafts for the larger Gila River drainage, we travelled through time and space slowly. Each cup of tea we brewed signaled another day of finding our way through the wild. We struggled to imagine a diverted Gila River and felt sorrow over the possibility of losing this powerful river.

While in 2016 the threatened Gila River drew us in, now, six years later, the Gila River Diversion Project has crumbled. This spring marked

the end of an era for the Gila River Diversion Project with the passage of House Bill 200 and the defunding of the New Mexico Entity of the Central Arizona Project. Even still, the Gila River communities rise to defend their source of livelihood, pleasure, and environmental health, setting sights on the Wild and Scenic designation.

After years of community-led groundwork, the bill to incorporate the Gila River into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System was originally introduced in the 116th Congress in 2020, and now must be introduced again by Sen. Heinrich and Sen. Luján.

Fortunately, the Gila River and its tributaries nourish a diverse group of local stakeholders who are ready to protect what they find valuable within. Free flowing, the Gila is a dynamic and powerful resource. The anglers, hikers, business owners, veterans, landowners, ranchers, paddlers, older folks, and us—the kids—agree.

One powerful lesson learned from my time on the Gila River is that threatened rivers require some of the same healing remedies as humans under threat: attention, time investment, allocated resources, nourishment, and love. Safeguarding our beloved river systems gives us a chance to provide them that treatment.

Kat Jacaruso is a steward of the Snake River in Wyoming. This article was originally published in American Whitewater, then in the Las Cruces Sun-News. 🐾



Boater on the Gila River. Photo by Kit Jacaruso



NEW MEXICO'S ACEQUIAS CAN BE INSTRUMENTAL IN COMBATING CLIMATE CHANGE

BY RALPH VIGIL, NORTHERN NEW MEXICO ORGANIZER

For over 400 years, *acequias* have brought communities together to share limited water, grow food to feed their communities, and quench the land's thirst. *Acequias*—mutually managed irrigation channels—were introduced to the Spanish during the Moorish colonization of the Iberian Peninsula; the word *acequia* has Arabic roots and means water-bearer or to give drink, quench thirst. As we head further into a drought with no end in sight, *acequia* farmers spread limited water throughout the land while growing food for their communities, assisting the flora and fauna while doing so.

Acequias are not just for agriculture; they have been here for so long that they are part of the landscape that makes New Mexico beautiful. They create greenbelts in our communities and have turned deserts into lush habitats full of life. They are extensions of the rivers that recharge our aquifers.

Acequias face many threats from mining efforts and proposed developments to water transfers and a lack of farmers. *Acequias* should be part of a more significant conservation effort to

preserve their environmental contribution and a crucial part of the administration's 30x30 vision to conserve nature. As an *acequia* farmer, while working in my fields, I have never seen such a diverse wildlife population—bald eagles, great blue herons, mountain lions, deer, and elk, to name a few. The plant life also is spectacular and supports pollinating insects and birds. It's a perfect balance that must remain intact to preserve our microclimates and so that we can leave the environment better than we found it for our children.

Acequias also help us combat climate change. By ensuring that agricultural use remains intact, we can continue to feed ourselves as a state instead of having to truck in our food. Shortening our food chain reduces our car-

bon footprint. Protecting the lands that *acequias* serve also staves off development and preserves vegetation and microorganisms that are essential for capturing carbon.

New Mexico's *acequias* require a vast community effort to make sure they continue to benefit us in the many ways they do. If you haven't been to an *acequia* cleaning, I recommend you immerse yourself in the culture; it is so rewarding to give back to something that gives us so much. 🐾



Ralph Vigil's farm, Molino de la Isla Organics LLC. Photo by Ralph Vigil



Vigil works the land on his farm, Molino de la Isla Organics LLC. Photo courtesy of Ralph Vigil Facebook page

CRITICAL WATERSHED PROTECTION EFFORTS IN NORTHERN NEW MEXICO



STAFF REPORT

The Pecos Watershed Protection Act is slated to be heard in the Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee. Sponsored by Sen. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., this critical legislation is a mineral withdrawal for the entire upper Pecos Watershed (including its tributaries) outside the boundaries of the Pecos Wilderness.

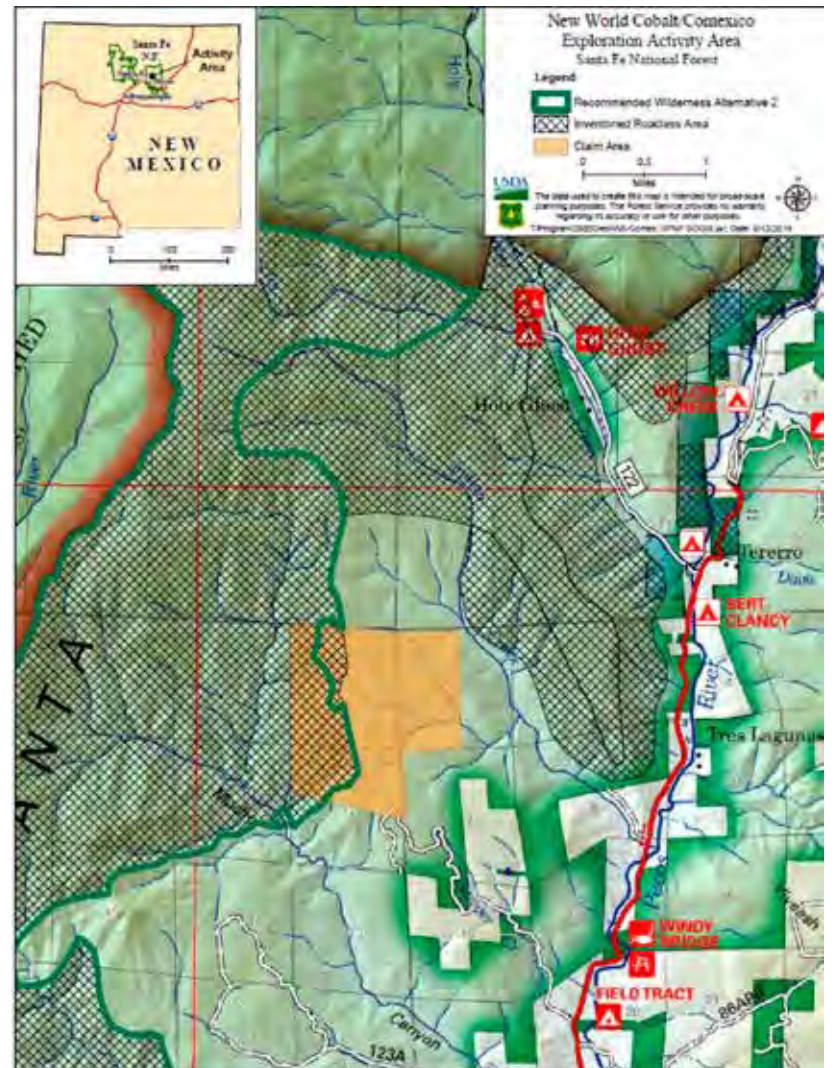
In light of the potential mining threats from Comexico, LLC, the act would prevent further mining claims from being developed throughout the upper Pecos. New Mexico Wild and our Pecos community partners are gathering support letters from local elected officials, businesses, pueblos, *acequia parciantes* and farmers so that the Senate committee members understand the broad base of support for this legislation.

In another development, Comexico recently objected to the Santa Fe National Forest assessment of the Thompson Peak area as having Wilderness characteristics and stated in their objection that they had existing mining claims and have in recent years “staked an additional 216 claims, many of which overlap the proposed (Wilderness evaluation) alternative...” Thompson Peak is situated in Santa Fe’s eastern viewshed and is only about a mile as the crow flies from McClure Reservoir. Comexico’s long-term mineral development in and around Thompson Peak most likely means Santa Fe’s critical water source

and watershed are now also threatened by mining development.

New Mexico Wild is consulting with GIS, geology and hydrology professionals to find out exactly where these new mining claims exist, and additional information will be released as we learn more about this extremely troubling new development. We have already met with the Stop Tererro Mine Coalition as well as Santa Fe watershed interests to start a dialogue on activating the greater Santa Fe community to oppose any potential development in the watershed. Check our website and social media feeds for up-to-date information as this story develops.

To read the comments from Comexico, go to https://cara.fs2c.usda.gov/Public/DownloadCommentFile?dmdId=FSPLT3_5694188



The tan area on this map shows the claim by Comexico where exploratory mining activity would take place in the Upper Pecos Watershed. This portion of the Santa Fe National Forest is critical to many species and is one of the most popular recreational areas in the entire forest.



Hikers crossing Cave Creek, one of the tributaries to the Pecos River. Photo by Lois Manno

Tribal Nations are Locked Inside the U.S. Water Regime

BY KALEN GOODLUCK, *HIGH COUNTRY NEWS*

New Mexico's water management agencies are having trouble keeping their rivers wet, and the problem will only get worse, according to a 50-year climate change and water study that was completed last year. So, the agencies have begun planning for a future of dwindling water supplies in the San Juan and Rio Grande basins. For tribal nations, the big question is: Will they finally have input in water management decisions?

Under Western water law's "first in time, first in right" doctrine, sovereign tribal and pueblo nations are entitled to the most senior rights on the region's waterways. Yet the U.S. water regime has long locked tribal nations out of the federal, state, and local water-planning and decision-making process. Over the past century and a half, federal, state, and local agencies have dominated planning on New Mexico's largest river, the Rio Grande, fracturing it with man-made reservoirs and diverting it to irrigate farms and lawns and golf courses. They have over-allocated it to such an extent that they now must import water from neighboring basins just to keep the river flowing.

"It's a system that we developed where we didn't account for the needs of our Native American people who have lived here since time immemorial," said Grace Haggerty, endangered species program supervisor for the Interstate Stream Commission, speaking in a July 2021 New Mexico Water Data video.

It can take years, sometimes decades, for tribal nations to navigate the legal maze of negotiating their rights within the massive tangle of other users staking claims.

While the northern pueblos have secured water rights through three settlement agreements, most others have not. A majority of tribes, including the six Middle Rio Grande pueblos, have unresolved water claims that are moving at a glacial speed through New Mexico courts. There are a dozen active water rights adjudications, involving 18 tribal and pueblo nations, with the oldest one filed in 1966.

The state has acknowledged how inconvenient the water settlement negotiations are and has sought ways to speed up the process in recent years, but the system remains imbalanced. State water managers, meanwhile, quickly carve up water among municipalities, industry, and private users instead of treating tribal and pueblo nations as partners.



Phoebe Suina of the Pueblo de Cochiti Nation stands on the shore of Cochiti Lake, which feeds into the Middle Rio Grande Valley. Photo: Kalen Goodluck, *High Country News*

High Country News sat down with Phoebe Suina, a hydrologist from the Pueblos of San Felipe and Cochiti, to talk about water and Indigenous knowledge. Suina talked about having meaningful engagement with tribal leaders in water planning and starting her own consulting company after a catastrophic wildfire. This interview has been edited and condensed for clarity.

KG: Can you tell me a bit about your company, High Water Mark, and how you work with pueblo communities?

PS: In 2013, my colleague Ryan Weiss and I started a small company called High Water Mark. Around that time, we were working for another, larger environmental consulting firm trying to help tribal communities, in particular the Pueblo of Cochiti after the Las Conchas wildfire. Cochiti Pueblo and the village were severely compromised by flooding in 2011 and 2012 and needed flood mitigation infrastructure in the main Jemez watershed.

Story continued on page 17



SUPREME COURT RULES IN FAVOR OF STREAM ACCESS!

BY LOGAN GLASENAPP, STAFF ATTORNEY

The long-running stream access fight has finally reached a conclusion, with the state Supreme Court ruling on March 1 in favor of public access and on the side of the Adobe Whitewater Club, Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, and New Mexico Wildlife Federation.

As our readers may remember, our friends filed a petition, asking the New Mexico Supreme Court to direct the state Department of Game and Fish to repeal the Landowner Certification of Non-navigability and restore the long-recognized right of access to our state's public waters. New Mexico Wild filed an amicus brief in support of this petition and we now applaud the court for its apt and efficient judgment.

As of publication, we still await the formal order from the court, but shortly following oral arguments, Chief Justice Michael E. Vigil announced the unanimous opinion that the non-navigability rule is unconstitutional and must be repealed. This rule, which we've been

working to repeal since its promulgation, effectively restricts access to anglers, boaters, hikers, birders and recreationists of all interests from any certified waters. We applaud the Supreme Court for recognizing a right that has existed for New Mexicans since before statehood. We will now watch attentively for the Department of Game and Fish to repeal the controversial rule and will work to ensure that another unconstitutional rule is not promulgated again in the future. We will also continue our work with land management agencies, private landowners, the public

and impacted communities to keep the health and ecological integrity of our state's watersheds at the forefront of the conversation. 🐾



A stream near Little Creek Ranch that had been closed off from public access. Photo by Garrett VeneKlasen

PUSH FOR ONRW PROTECTIONS CONTINUES



**BY GARRETT VENEKLASEN,
NORTHERN CONSERVATION DIRECTOR**

A small stream in the Santa Fe National Forest.
Photo: Jesse Furr

A recent peer-reviewed study published in the journal *Nature Climate Change* reported that the Western United States and parts of northern Mexico are experiencing their driest period in at least 1,200 years. Extensive long range climate data and modeling all indicate this is the new normal for Western states, and New Mexico sits in the bull's eye of this troubling phenomenon.

In light of these facts, New Mexico and its elected officials need to get serious about water law reform, aggressive water conservation regulations, ambitious restoration of our watersheds and riparian areas and, most importantly, robust and permanent water quality protection measures.

One such critical tool is watershed-specific Outstanding National Resource Waters (ONRW) designation. ONRWs are rivers, streams, lakes, and wetlands that receive special state protections to preserve water quality and ensure that future generations of New Mexicans have access to clean water. Once a

water/watershed gets an ONRW designation, existing water quality standards in that waterbody may not be degraded by any sort of activity or development.

New Mexico Wild is working closely with communities, tribes, *acequia parciales*, businesses, elected officials, other key local stakeholders, and like-minded NGOs to designate the upper Pecos watershed as well as the upper Rio Grande, the Rio Hondo and the upper Jemez/San Antonio and Redondo in the Valles Caldera National Preserve as ONRWs. Achieving these designations requires a thorough formal petition and hearing in front of the New Mexico Water Quality Control Commission (WQCC) in which experts testify and a host of witnesses present their arguments.

Formal petitions have already been filed with the WQCC for the upper Pecos and upper Rio Grande, Hondo, Jemez, San Antonio, and Redondo systems. A public hearing for the Upper Pecos Watershed was held April 12-14. A hearing on the Upper Rio Grande,

Hondo, Jemez, San Antonio, and Redondo systems is scheduled for June 14-16.

What can you do to help? It is critical that both members of the WQCC and Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham are inundated with letters of support from the public. Kindly take a moment and submit a simple statement—saying you support clean water in New Mexico and designating these waters as ONRWs—to both the WQCC commission and the governor's office at the following links:

Water Quality Control Commission:
www.env.nm.gov/opf/water-quality-control-commission/

Link to WQCC comment portal:
<https://nmed.commentinput.com/?id=fZpDu>

Governor Lujan Grisham:
<https://www.governor.state.nm.us/contact-the-governor/> 🗳️

Q: What are Outstanding Waters (ONRWs)?

A: Outstanding National Resource Waters (ONRWs) are rivers, streams, lakes and wetlands that receive special protections to preserve water. ONRW designations are made by the state Water Quality Control Commission.

Q: Which bodies of water in New Mexico currently have Outstanding Waters designation?

A: Several Outstanding Waters already exist in New Mexico, all on U.S. Forest Service land: the headwaters of the Rio Santa Barbara, the waters in the Valle Vidal and surface waters within Forest Service Wilderness Areas.

Q: Which waters are eligible to be protected as Outstanding Waters?

A: Any surface water of the state that meets one or more of the following criteria can be designated as an Outstanding Water:

- Special trout waters
- Waters in a national or state park, monument, wildlife refuge or designated Wilderness Area
- Part of a designated wild river under the federal Wild and Scenic Rivers Act
- Waters with exceptional recreational or ecological significance
- Waters with existing water quality equal to or better than state water quality standards

Q: Who benefits from Outstanding Waters protections?

A: We all benefit from clean water. By protecting clean water, we preserve traditional uses essential to New Mexicans and our rich cultural heritage, including agriculture and ranching. Outstanding Waters also ensure all New Mexicans have access to clean water when fishing, rafting and swimming. Our state's abundant fish and wildlife also benefit from clean water, which contributes to their survival and New Mexico's wild, outdoor heritage. And we all rely on clean sources of drinking water flowing downstream to our towns and cities. 🗳️



UPSTREAM AND DOWNSTREAM OF THE ROUNDHOUSE: NEW MEXICO WATER POLICY UPDATES

BY BRITTANY FALLON, POLICY DIRECTOR

If there's one policy area everyone is talking about these days, it's water—and water funding. Both the special legislative session in December 2021 and the regular legislative session in January 2022 featured water as a prime topic of discussion.

In December, the Legislature allocated \$10 million in American Rescue Plan dollars to the Environment Department for its River Stewards and surface water programs, as part of a \$43.5 million environmental package that included funding for other key programs like state parks, outdoor recreation and the outdoor equity fund, and orphan well cleanups. Then, in January, the Legislature allocated another \$1.5 million to the River Stewards program, \$35 million for forest and watershed programs and \$30 million for short-term drought mitigation, in addition to modest budget increases for our agencies that oversee water issues.

With unprecedented levels of need as New Mexico continues to experience worsening, decades-long drought, a key item left unfunded is one of our newer state laws, the Water Data Act. This law passed in 2019, sponsored by then state representative, now Congresswoman, Melanie Stansbury. Its directive is simple: requiring our state agencies to improve how water data are managed and shared. Why is this important? As water scarcity increases, New Mexico is relying on instinct—to manage water because our agencies aren't equipped to share data, although they are doing the best they can with limited resources. We hope to change this funding landscape next session.

In 2023, you can expect water policy to be a major focus once again. With new State Engineer Mike Hamman in office and millions in federal funding still coming down the figurative pipeline, New Mexico is poised to spend big to address the water reality of living in a desert as climate change progresses.

One area we'd like to see legislators talking more about is the Strategic Water Reserve. Our friends at the Utton Transboundary Resources Center describe the reserve as a "pool of publicly held water rights dedicated to keeping New Mexico's rivers flowing to meet the needs of river-dependent endangered species and to fulfill our water delivery obligations to other states." It has received piecemeal funding over the years and applies to only limited water basins in New Mexico. We think it is far past time to think (and spend) bigger when it comes to keeping water in rivers. Expanding the designated basins, funding the reserve, and allowing capital outlay dollars to be used for 10-year water leases are just a few ideas to make this program beneficial to even more New Mexicans.

New Mexico Wild is also exploring options to shape a state framework for rivers that are important for conservation and recreation, as a state parallel of federal Wild and Scenic Rivers designations. With Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham's administration supporting a recreational Outstanding National Resource Water proposal for the Rio Grande and Rio Hondo, we think a formalized, statewide program would be a huge win for protecting the health of our rivers as the state expands its outdoor recreation economy. Have ideas on this? Contact Policy Director Brittany Fallon at brittany@nmwild.org.

THE 2022 MEXICAN WOLF CONSERVATION STAMP: Winners of This Year's Judging

Ten pieces of original art were submitted to the 2022 Mexican Wolf Conservation Stamp Contest. We want to thank everyone who participated in the contest and for helping us raise awareness about efforts to conserve the Mexican gray wolf.

The Mexican Gray Wolf Stamp is sold to support Mexican gray wolf conservation and education programs. This year's winner is LWren Walraven. Second place goes to Debora Gorga, and third place goes to Kat Manton-Jones. Youth Honorable Mention goes to Graham Vanwert, age 9.

More about the first-place winner: With her degree in Fine Arts from the Ohio University in hand, LWren turned to working at a nature center in the wildlife rehabilitation dept. From there, more wildlife related jobs came her way like doing bird surveys for USFWS, managing bird banding stations, and co-leading bird tours. The countless experiences of seeing wild birds in the hand and animals in their natural environments still gives her inspiration in her paintings. In these difficult times, she is a devoted steward for wildlife working for their rights and conservation. She lives with her husband between Albuquerque and Santa Fe. See more of her work online at <https://www.wrendreams.com>.



First place winner LWren Walraven.



Second place winner Debora Gorga.



Third place winner Kat Manton-Jones.

ORDER YOUR WOLF STAMP TODAY! SCAN THE QR CODE OR USE THE BIT.LY BELOW TO PURCHASE.

<https://bit.ly/nm-wildshop>



CELEBRATING



1997

Spring: New Mexico Wilderness Alliance established (now doing business as New Mexico Wild).



1998

First paid staff hired.



1999

March: Began Citizen's Wilderness Inventory Project to survey every remaining wild area in New Mexico to determine if it should be included in new Wilderness proposal.

May: First ever Wilderness Activist Workshop drew over 150 participants.

September: Organized public comment letters to save Bisti/De-Na-Zin Wilderness in northern New Mexico from oil and gas development. President Clinton announced the Roadless Area Conservation Rule to protect undesignated wilderness in national forests throughout the country.

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



2003

January: Robledos-Las Uvas Citizens' Wilderness Proposal for Dona Ana County.



2004

January: Organized a public meeting where Gov. Richardson signed executive order directing state agencies to protect Otero Mesa.

February: First Wilderness legislation for New Mexico in over 15 years—Ojito Wilderness Act—introduced in Congress with bipartisan support.

July: President Bush released plan to repeal Roadless Rule. Worked with coalition and businesses to save 1.6 million acres in New Mexico.



2005

March: Launched campaign to protect Valle Vidal from coal-bed methane development.

April: University of New Mexico chapter of New Mexico Wilderness Alliance established.

October: Ojito Wilderness Act signed by President Bush.

December: State Water Quality Control Commission voted to protect Valle Vidal's streams and lakes as Outstanding National Resource Waters.

1997 Early tabling for New Mexico Wilderness Alliance - Staff Photo

1998 Edward Sullivan, our first Executive Director - Photo by Michael Berman

1999 A hiker in the Bisti De-Na-Zin Wilderness - Photo by Aaron Bradley

2000 A Mexican gray wolf in the Gila Wilderness - Photo by Matthew Wilks

2001 A road closed to off-road vehicle use - Photo by Garrett VeneKlasen

2002 Former Governor Bill Richardson speaks in support of Otero Mesa - Staff Photo

2003 Robledo Wilderness - Photo by Patrick Alexander

2004 Ojito Wilderness - Photo by Lois Manno

G

25 YEARS PROTECTING

Wilderness, Wildlife, & Water

This year marks the 25th anniversary of New Mexico Wild's existence. While the work to protect New Mexico's Wilderness, wildlife, and water is far from complete, we wanted to look back at some of the biggest accomplishments of the past 25 years, thanks to supporters like you!



2000

January: Bisti/De-Na-Zin Wilderness saved thanks to organizing efforts of New Mexico Wild.
June: Organized members to attend public meetings throughout the state to support reintroduction of wolves to the Gila Wilderness.



2001

Began work with BLM to regulate irresponsible off road vehicle use and make recommendations to protect areas being considered for Wilderness designation.



2002

Summer: Completed inventory of BLM lands for Wilderness, identifying over 3.5 million eligible acres throughout the state.
February: Launched fight to protect Otero Mesa—New Mexico's largest and wildest remnant Chihuahuan Desert grasslands—from oil and gas drilling.



2006

January: Launched Doña Ana Wild! campaign to protect approximately 330,000 acres of potential Wilderness in Las Cruces area.
April: Launched campaign to protect national park and national monument lands in or adjacent to Chaco Canyon, El Malpais, White Sands, Bandelier, Carlsbad Caverns, Guadalupe Mountains and Big Bend by managing as Wilderness.



2007

March: Launched Rio Grande del Norte campaign to protect 303,000 acres of BLM land around Ute Mountain and Rio Grande Gorge as Wilderness and national conservation area.



2008

February: Began campaign to reform the 1872 Mining Law.

2005 Wheeler Peak as seen from Valle Vidal - Photo by David Herrera

2006 Chaco Culture National Historical Park-Photo by Alison Ruth Hughes

2007 The Rio Grande within the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument - Photo by Sally Paez

2008 Staff and Volunteers in the Pecos Wilderness - Photo by Irene Owsley



2009

July: Launched campaign to permanently protect 120,000 acres adjacent to Pecos Wilderness.
March: Sabinoso Wilderness signed into law by President Obama.
April: Sen. Jeff Bingaman introduced El Rio Grande del Norte National Conservation Area legislation (co-sponsored by Sen. Tom Udall).
 -U.S. 10th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in favor of New Mexico Wild litigation challenging the BLM Resource Management Plan Amendment for Otero and Sierra counties, recognizing ecological importance of Otero Mesa.



2010

February: Sen. Bingaman held hearing in Las Cruces on draft legislation proposing 259,000 acres of Wilderness and 162,000 acres of national conservation area in Doña Ana County. Supportive crowd of 500 attended.
May: Rep. Ben Ray Luján introduced legislation for Rio Grande del Norte National Conservation Area and Wilderness (co-sponsored by Rep. Martin Heinrich).
September: Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks Wilderness Act introduced by Sen. Bingaman, calling for protections totaling 402,000 acres in Doña Ana County.
October: Gov. Bill Richardson asked President Obama to create national monument for Otero Mesa.



2011

August: New Mexico Wild launched national monument proposal for Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks national monument.



2015

March: New Mexico Wild completed on-the-ground inventory of Gila National Forest, identifying over one million acres eligible for Wilderness designation, as well as over 500 miles of rivers and streams that merit protection under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.
May: Cerros del Norte Conservation Act introduced to create new Cerro del Yuta and Rio San Antonio Wilderness areas within Rio Grande del Norte National Monument.
October: Devoted semi-annual newsletter to highlight climate change and mass species extinction crisis.



2016

-Cibola National Forest released draft alternatives as first of five New Mexico forests updating their management plans; our citizen proposal for recommended wilderness was largely ignored.
March: Published *Wild Guide, a comprehensive guide to all New Mexico's Wilderness and Wilderness Study Areas.*
June: Joined New Mexico v. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service lawsuit over wolf releases on the side of FWS.
September: New Mexico Wild analysis estimated 5,272,947 acres of Wilderness-quality lands remaining in New Mexico currently unprotected.
 -Defeated four years of state bills designed to privatize public lands.



2017

February: Cohosted historic meeting between All Pueblo Council of Governors and Navajo Nation about protecting greater Chaco landscape from oil and gas development.
April: President Trump issued executive order to "review" national monuments, instigating a fierce defense of OMDP and RGDN national monuments.
May: Launched New Mexico Wilderness Ranger program in cooperation with U.S. Forest Service.
June: New Mexico Wild won Federal District Court case against the U. S. Department of Justice over its policy preventing prosecution of individuals for killing endangered species unless it was proven the person knew the biological identity of the species.
November: Rimrock Rose Ranch added to the Sabinoso Wilderness, opening it to public access. New Mexico Wild volunteers donate thousands of hours to ready it for transfer to the Wilderness Preservation System.
December: Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks and Rio Grande del Norte national monuments remained unchanged after the Trump Administration national monument review process. New Mexicans submitted the most comments per capita of any state, with over 93 percent supportive.



2021

January: After public objection to expanded military overflights above the Gila Wilderness, Holloman AFB chose our preferred alternative.
 -President Biden signed executive order to conserve 30% of U.S. lands & waters by 2030.
 - New Mexican Deb Haaland became the first Native American Secretary of Interior,
April: Gov. Lujan Grisham signed bill ending proposed Gila diversion project and fast-tracking \$80 million for priority water conservation projects in southwestern NM.
 -New Mexico Wild supported the Cerro de la Olla Wilderness bill in the U.S. House of Representatives, sponsored by Rep. Leger Fernandez
 -After being nominated by New Mexico Wild, the Pecos named by American Rivers as Most Endangered River.
July: Sabinoso Wilderness expanded by 9,855 acres.
October: New Mexico Wild supported the introduction of the Pecos Watershed Protection Act in the U.S. House of Representatives, sponsored by Rep. Teresa Leger Fernandez
November: President Biden & Secretary Haaland proposed administrative withdrawal banning oil & gas drilling within 10 miles of Chaco Culture National Historical Park for 20 years.



2022

April: New Mexico Wild celebrated its 25th Anniversary.



2122

Great-, great-, great-grandchildren continue to enjoy our public lands and thank New Mexico Wild supporters for the vision and effort to protect New Mexico's wild places, waters, and wildlife.



2012

January: New Mexico Wild launched national monument proposal for Rio Grande del Norte.



2013

January: Taos Pueblo signed resolution supporting national conservation area or national monument designation for Rio Grande del Norte and Wilderness designation for Cerro del Yuta and Rio San Antonio.
-Sens. Heinrich and Udall reintroduced Sen. Bingaman's Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks Wilderness bill, congruent with national monument campaign.

February: Sens. Heinrich and Udall and Rep. Luján reintroduced Rio Grande del Norte Conservation Area legislation.

March: Rio Grande del Norte National Monument established by President Obama at 242, 555 acres.

May: Filed lawsuit to challenge U.S. Department of Justice McKittrick policy that makes it harder to prosecute wolf killings.



2014

May: Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument designated by President Obama at 496,333 acres.

October: New Mexico Wild co-hosted national conference with 1,200 attendees to celebrate 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act. Historian Douglas Brinkley proclaimed New Mexico the "headquarters of the Wilderness protection movement."

December: Columbine-Hondo Wilderness Act signed by President Obama, protecting 46,000 acres in Taos County, the first new Wilderness in New Mexico since 2009.



2018

New Mexico Wild celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

Summer: Over 900 public comments were generated by New Mexico Wild supporters to stop a proposed geothermal development on 195,000 acres of the Jemez district of the Santa Fe National Forest that would have threatened sensitive riparian areas and hot springs.

-Hosted New Mexico's first Outdoor Economics Conference in Las Cruces and launch the effort for the creation of the State's Outdoor Recreation Division.

-New Mexico Wild urged the introduction of The Chaco Cultural Heritage Area Protection Act in the U.S. Senate, co-sponsored by Sen. Heinrich and former Sen. Udall.



2019

March: Federal public lands packaged signed into law, creating 13 new Wilderness Areas in New Mexico comprising 272,586 acres, the most new Wilderness since 1980. The Dingell Act also permanently reauthorized the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

April: Creation of the New Mexico Outdoor Recreation Division and Outdoor Equity Fund—the first fund of its kind in the country—designed to help disadvantaged youth get outside.

-After being nominated by New Mexico Wild, Gila and San Francisco Rivers named by American Rivers as Most Endangered River.

-New Mexico Wild supported the introduction The Chaco Cultural Heritage Area Protection Act in the U.S. House of Representatives, co-sponsored by former Reps. Ben Ray Luján, Deb Haaland, and Xochitl Torres Small.

September: Comexico proposed exploratory hard rock mining in sensitive Pecos watershed. New Mexico Wild convenes emergency stakeholder meetings and helps create formidable coalition.

-New Mexico Wild advocated for the introduction of the Pecos Watershed Protection Act in the U.S. Senate, sponsored by Sen. Martin Heinrich.

October: New Mexico Wild hosted the 2nd annual Outdoor Economics Conference in Silver City bringing to together nearly 300 attendees from 42 communities, as well as Governor Lujan-Grisham, Lt. Governor Morales, State Land Commissioner Garcia-Richard, Senator Heinrich and Rep. Torres-Small.

-The Chaco Cultural Heritage Area Protection Act passed the U.S. House, but stalled in the Senate.

Fall: USFS closed all forest in New Mexico in wake of court ruling. New Mexico Wild starts emergency fuel wood distribution program to households in need in rural communities throughout the state.



2020

-Filed lawsuit against the Trump Administration for the "Dirty Water Rule."
-The Pecos Watershed was nominated for Outstanding National Resource Waters designation.

February: Organized field trip for then congresswoman Haaland and Pueblo governors to the Caja del Rio.

April: New Mexico Online Hiking Guide launched at hike.nmwild.org.

Spring: Launched Rio Chama citizen science bug collection project, conducting outreach to boaters to help assess water quality.

May: The M.H. "Dutch" Salmon Greater Gila Wild and Scenic River Act introduced by Sens. Udall and Heinrich.

June: New Mexico Wild pushed for the introduction of Cerro de lo Olla Wilderness bill in Taos County in the U.S. Senate, co-sponsored by Sen. Martin Heinrich and former Sen. Tom Udall.

August: The Great American Outdoor Act signed into law, which fully and permanently funded the Land and Water Conservation Fund and provides nearly \$10 billion for deferred maintenance for land management agencies. New Mexico Wild hosts (virtual) celebration featuring New Mexico's entire federal congressional delegation.

2009 Sabinoso Wilderness Area - Photo by Lois Manno

2010 A cactus in the Organ Mountains - Photo by Paul Bardwell

2011 Nathan Small leads a youth hike in the Organ Mountains - Staff Photo

2012 An aerial view of the Rio Grande Gorge - Photo by Wikimedia Commons

2013 Petroglyphs in the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument - Photo by Sally Paez

2014 Nathan Newcomer & Tisha Broska speak at the Wilderness 50 Celebration - Staff Photo

2015 Former staff member John Olivas - Staff Photo

2016 Deer in the foothills of the Sandia Mountains - Photo by Andrew Reville

2017 Boxer Austin Trout with NM Wild staff and supporters at OMDP Rally in Las Cruces

2018 Wilderness Rangers and staff in the Santa Fe National Forest - Photo by James Lautzenheiser

2019 Sen. Heinrich receiving Conservation Champion Award from New Mexico Wild Staff at the Outdoor Economics Conference in Silver City - Photo by Mark Allison

2020 West Fork of the Gila River - Photo by Nathan Newcomer

2021 Interior Secretary Deb Haaland speaking at a Sabinoso Wilderness expansion celebration - Photo by Garrett Veneklasen

2022 A stream in the Gila Wilderness - Photo by Jesse Furr



GILA REGION REPORT

BY NATHAN NEWCOMER, GILA GRASSROOTS ORGANIZER

Our efforts to pass the **Gila Wild and Scenic Rivers Act** in the U.S. Senate are ongoing, with a possible hearing in the Energy and Natural Resources Committee this spring. We continue to engage with our senators and urge passage of the bill so that we can permanently protect the Gila River watershed from major dams and diversions.

In early March of this year, we organized meetings in Washington, D.C., with the offices of Democratic Sens. Martin Heinrich and Ben Ray Luján, in which a diverse coalition of local constituents from the Gila Region advocated for the advancement of the legislation. We remain resolute and confident that the Gila Wild and Scenic Rivers legislation will progress further this Congress.

Elsewhere, the U.S. Forest Service recently authorized the lethal removal of **feral cows** that have been decimating the Gila River through the Gila Wilderness. These unbranded, feral cows have been a menace in the region for decades, damaging the river corridor. We are grateful that the Forest Service is finally making a concerted effort to remove these cows and we look forward to the day when this issue is fully resolved.

Finally, we recently learned that the **U.S. Air Force** again wants to modify 10 existing Military Operations Areas (MOAs) that stretch across southern Arizona into southwest New Mexico as part of a planned expansion of Special Use Airspace in the Southwest region of the country. The proposal would authorize low-level fighter jet maneuvers and supersonic flights that cause sonic booms above rural

and tribal communities and over beloved Wilderness areas and national monuments.

Federal public lands that could be affected by the Air Force proposal include four national forests (Gila, Apache-Sitgreaves, Tonto and Coronado), 12 Forest Service Wilderness Areas; 19 Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Wilderness Areas, eight BLM Wilderness Study Areas and two national monuments. Additionally, 70 miles of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail could be affected.

Working with the same coalition that defeated a similar Holloman Air Force Base proposal one year ago, we have submitted initial scoping comments to the agency and will continue to organize and be engaged. To learn more about this effort, please visit www.peacefulgилaskies.com



Left: Efforts to protect the Gila and its tributaries as Wild and Scenic continue.

Top: Feral cattle are heavily impacting delicate riparian areas in the Gila. Photo by Mike Fugali

Above: Military overflights threaten the peaceful skies over the Gila. Photos by Jesse Furr

After you have a wildfire in a mountainous area, if you get a moderate or severe burn in a watershed, it's a catastrophic condition and impact to a watershed. The land will not absorb water like it normally could during a normal rain. It becomes hydrophobic, meaning the sand gets so hot during a wildfire—actually becoming similar to glass—(that) raindrops will hit and just immediately run off and can bring everything along, like an avalanche.

I was faced with a decision to leave Cochiti Pueblo to spearhead the company's federal contract, and I didn't see myself doing that. However, I realized that I had a certain experience and, some will call it, expertise as a hydrologist and navigating federal funding, navigating compliance, and navigating the real threat that post-wildfire flooding had on the community. So, in a matter of days, we jumped ship and started High Water Mark.

What do you think water-management agencies miss when they don't include tribal nations when stewarding our watersheds?

I really feel like Indigenous peoples still have that knowledge, that lived experience of being connected to natural resources, like water, that maybe modernization has separated from being an everyday connection. As an example, how many people out of the billions on this earth can say that they've drank right from the earth, not from a faucet, not the water bottle? The largest portion are probably Indigenous peoples.

The current system is based on assumptions from back in the early 1900s with their interstate stream compacts and the other water agreements that didn't have the breadth of understanding or the expertise or the knowledge or wisdom of Indigenous peoples at the table to help the decision-makers create a framework. So, if it was deficient in that, how can it be a sustainable system, a sustainable framework, a sustainable way to go forward?

In New Mexico, we have a term called "prior and paramount water rights." Those that have prior and paramount water rights were not at the table in the early 1900s, when agreements were signed and were decided.

There's an essence of being—having that direct connection to natural resources, but also how that connection is inherent culturally. To not take it for granted. And so, when the tribal leaders and the state engineers and non-tribal governments come together, we tend to create that separation during these water discussions. We say, "OK, here's a piece of paper and this identifies how many water rights our pueblo people have, as mothers, as daughters, sisters and all those that have gone before us." I worry that we are veering dangerously from that perspective and are taking water for granted.

This reminds me of something Grace Haggerty of the Interstate Stream Commission said in a video explaining New Mexico's 50-year plan. Speaking as someone who is

in such a high position, she said that the system that operates the Rio Grande River—that it's a system the U.S. developed that didn't account for the needs of Native American people who have lived here since time immemorial. And I'm wondering what you make of that?

I appreciate her acknowledging that. People have reached out to me and asked about engaging tribes in these water conversations, and I encourage that. And I wholeheartedly hope that that continues. But let's now follow up with action. How do we actually put those words into action? And how do we wholeheartedly incorporate the Indigenous wisdom and expertise in plans and laws and policies in how we track water, how we manage water, how we steward water? That will tell me if these are just words, or if there is real sentiment and understanding behind those words.

Kalen Goodluck is a reporter and photographer based in Albuquerque, New Mexico who was a former fellow at High Country News. He comes from the Diné, Mandan, Hidatsa and Tsimshian tribes. This article originally appeared in High Country News on January 31, 2022.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Governor Lujan Grisham appointed Phoebe Suina to the New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission in February. New Mexico Wild works closely with Phoebe on ongoing efforts to protect the Caja del Rio. 🐾



THE WILDERNESS DEFENDERS PROGRAM

BY WILL RIBBANS, WILDERNESS STEWARDSHIP AND OUTREACH MANAGER

After what felt like a longer than normal winter, we are so excited to get out on our public lands this season. Changes in funding this year have altered our stewardship program, so we are engaging our awesome base of volunteers to fulfill some of our field duties.

We have been hard at work developing what we are calling the "Wilderness Defender Volunteer Program" to maintain our work in the field and to continue public engagement out on the ground. There will be more formal communication in late spring but, in the meantime, here is a snapshot of our program.

The Wilderness Defender Program utilizes volunteers to provide New Mexico Wild and public land agencies important information regarding the conditions of wildland areas. We intend to pair volunteers with Wilderness Study Areas and other wildland areas that may warrant new designations or protections. These volunteers will adopt and routinely visit these areas and gather information on visitor use and conditions of trails, campsites, signage, facilities, and other maintenance concerns. They will also provide information regarding Wilderness character and values that will further understanding of these areas, with the goal of protection and ongoing stewardship in mind.

We want volunteers who will cultivate a relationship with their designated area and

advocate for it through story. These stories/narratives help us explain to the public why they are worthy of protection. Without knowing what these places are like, we can't fight for them. Ultimately, volunteers will become ambassadors for these underserved areas and provide us with a strong holistic narrative for protection. Volunteers will have resources available from New Mexico Wild's previous inventory/narrative efforts, but much of this information will need to be updated or collected from scratch. If an area receives protection, these efforts will give us a basis for addressing stewardship needs that we can act upon through volunteer-based projects. It is important to note that we are ultimately partners in this with land agencies, and all associated parties must work together to gain permanent protections.

If you are a volunteer who is serious and passionate about protecting our public

lands and has the experience and self-driven attitude needed to take on this project, please contact will@nmwild.org to get on a preliminary list for consideration. There will be a small intake process to understand your level of experience followed by a short training on the program to get you started.



Volunteers planning a trip in the Gila. Photo by Jesse Furr

For many, many years in New Mexico, our water and natural resources policy was really driven within agencies that had historic mandates that really are not well aligned with the values of many of our communities, and certainly are not well aligned with the needs we have for sustainable water resource management going forward in a time of climate change.

What's important for nonprofit organizations like New Mexico Wild is to listen deeply to the constituencies that care about those issues and bring those voices and values to your work. And then to take that work to our Legislature, to Congress, and to those who have decision-making power to shape and transform the conversations around how we're going to manage our resources going forward.

I think that engagement in the policy process, mobilizing and educating constituents, and the collective power of the people is so important, especially right now.

MA: Can you say a bit more about the role Pueblos, Tribes, and *acequias* need to play in this conversation in New Mexico to realize success?

RS: Well, our Pueblos and our Tribes have been here on this landscape since time immemorial and continue to practice land and water stewardship and agriculture. Those families have engaged in these practices for countless generations, and our *acequias*, which are not only the physical infrastructure, but also social institutions that are part of the DNA of our traditional Hispano communities, have been here for hundreds of years, and those systems are the heritage of our landscape.

We must ensure that not only are the individuals and communities that comprise our Pueblos and Tribes at the table, but the values and voices of those communities are really represented in the policy process. Their systems have been resilient across much change in the climate and landscape. So, in the ways in which water has been traditionally managed, there are concepts about water sharing, and we're understanding that water sharing systems are the best way to manage water resiliently during times of change. We have a lot to learn, not only in terms of protecting those traditional systems, but also in bringing the concepts from those systems into the overall management process.

Water truly is sacred. Water is life and in many of our traditional communities, water is among the most sacred elements of the landscape, and it is a living thing itself and has intrinsic value. Protecting the uses and ways in which water moves through the landscape is essential to preserving the cultures and languages and ways of life of our communities as well.

MA: I wanted to turn to the historic infrastructure bill and thank you very much for your vote on that, by the way. Can you describe for our readers what that legislation means to New Mexico and what you're most proud of?

RS: In November, President Biden signed into law an historic bill that makes a \$1.2 trillion investment in modernizing our infrastructure. New Mexico is expecting to see \$3.7 billion in formula funds alone, and of that total amount, we're expecting to see about \$350 million just for drinking water projects. The reason why that bill is so significant—for water in particular—is that it makes historic investments in our rural and our Tribal communities in terms of safe drinking water and addressing wastewater challenges. It also makes billions of dollars in investments in drought and climate resilience through the Bureau of Reclamation's budget...to address infrastructure needs, to build more resilience into the systems and to do restoration work.

So that is incredibly significant, and it is probably the largest, single investment in water infrastructure that we've seen in generations. It's really an incredible piece of legislation. But we also still need to pass the investments that are in the Build Back Better Act, which includes investments in further water infrastructure and climate resilience.

MA: We share a love of floating rivers. I'm wondering if those trips you've taken have taught you anything that maybe you didn't know before?

RS: Well, I do love floating rivers, and I think when you spend time on a river you learn the lessons of the river itself. I'm very much a student of historical texts, and there are a number of places in the Tao Te Ching, which is an ancient text about leadership and about life, that explore the best ways to be like water. And I think when you're on a river, you see those lessons that water is yielding, that water gives life to all things and doesn't ask for anything in return. The river continues to flow regardless of what happens in life.

I think being on a river restores your connection to the landscape and to the sacredness of life. But I think also it teaches you about the ways in which water shapes our landscape, the essential nature of it and the things that it provides to our communities. And I also think that it is among the best ways to commune and connect with the natural world.

MA: I love that. Thank you. Any plans to float any rivers this year?

RS: A number of friends and I put in for permits, but we didn't get any! But I try to float the Rio Chama a couple of times a year, which is one of my favorite rivers. And hopefully, I'd also like to do the stretch of the Rio Grande that's just upstream of Cochiti this year.

MA: I'd love to be part of a White Rock run if it happens! Thank you, Congresswoman, very much for your time and for your leadership. It's always wonderful to talk to you. 🐾

Scan the QR code to read the full interview



Or visit: <https://bit.ly/repstansbury>

NEW MEXICO BRINGS THE ADVENTURE



BY EMMA YODER, VOLUNTEER & OUTREACH COORDINATOR

In August of 2021, I moved from Virginia to Albuquerque through the Young Adult Volunteer (YAV) program, a Presbyterian service program that pairs full-time volunteers with local non-profits organizations. I, of course, was paired with New Mexico Wild. Coming into this year, I truly had no idea what to expect from Albuquerque or my job placement, but for anyone who knows the team at New Mexico Wild, it should be of no surprise that my experiences so far have been beyond any expectations.

When I moved to New Mexico, I made it a personal goal to experience as much of the state as possible. While I did not expect my work placement to help fulfill that goal, opportunities at New Mexico Wild continue to arise,

from travelling Silver City for the Gila Wild & Scenic River Conference or to Farmington for our most recent brewery event. Even trips closer to home have created unforgettable memories, like listening to Darrin Muenzberg and Ralph Vigil's stories about their long-held familial connections to the awe-inspiring Caja del Rio and Will Ribbons pointing out not one, but three porcupines hanging out in the Bosque.

As I look ahead to the rest of my time with New Mexico Wild, I am excited for whatever new adventures may come, whether they be in Albuquerque or across the state. When I joined YAV, I did so hoping to see incredible sights and parts of the world I had not previously experienced. I would say goal accomplished. 🐾

Wild & Scenic River FAQs

1. Why did Congress pass the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act?

Congress passed the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act at the height of the modern dam-building era in order to ensure that the construction of new dams is balanced with the protection of select free-flowing rivers that possess nationally significant values. This landmark law is the highest form of protection for rivers in the United States. In the words of Congress: "It is hereby declared to be the policy of the United States that certain selected rivers of the Nation which, with their immediate environments possess outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, or other similar values, shall be preserved in free-flowing condition, and that they and their immediate environments shall be protected for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations."

2. How does the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act protect rivers?

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act protects rivers in five major ways:

- It bans the construction of new federally-licensed dams and other harmful water development projects;
- It ensures water quality is maintained and, where possible, enhanced;
- It creates a federally-reserved water right for the minimum amount of water necessary to maintain a river's special values;
- It restricts activities that would harm a river's special values;
- And it requires the development of a Comprehensive River Management Plan (CRMP) to guide management along designated rivers for a period of 10-20 years.

3. Are there different classifications under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act that reflect the condition of a river at the time it is designated?

Designated rivers are classified in one of three categories depending upon the extent of development and accessibility along each section:

- **Wild** rivers are free of impoundments and generally inaccessible except by trail, with watersheds or shorelines essentially primitive, and waters unpolluted.
- **Scenic** rivers are free of impoundments with shorelines or watersheds still largely primitive, and shorelines largely undeveloped, but accessible in places by roads. These segments are more developed than "wild" rivers and less developed than "recreational" rivers.
- **Recreational** rivers are readily accessible by road or railroad, may have some development along their shoreline, and may have undergone some impoundment or diversion in the past.

4. How many rivers are in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System?

As of September 2011, the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System includes 203 river segments comprising 12,598 river miles. That translates to approximately 0.4% of the river miles in the United States. By comparison, more than 75,000 large dams have modified at least 600,000 miles of rivers across the country, or approximately 17% of the river miles in the United States.

5. How are rivers added to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System?

Typically, a river becomes Wild and Scenic first by being categorized as "eligible" for designation by the appropriate land management agency (Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, etc.), although Congress has designated rivers that were not previously found eligible for protection. Any section of river that is free-flowing and possesses one or more "outstandingly remarkable values" can be found eligible for Wild and Scenic protection. Rivers can be added to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System in one of two ways. The most common way is for Congress to pass Wild and Scenic legislation that is signed into law by the president. The less traditional way is for the governor of a state to petition the secretary of the interior to add a river to the system.

6. How does Wild and Scenic designation affect public access to rivers for fishing, hunting, camping and other forms of recreation?

Wild and Scenic designation neither limits the public from accessing public lands within designated river corridors nor opens private lands to public access. Designation has no effect on fishing and hunting, as those activities are regulated under state laws. Where hunting and fishing were allowed prior to designation, they may continue. In general, Wild and Scenic designation does not restrict boating access unless specific issues have been identified in the river management planning process.

7. Is livestock grazing allowed in Wild and Scenic river corridors?

Generally, livestock grazing and related infrastructure are not affected by Wild and Scenic designation, with the caveat that agricultural practices should be similar in nature and intensity to those present in the river corridor at the time of designation.

8. Does the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act restrict development on private lands within designated river corridors?

No. Under the act, the federal government has no authority to regulate or zone private lands. Land use controls on private lands are solely a matter of state and local zoning. Although the act includes provisions encouraging the protection of river values through state and local land use planning, there are no binding provisions on local governments. In the absence of state or local river protection provisions, the federal government may seek to protect values by providing technical assistance, entering into agreements with landowners and/or through the purchase of easements, exchanges or acquisition of private lands.

9. How does Wild and Scenic designation affect water rights?

Wild and Scenic designation has no effect on existing valid water rights or interstate water compacts. Existing irrigation systems and other water development facilities are not disturbed. Alterations to existing systems and new water projects that require a federal permit may be allowed as long as they don't have an adverse effect on the values of the river. ▲

New Mexico Wild's first Nancy Morton Wilderness Intern Issa Nellos hiking near Los Alamos, New Mexico.
Photo courtesy of Issa Nellos



“A Matter of Life and Death”

New poll shows concern about environment among Latino voters

BY HANNAH GROVER, CONTRIBUTOR

Reprinted from the *New Mexico Political Report*
nmpoliticalreport.com

The majority of Latino voters in the western United States are concerned about climate change, access to public lands and other environment-related topics, according to the 12th annual Conservation in the West Poll. Colorado College’s State of the Rockies Project released the results of the poll in February and a press conference webinar focused on how Latino voters perceive a variety of topics related to the environment.

As part of the poll, researchers conducted 3,440 interviews between Jan. 5 and Jan. 23 both by phone and using the internet. The people interviewed live in eight western states and 434 of the participants were New Mexicans.

The poll showed overwhelming support for measures to protect the environment and increase access to public lands across racial groups. It also found an increasingly “dim view” of nature’s future when looking back over the 12 years of polling data. Last year, 36 percent of respondents said they were hopeful about the future of nature. This year, that number fell to 28 percent.

Some of the areas that voters said they were concerned about include inadequate water supplies, poorly planned growth and development, water contamination, loss of family agriculture, habitat loss, loss of natural areas, climate change, air pollution and the impacts of oil and natural gas extraction.

According to the poll results, 76 percent of Republicans, 87 percent of independent voters and 96 percent of Democrats said candidates’ positions on conservation issues will be an important factor in determining their support for that candidate.

“We are seeing a perfect storm of threats that are driving higher levels of concern than ever before for the state of our lands and water in the Mountain West,” Katrina Miller-Stevens, Director of the State of the Rockies Project, and an associate professor at Colorado College, said in a press release. “Not surprisingly, most voters are aligning behind policies that would help mitigate threats by conserving and protecting more outdoor spaces.”

While the poll included voters of various racial and ethnic backgrounds, Tuesday’s webinar, which was hosted by the Hispanic Access Foundation, focused on how Latino voters responded to the poll. 🗳️

Scan the QR code to read the full article online

Or visit:

<https://bit.ly/latinopollenv>



Colorado College’s State of the Rockies Project
2022 Conservation in the West Poll

NEW MEXICO

ENVIRONMENT AT THE BALLOT BOX

85% of New Mexicans say that issues involving clean water, wildlife, and public lands are important in deciding whether to support an elected public official.



ENERGY ON PUBLIC LANDS

92% support requiring oil and gas companies to pay for all clean-up and restoration costs after drilling.

67% think that oil and gas development on national public lands should be stopped or strictly limited, as opposed to expanded.

RECREATION

66% visited national public lands more than twice in the past year.

PROTECTING LAND, WATER & WILDLIFE

79% support a national goal of protecting 30 percent of America’s lands and waters by 2030.

82% support creating new national parks, national monuments, national wildlife refuges, and tribal protected areas.

FIRE & DROUGHT CONCERNS

79% are concerned about more frequent and severe wildfires.

66% think that wildfires in the West are more of a problem than they were 10 years ago.

85% are concerned about droughts and reduced snowpack.

ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

63% support gradually transitioning to one hundred percent clean, renewable energy over the next ten to fifteen years.

65% say that there is enough evidence of climate change that action should be taken.

New Mexico Wild Board and Staff Retreat



Board and Staff came together to celebrate 25 years and plan for the future of New Mexico Wild. Top row: Darrin Muenzberg, Logan Glasenapp, Garrett VeneKlasen, Ken Jones, Carol Johnson, Joe Alcock, Sam DesGeorges, Mark Allison, Sally Paez, Todd Schulke, Keegan King, Wendy Brown, Devon Naples, Terry Richey, and Nathan Small. Bottom row: Rhett Spencer, Brittany Fallon, Will Ribbans, Tisha Broska, Lois Manno, Joey Keefe, and Sarai Cajiao.



New Mexico Wild Staff and Former Board participated in a Discada Cook-off. Former Board Member, Jeff Regenold's Yak Tacos won the prize.



Senator Martin Heinrich joined us at Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge to celebrate 25 years. Senator Heinrich is a former Board member of New Mexico Wild and continues to be a conservation champion for New Mexico's public lands.



Founding Board Member, Dave Foreman accepts memorial walking stick for his late wife, Nancy Morton. Nancy was a founding Board Member of New Mexico Wild, who served on the Board from 1997-2021.



UNM Wilderness Alliance

The UNM Wilderness Alliance supports the work of New Mexico Wild on the University of New Mexico's campus in Albuquerque. The student-led organization raises awareness about conservation issues and organizes field trips to public land destinations throughout the state. The activities of UNM Wilderness Alliance are crucial to cultivating a new generation of leaders dedicated to protecting New Mexico's Wilderness, wildlife, and water. To learn more or to get involved, email unmwild@unm.edu.

Staffer Ralph Vigil Receives Living Land Award

During the 2022 legislative session, Farm to Table New Mexico presented our team member Ralph Vigil with the Living Land Award for Outstanding Leadership in Land Stewardship for his work on his farm, Molino de la Isla Organics LLC. Ralph was also recognized for his leadership in advancing policies to protect New Mexico's *acequia* communities. We are proud of Ralph and are grateful for the knowledge he brings to our team. Congratulations, Ralph!



WELCOME AND FAREWELL TO STAFF



Welcome to Devon Naples, Executive Assistant

A lifelong visitor to New Mexico, Devon moved to Albuquerque with her husband Jason in the spring of 2021 to be closer to the wild beauty of this totally unique state. You can catch them zealously hiking, camping, and rafting their way around New Mexico. Devon grew up in Dallas. After earning a bachelor's degree in Philosophy from the University of Northern Colorado, she lived in Denver and worked for the Harm Reduction Action Center in homeless outreach. She is so inspired by the work New Mexico Wild does to protect our state's precious Wilderness, and so proud to be on this righteous team!



Farewell to Joey Keefe, Communications Coordinator

Joey Keefe is transitioning to a new career opportunity at the State Land Office as their Assistant Commissioner of Communications. It is certain that our paths will cross again with some regularity as we work closely with that office. Joey joined New Mexico Wild in 2018 and made many contributions to our numerous organizational and conservation successes. We will miss his thoughtful writing of newsletter articles, opinion pieces, and press releases; his ability to maintain close connections to the state's rapidly changing journalism community; and his—some would say—quirky sense of humor. Staff were able to reminisce and say our fond farewells to Joey at the 25th anniversary celebration and board retreat at the Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge. Congratulations Joey!

HIKE!

Introducing 100+ Great Hikes
in New Mexico Wilderness Areas
<http://hike.nmwild.org>



Interactive features

Powerful planning tools

Famous hikes and secluded Wilderness treasures

Rich descriptions and useful trail information

Track progress on the route, see elevation profile

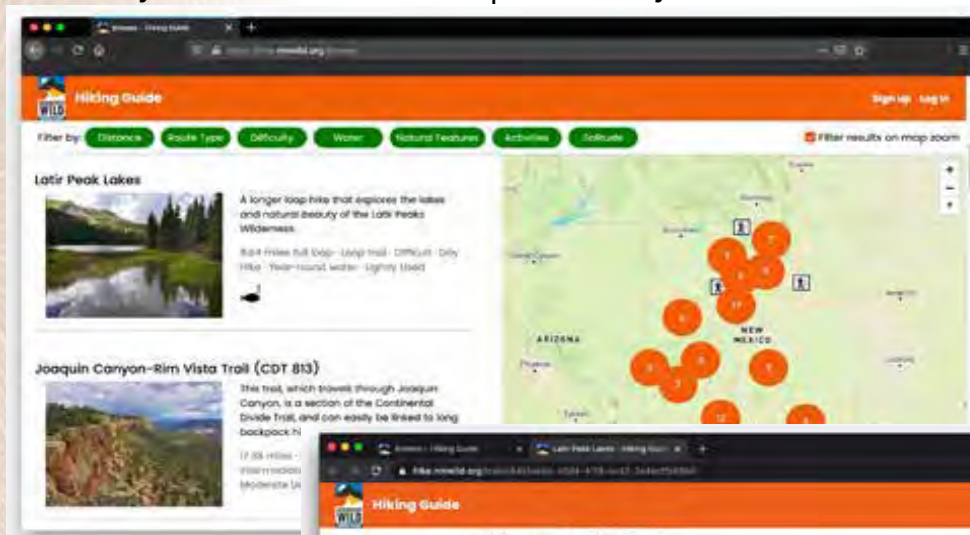
Print a PDF of the hike to take with you

Useful info about local businesses

SPONSORED BY

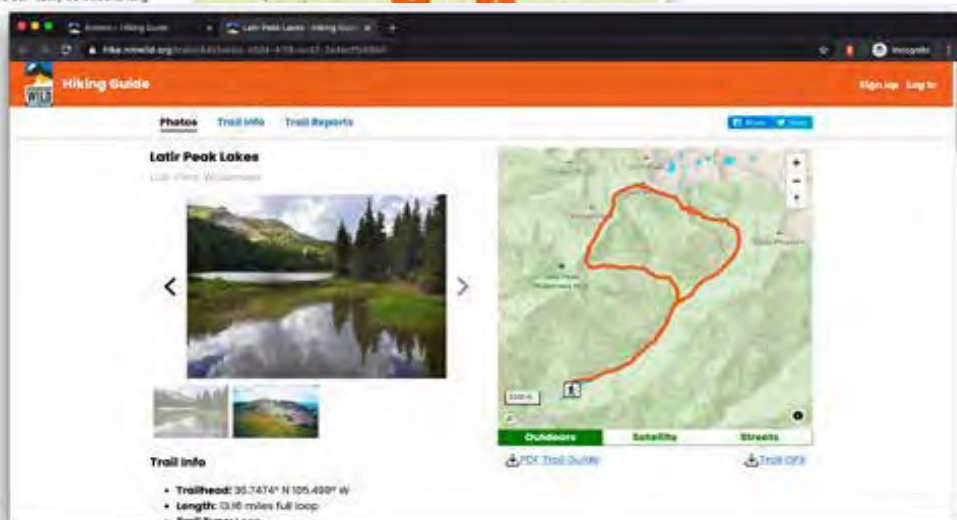


Locate your hike on the state map, or filter by feature.



Always
Free!

Unlimited
Access



Dive deeper into a specific trail, view photos, download maps.

UPCOMING EVENTS

YEAR-ROUND: Solitude Monitoring in the Sabinoso, Cerro Del Yuta, and Rio San Antonio Wilderness Areas

Do you like hiking and want to volunteer to help our Public Lands? We need volunteers to collect data on visitor use in the Taos BLM Wilderness areas. This data informs us on the level of use in each of these areas, which is key to better management. How to get started:

- Email will@nmwild.org to sign up!
- Take a quick 30-minute phone training with our Wilderness Rangers
- Sign up for a date to go hiking
- Hike in the Sabinoso, Cerro Del Yuta, or Rio San Antonio Wilderness Areas
- Count visitors you encounter
- Report back to us!

MAY 28: Float trip on the Rio Chama with Far Flung Adventures

AUGUST 20: Float trip on the Rio Grande Lower Gorge with Far Flung Adventures

For updates about other events and volunteer opportunities, please visit
nmwild.org/events

Sabinoso Wilderness: Lois Manno



Cerro del Yuta Wilderness: Jim O'Donnell



Rio San Antonio Wilderness: Garrett VeneKlasen



DONATING FROM YOUR IRA: IT CAN BE SUCH A **SMART** WAY TO GIVE

Getting older has some advantages. At age 70½ you can donate tax-free from your IRA if you make the gift directly to a qualified charity such as New Mexico Wild. When you reach age 72, the IRS requires a minimum IRA distribution each year which is normally taxable. If you donate directly to a qualified charity, you can avoid that required distribution becoming taxable income. In fact, you may be able to set up an automatic payment with your IRA investment company to make giving even easier. First step is to see your tax advisor to discuss the best option for you.



WHERE THERE'S A WILL, THERE'S A WAY CONSIDER A LEGACY GIFT TO NEW MEXICO WILD

If you'd like to help protect wilderness for future generations but feel you cannot make a significant gift today, consider making a charitable contribution through your will in the form of a bequest. It is simple to designate New Mexico Wild for an estate gift and your contribution will help protect our public lands far into the future.

You can learn more about making a bequest through your will at:
nmwild.org/legacy-giving-bequest/
or by contacting Tisha Broska at tisha@nmwild.org, 505-321-6131.



THE ALDO LEOPOLD CIRCLE
SUPPORTING NEW MEXICO WILD

JOIN A SPECIAL GROUP OF SUPPORTERS WHO HELP SUSTAIN NEW MEXICO WILD

The Aldo Leopold Circle helps sustain our vital work protecting the Land of Enchantment. Members of the Aldo Leopold Circle contribute \$1,000 or more each year to New Mexico Wild. The group participates in special events and outings and receives exclusive briefings on conservation issues in New Mexico.

For more information: nmwild.org/aldo-leopold-circle/

Help us protect the Wilderness, Wildlife, and Water of New Mexico

I want to make a one-time donation

- \$25 (Student/Senior)
- \$35
- \$50
- \$100
- Other amount \$ _____

*I want to become a monthly sustaining donor**

- \$10
- \$30
- \$60
- \$100
- Other amount \$ _____

*If you are already a monthly sustainer, thank you! You can use this form to increase your recurring donation. Donations totaling \$1,000 or more over the course of a year become members of our Aldo Leopold Circle.



Credit card payment

Name _____

Credit Card Number _____

Exp. Date _____ C V V _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____



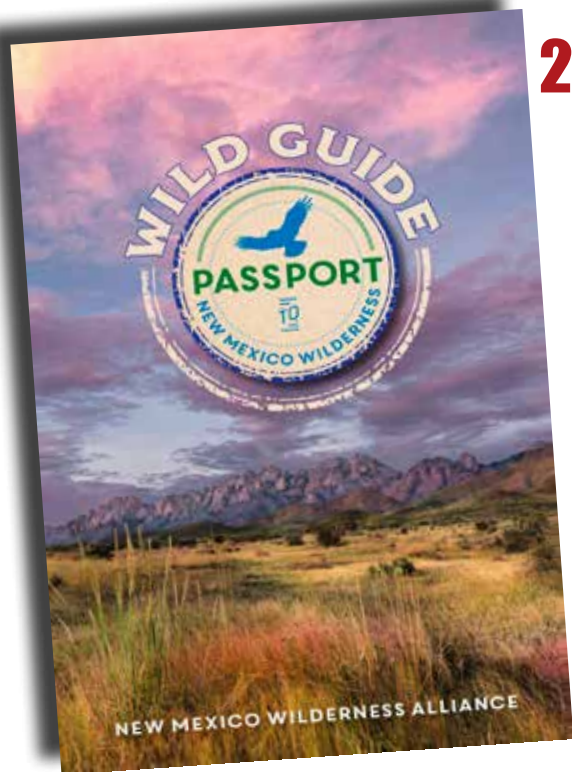
Other payment options:

- 1) Enclose your check payable to: *New Mexico Wild*
- 2) Donate online at nmwild.org/donate

Mail your membership form to New Mexico Wild, PO Box 25464, Albuquerque, NM 87125. Thank you!

If You Love Wilderness, You Need This Book!

WILD GUIDE: Passport to New Mexico Wilderness



2ND EDITION

Updated with
NEW
PROTECTED
AREAS!

Only
\$19.95

Plus \$3.25 S&H

Available online
at
www.nmwild.org

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.

CITIZEN SCIENCE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

RIO CHAMA BOATERS CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS SPRING 2022

Do you have plans to run the Wild and Scenic section of Rio Chama in 2022?

We are looking for volunteers to collect insect samples during your trip. We will provide training and sampling kits at the launch and meet you at the take out to retrieve the samples. Please contact rhett@nmwild.org if you are interested in learning more about this project.

Email will@nmwild.org to learn more!



2022 Mexican Wolf Stamp

WOLVES BELONG

Stickers, hats and more!


NMWild Online Shop

VISIT NOW

nmwild.org/shop

CHECK US OUT ONLINE

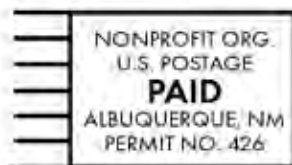
 facebook.com/nmwilderness

 Check out more information at nmwild.org

 instagram.com/nmwilderness

 twitter.com/nmwilderness

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



Native Rio Grande cutthroat trout in Indian Creek, one of the tributaries that would be adversely affected should mining happen on Jones hill in the Pecos River basin.

Photo by Garrett VeneKlasen