

Origins of the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance

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Introduction

America lost Dave Foreman in the early evening of September 19, 2022. The cause was an incurable lung ailment, one of several disabling maladies that dogged him during his final years. His sister, Roxanne Pacheco, other family, and close friends were there. Others, scattered around the nation, were on their way hoping to arrive in time with their personal messages of support and affection. Those who knew him well held him in esteem justified by his lived values and a record of achievement recorded in Bob Howard's remembrance:¹

"Dave Foreman's valuing of wildness, vision of what might be, understanding of conservation biology, and a lifetime's scholarly work produced four organizations--Earth First!, North American Wilderness Recovery/The Rewilding Institute, The Wildlands Project/Network, and New Mexico Wilderness Alliance/NMWild--as well as a seminal book, a worldwide rewilding movement, and protective designation of over a million acres of Wilderness. That is an especially rich and profound legacy! New Mexico Wild is a primary beneficiary of that legacy, and Dave's values, vision, understanding and passionate activism are in the organization's DNA."

Dave's passing made the national news. He had spent his adult life inspiring Americans to protect their unspoiled landscapes and its wildlife. He did it well. Dave will be remembered for his attention-getting, most famous creation, the radical, barely organized conservation organization he named Earth First!² Of lesser known, but of longer-lasting importance, was his science-oriented collaboration with Michael Soulé, Reed Noss, Doug Tompkins, John Davis and others in the Wildlands Project/Network starting in 1991.³ He followed that with the creation of the Rewilding Institute in 2003, again joined by John Davis and with the help of Bob Howard

and Dave Parsons.⁴ His wife, Nancy Morton, and collaborator Susan Morgan were significantly involved in these endeavors, more than is usually recognized.⁵

Earth First! generated a series of head-on collisions between grassroots wilderness activists and their nemeses attacking the unroaded public domain, principally timber interests, miners, road builders, land developers, dam constructors, and wayward agency land managers. During the 1980's Reaganism, the "wise use" movement, and the "Sagebrush Rebellion" encouraged and created multiple threats to wildlands at the same time that mainstream conservation organizations were backing away from their grassroots connection. Those grassroots, the very people made anxious and trying to prevent esthetic and ecological damage to their neighborhoods and the homeland they loved, found their boat cut adrift with heavy weather arriving. The 1980's delivered perfect conditions for spawning and growing a rebellious fish like Earth First!.⁶

Early Conservation Experience in New Mexico

Before there was an Earth First! Dave Foreman was spending the first twelve years of his adult life in New Mexico.⁷ In New Mexico he stuck a toe into the waters of conservation activism, first as a volunteer with the Black Mesa Defense Fund in 1971, then with River Defense.⁸ He next submerged an ankle as Wilderness Director for the Albuquerque Environmental Center, and in 1972 reached full immersion as a hyperactive volunteer with the New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee.⁹ That year he met Bob and Phyllenore Howard, newly-arrived medical professionals and active members of the Sierra Club. At the time Foreman was attending executive meetings of the Rio Grande Chapter representing the Albuquerque Environmental Center and the Howards began attending also. Through the Sierra Club and the Environmental Center the Howards became friendly with Dave and his girlfriend and future wife, Debbie Sease, in the fall of 1972. At that time they also met Bill and Judy Bishop. The three couples soon became fast friends, hiking and getting together. Their talk during those days often turned to wildland conservation and who to achieve it. They all regularly attended the meetings of the Sierra Club's Rio Grande Chapter where they met Wesley Leonard, chair of the El Paso Group of the chapter, and Brant Calkin, formerly a chapter board chair and now the Regional Representative of the Sierra Club. Bob recalled that they would all frequently engage in "rump sessions" after Sierra Club meetings where issues, events, and strategy could be discussed in an informal atmosphere.¹⁰

The careers of the Howards and Dave would take them away from New Mexico, but events would reunite them more than two decades later when once again they would take up meeting, hiking, and talking conservation strategy. From this renewed friendship and association with Susan Morgan and other like-minded activists would come the ideas and actions that created the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance. Bob and Susan would be with Roxanne at Dave's side throughout the day and early evening of Dave's passing.¹¹

Working with the Wilderness Study Committee (WSC) gave Foreman valuable experience leading wilderness inventories, managing campaigns, meeting with the congressional delegation, and communicating with the press. These skills helped set him on a path that became his life's calling. At the time he joined the Wilderness Study Committee it was just beginning formal evaluations of New Mexico's national forests to determine where the characteristics defining wilderness existed. The process, termed inventorying, was already in progress within the public

domain managed by the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Their task was defined by the directives of the Wilderness Act of 1964. The WSC had recognized the need to make its own assessments of the state's wildlands to back up its positions on the appropriate number, sizes, and boundaries for candidate wilderness areas. Foreman soon became one of its team leaders, assigned the task of evaluating the Gila and Apache National Forests. Within the Gila National Forest lay the nation's first formal wilderness, the Gila Wilderness Area, encompassing the expansive, canyon and gorge-riven headwaters of the Gila River. The data, photographs, and findings of teams like his would become the material evidence justifying WSC's citizen proposals for wilderness candidates conforming with the terms of the Wilderness Act. The ambitious WSC sought to have enough information to draft bills ready for submission to Congress for every wilderness candidate it identified.¹²

Volunteers for these jobs were not hard to find. Plenty of backpackers and hikers relished the idea of exploring the forest wilds to determine what was out there. In February 1975, anticipating that the Bureau of Land Management would soon come under the Wilderness Act, the WSC held a workshop in Las Cruces for 100 of its members and formed teams to begin evaluating BLM-managed public land for potential wilderness area candidates. This new evaluation brought the eager hiking and backpacking enthusiasts out again to scour the grasslands and arid mountains typical of most BLM wildland. Foreman was named statewide coordinator for the teams involved in this operation. Wesley Leonard, later a Wilderness Alliance founder and long-time board chair, remembers Foreman as his mentor and was the team leader for inventories of the huge Las Cruces BLM District.¹³

Foreman entered the WSC as a ready and able volunteer, exploring wildlands on his own and leading hiking and backpacking parties of other volunteers into the backcountry to map roads and boundaries and document where wilderness characteristics were found. He loved the work and he enjoyed spending time with people who shared his values. His imagination, enthusiasm, and leadership skills caught the attention of The Wilderness Society (TWS). In 1973 he was invited to attend one of their week-long training sessions for volunteers in Washington D.C. Once there he was exposed to lessons on the inner workings of Congress and how to lobby and interact with its members. He made a second good impression on TWS management and afterwards was offered a \$250-a-month position as the New Mexico field representative, later expanded to include the southwest. This, for Dave, was a dream job at any salary. He accepted and, with his future first wife, Debbie Sease, moved into a little stone house south of the tiny village of Glenwood and near the northwestern edge of the Gila Wilderness. There he assumed the triple roles of Wilderness Society employee, Wilderness Study Committee activist, and the locally-assumed threat to the ranching and logging communities way of life. He handled all three by doing good work, being honest and fair, willing to debate and negotiate, and remaining unintimidated by the less-friendly opposition.¹⁴

Dave's new job had him reporting to Susan Morgan, the TWS Denver Office coordinator for state field representatives across the West. "All these rowdies" she calls them, then elaborates:

"They were a wonderful bunch, just once removed from the founders of The Wilderness Society. They were all dedicated, inspired, and on a mission, all of them. They are still

all working in conservation. ... Dave was this wild guy. ... He was full blown manic at the time and he could put the work out. He was so much fun, and he was so effective, always trying something new, and so it was an experience to know him then too. He was a good guy."¹⁵

The Wilderness Study Committee had similar experiences with Dave, some revealed in his writing. His one-page memos to WSC colleagues and those he was sending to the field on inventory excursions might have no margins. Hand written or typed, text filled the white space with his ideas, observations, directions, instructions, the latest news, or whatever else he felt was important. Sometime his signature, small and cocked, was squeezed into a lower corner because that was the only white space left. Dave was inspirational and effective, willing to do whatever he asked of others. In April 1975 he was elected chairman of the New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee and Bob Howard became a member of the board. Less than two years later TWS headquarters struck again, transferring him to its Washington D.C. office to become Coordinator of Wilderness Affairs. During his sojourn in Washington he arranged for Bob Langsencamp, a capable and popular conservationist from Silver City, to take his place as TWS southwest representative. Later Langsencamp would figure prominently in the creation and leadership of the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance.

Dave's new elevated position found him, among other things, taking on a lobbying role as the go-between for grassroots organizations, other lobbyists, and Congress. He was in the big city with a white collar job, a job, Susan observed, "he just wasn't cut out for." Worse, in 1979 The Wilderness Society eliminated its grassroots program. Susan's "rowdies," his friends the field reps, were all laid off. Foreman was made an exception and given the opportunity to return his old job as New Mexico field representative which he accepted. Previously Dave and Debbie had amicably divorced, so he moved alone back to the little stone house south of Glenwood. Debbie remained in Washington working for TWS. Later she would leave TWS for the Sierra Club where she would rise to become National Campaign Director.

Susan's Denver office job had been eliminated also. She didn't want the position in D.C. that was offered and left The Wilderness Society. Disillusioned by his Washington experience and the new direction TWS and the other national organizations were taking, Dave resigned after a few months and embarked on a soul-searching journey to Mexico with his newly unemployed field rep friends. On the long drive back they began exploring concepts for a new radical conservation organization that Foreman suggested calling "Earth First," its mission "no compromise in defense of Mother Earth."¹⁶ After more consultation with a wider audience that included Susan Morgan, the "rowdies," and other like-minded contacts, Dave Foreman and Howie Wolke announced the birth of Earth First! in the summer of 1981.¹⁷

Earth First!

Earth First! was demonstrably on the side of the grassroots and not interested in the D.C.-centric-negotiating-compromising-deal-making-settle-for-less-than-what-you-need-process adopted by large national organizations. Earth First! made frequent headlines in local, regional, and national news by exposing and physically opposing the assault on public wildlands being carried out by a myriad of sources. Earth First's vanguard was mostly young and often long-haired, but it also attracted a surprising number of grandparents, sportsmen, conservation

professionals and average Janes and Joes. Their principal weapons were their ideas, legal action, and their commitment to use their bodies to mount protests, block roads, face down trucks and heavy equipment, and obstruct workers trying to get to the job site. Their most dramatic tactic was tree sitting, the act of setting up housekeeping on a tiny platform built high in a conifer otherwise destined to become lumber or wood chips.¹⁸

Less frequently, Earth Firsters engaged in the sabotage of the opposition's equipment or facilities, called "monkey wrenching," and then paid the price with fines and jail time if caught.¹⁹ In Foreman's case, it meant becoming the FBI's target of an entrapment and sting operation in 1989 that produced a charge of conspiracy to bring down power lines in Arizona. That caused him two years of legal headaches but introduced him to mountaineering friends and wilderness advocates Doug Tompkins and Yvon Chouinard. Tompkins was the well-heeled creator of Esprit and North Face clothing giants and the Foundation for Deep Ecology. Yvon Chouinard had founded Patagonia known for its high-quality climbing and outdoor equipment, clothing, and a conservation foundation of the same name. The two urged Gary Spence, prominent defense attorney and Chouinard's neighbor, to take on Foreman's case, which he did pro bono. Tompkins and Chouinard then covered his bail and the other costs necessary to support court proceedings, including paying for staff, witness transportation, and hotel fees. After Spence exposed the FBI's highly questionable use of deceit and entrapment to produce his arrest, a plea agreement was reached with prosecutors. That ended the tiresome, anxiety-inducing litigation and yielded a September 1991 settlement that amounted to serving a five year suspended sentence for a misdemeanor. Acts of "monkey wrenching " or "ecotage," as it was called, caused Foreman, its practitioners, and Earth First! to be branded as eco-terrorists by those they opposed and a press that often didn't dig deeper.²⁰

The effectiveness of Earth First! is sometimes downplayed as being little more than a scattering of local protests and stunts by a small contingent of radicals, saving a relatively small amount of real estate from degradation or destruction. This analysis ignores the objective of Earth First! which was never to achieve its goals simply through stunts and physical confrontation. That was the theater and last resort to block an impending egregious assault on Nature. Its consistent goal was to expose and draw American's attention to the growing onslaught on the nation's wildlands and wildlife, and highlight the failure of corporate conservation giants to mount an adequate defense. The resulting public indignation was intended to prompt outcries that moved politicians and agencies to act and, in some cases, move offending private businesses to negotiate. Direct physical intervention was not Earth First!'s only approach. When legal action appeared the better route, Earth First! took it. When negotiation might produce the wanted outcome, it participated. Earth First! could, with its theater and sometimes-outrageous propaganda, intentionally jolt the public into asking itself the questions, "Is this assault on Nature right,?" followed by "Is this what we really want?" After getting two "no's" for answers the ground was fertile for inducing citizens to speak up, contact their congressional delegation, and take action, direct action on the picket line if necessary.²¹

Earth First! drew battle lines around every wildland and critical wildlife habitat remaining in America. With so many potential problems, attention-getting physical conflict involving troop deployments favored the worst insults, such as logging the last great stands of redwoods, or invading the commercially lucrative old growth forests of the Pacific Northwest and the northern

Mountain States. Here the stakes were so high there was no alternative but to fight the good fight on the ground.²²

Earth First! shined a spotlight on government agency policies that allowed and even promoted anti-environmental activities. Special displeasure was directed at the U.S. Forest Service with its long-range plan to sell practically every tree that could profitably be "harvested" in certain of our national forests. While the harvesting was incremental and said to be sustainable, it reduced biological diversity in favor of fast-growing species, such as Douglas fir, and would eventually wipe out nearly all of the nation's remaining magnificent stands of large, old growth timber not protected by wilderness designation.²³

Earth First! was one of the reactions to the policies and actions of the administration of President Ronald Reagan (1981-1989). The government's environmental and public land policies often answered to the pressures of market capitalism and the calls of the "Sagebrush Rebellion" and the "wise use" movement. The resulting promotion of resource extraction and wildland abuse created a loud outcry and resistance from an environmental community that had emerged and grown up in the 1960's and 1970's. Earth First! was only one of many parties willing to oppose government policies and agencies over wilderness and environmental issues. The basis for legal action could be the terms of the Wilderness Act itself, but often was justified by the foundational laws written shortly thereafter, laws that created the Environmental Policy Agency (EPA) and the regulations designed to protect the environment or endangered species.²⁴

The methods used by Earth First! and the larger environmental community were based on two tactics common to the civil rights and anti-Viet Nam war movements active during the prior two decades, non-violent confrontation and civil disobedience. Legal action could accompany either tactic and often did. Earth First! was not unique in its encouragement of extreme methods of confrontation or civil disobedience that could, intended or not, result in violent responses, but was unique in its countenance of "monkey wrenching." By the late 1980's Foreman was clearly troubled by the possibilities violence or felonious acts being committed during Earth First! physical actions. He had personally suffered the consequences of the first and been inappropriately charged with the second. In Oregon he was purposely struck and drug by a logger's vehicle on an access road he was attempting to block.²⁵ As discussed earlier, in Arizona he was charged, inappropriately, with conspiring to attempt to down power lines. That charge was later withdrawn.

By the early 1990's the courts had affirmed the legitimacy and broad vision behind the Wilderness Act and the environmental laws passed in the 60's and 70's. The Reagan administration's worst initiatives threatening public domain wildlands and associated wildlife had been largely thwarted. Federal land management policy, wildlife protections, and public sentiment were turning, if unevenly, in favor of more protection and preservation. Earth First! played a useful role in that growing transformation.

Early in his tenure as the public face of Earth First! Dave met Nancy Morton, a pretty, young activist who was to become his second wife and the stable center of his sometimes-chaotic life. Their paths crossed in 1983 when he came to Chico, California on an organizing trip. She was a nursing school undergraduate at the time, a leader of the local campaign to establish an Ishi

Wilderness Area, and collaborator on other wilderness campaigns in north-central California. The two were attracted to each other and, a few months later, Dave moved from his temporary residence with a friend in Ely, Nevada to Chico. After Nancy graduated she took up nursing in a Chico hospital and the two were married in 1984 at the annual Earth First! Round River Rendezvous. Later they moved to Tucson so that she could enroll in a masters degree program at the University of Arizona. After receiving her degree Nancy became an acute care/critical care nurse in the university hospital. Then, after spending nearly a decade in Tucson, Nancy accepted a teaching position with the University of New Mexico and she and Dave moved to Albuquerque.²⁶

A New Direction

A decade after founding Earth First! Dave Foreman, with Nancy at his side, declared his original purpose in creating the organization largely fulfilled.²⁷ It was time to move on and he was joined by John Davis, editor of *Earth First! Journal*. With financial assistance from Doug Tompkins' Foundation for Deep Ecology, Foreman and Davis initiated publication of *Wild Earth* in 1991, a new magazine devoted to conservation and conservation science. Dave was at a turning point in his life and signaling that he was embarking on a deeper and more reflective kind of activism. After years of struggling for wildland preservation he began directing his attention to the steps needed to assure that Nature survived in meaningful ways, ways that preserved the wild biome and its species in sustainable quantities. His religion became conservation biology, and his creation became rewilding, his term for expanding former wildlands by restoring and maintaining their original conditions.²⁸

At the time of Foreman's conversion the new field of conservation biology was revealing that individual plant and animal species in isolated wilderness areas, even when those areas are large, often do not have enough gene pool diversity to indefinitely sustain themselves. When disease or environmental disruptions strike a specie with a genetically diverse population, some of its members often show more resistance and survivability than other members based on minor differences in their genetic makeup. Taking actions that promote and preserve genetic diversity in our ecosystems adds to long term stability and survivability. Particularly important are "key species," those that have an outsized influence on the health and balance of the ecosystem. Such key species are often large often carnivores, at or near the top of the food chain, that exert population limits on herbivores that might otherwise over-exploit their plant-based food sources.

Before European arrival in North America the intermingling of populations of a single specie was limited only by its ability to migrate. Genetic diversity was common, resulting from eons of evolution. Today nature-on-its-own is often restricted to islands of wildlands where genetic diversity may be low, especially if numbers have fallen or a specie, such as the Mexican wolf, is being reintroduced after previously having been eradicated. Being able to retain examples of our wildlands and wildlife approximately as they were hundreds of years ago requires that some mechanism for migration of key species be protected or reestablished and maintained.²⁹

In 1988 Dave Foreman and David Brower, the first executive director of the Sierra Club and founder of the Earth Island Institute, were invited to the University of Michigan to give presentations. The two had often shared a stage in the past and knew each other well. The invitation was extended by Barbara Dugelby, a graduate student and former member of Earth

First!, at that time studying under Dr. Michael Soulé, founder and president of the Society for Conservation Biology. The morning after the presentations Dugelby took Foreman, Brower, and Soulé to breakfast. All were familiar with each other's work, and the ensuing conversation revealed shared interests that suggested collaboration. As Greg Hanscom put it, *"In Foreman, Soulé saw the passion and the drive to take his science to the people. And in Soulé's science, Foreman saw the foundation for his vision."*³⁰

Soulé and Foreman began communicating, perhaps casually at first, but with enough depth and frequency to keep the flame alive for another couple of years. Then, in the spring of 1991, Michael wrote Dave a letter. Frustrated with the thought that conservation had lost its vision and come to a dead end, he inquired "what's the next step?" He then suggested a small meeting involving conservation biologists and wilderness activists to explore the question.³¹ Doug Tompkins and his Foundation for Deep Ecology were already bankrolling *Wild Earth* magazine and Tompkins was always looking for ways to improve and accelerate conservation. When Foreman showed him Soulé's letter Tompkins seized on Soulé's suggestion. He urged Foreman to get the key people together and make a plan, offering his San Francisco home as the place for the meeting. Rod Mondt, an Arizona organizer, made the contacts and fifteen showed up in the fall of 1991 for a three-day strategy meeting, camping out on Tompkin's apparently spacious living room floor. About half of them were conservation biologists, probably selected by Soulé and Reed Noss. Some were wildland activists, probably selected by Foreman and Davis. Two were friends of Tompkins known to be provocative thinkers.³²

Out of this gathering came the conclusion that a new organization was needed that could attack a central problem emerging from the findings of conservation biology: how to establish a network composed of large wildlands (core areas) connected by wildlife corridors. The corridors needed to be sufficiently free from human interference to encourage the physical movement of larger key species, especially carnivores. Such migration was recognized as necessary to nurture and maintain genetic diversity and thereby bolster resistance to disease and environmental threats. The resulting stability of these key species then would add stability to the entire biome and increase its chances of surviving intact.³³

A small group emerged from this meeting calling itself the North American Wilderness Recovery Project centered around Reed Noss, Michael Soulé, John Davis, David Johns, and Dave Foreman. This group took on the immediate task of preparing a document that presented a mission statement, the problem identified, and a plan to address it. Their 90-page draft became the basis for the Wildlands Project, a small non-profit staffed by conservation biologists and wilderness activists. The Wildlands Project would promote research on applications of conservation biology to long-term wildlife survival while encouraging and supporting local affiliates willing to attempt implementation of the results. Helping fund the startup was, to no surprise, Tompkins' Foundation for Deep Ecology. The formal announcement of the Wildlands Project was made in a 1992 *Wild Earth-Special Issue* titled "The Wildlands Project: Plotting a North American Wilderness Recovery Strategy" ³⁴

These developments must have kept Dave and Nancy very busy during the next several years. Nancy was applying her recent M.S. (Nursing, Adult Health and Education) as an intensive care unit nurse with increased responsibilities. Dave held an executive position with The Wildlands

Project as board chair. His position and background would have him committed to helping educate the public and new Wildlands Project affiliates. Affiliates typically were conservation organizations with little background in conservation biology. At the time he was still serving as executive editor of *Wild Earth* and, at the same time, updating *The Big Outside* with Howie Wolke and arranging for a second edition. He also had columns and essays to write for *Wild Earth* and other publications, and was sitting for interviews with Susan Zakin as she prepared her biography of him and his years with Earth First! titled *Coyotes and Town Dogs*.³⁵

A New Home in New Mexico

In 1994 Nancy obtained a teaching position at the University of New Mexico College of Nursing necessitating a move from Tucson to Albuquerque. This was a welcome development for her, as it would have meant more predictable hours and a clearer career path with means for advancement. She would, in time, become the Undergraduate Program Director for the college.³⁶ Dave was returning to his home state filled with people and places he knew well and loved. A number of friends from his days with the New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee were still in the area and still active in conservation. There was a lot to look forward to, including moving into the comfortable Mark Drive house near the foot of the Sandia Mountains. It would become home for the rest of their lives.

1995 was a portentous year for a number of people in this story. That year conservationists were brought together again who had participated in earlier wilderness campaigns. Those campaigns added a significant amount of wilderness, in numbers and acreages, to the state's totals in the late 1970's and early 1980's. The events of 1995 would set these stalwarts on a course that would lead to the creation of the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance.

Dave and Nancy had hardly settled in Albuquerque when Susan Morgan, previously living in Washington state, took up temporary residence near Madrid, only an hour's drive away. Then, in early 1995 Bob and Phyllenore Howard retired and moved back to New Mexico after living in Connecticut and Oklahoma for the previous ten years. Before leaving New Mexico for Connecticut Bob had been a board member of the New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee and was well aware of its capabilities and accomplishments. Bob immediately got in contact with his old friend to reconnect. The memories of earlier days were still alive and well when Bob and Phyllenore reunited with Dave and met Nancy. There was much to catch up on.

In 1985 when the Howards left New Mexico for Connecticut Robert E. "Bob" Howard, M.D., Ph.D., had just resigned from his position as tenured Associate Professor at the University of New Mexico Medical School and Associate Director of the UNM Medical Center laboratories. Phyllenore D. Howard, Ph. D., M.B.A., was leaving her position as Associate Director of the then New Mexico Medical Reference Laboratories to accept a position as Vice President of Operations and Laboratory Director with a company developing cancer diagnostic technology. During the period away from the state Bob established a successful medical consulting business and he and Phyllenore remained active with the Sierra Club. In 1983 Bob had been appointed and later reelected to the Sierra Club national Board of Directors, serving as its Vice President for four years and Treasurer for two years until 1990. He also had served as the Sierra Club's national Vice President for Planning for ten years. In 1995 they had returned to occupy a new home being built for them in Eldorado at Santa Fe.³⁷

The New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee (WSC)

The New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee stands tall and casts a long shadow in the history of New Mexico wilderness conservation. It is the most direct ancestor of the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance. The WSC was formed in 1970 by a collection of outdoor organizations to serve as the coordinator of a growing coalition. Prominent among them were the New Mexico Mountain Club, the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club, the Albuquerque and New Mexico Wildlife and Conservation Associations (later renamed the Albuquerque and New Mexico Wildlife Federations), the New Mexico Speleological Society and its Albuquerque Grotto, and the Save the Grand Canyon Committee.³⁸

The WSC sought to promote and influence the creation and management of wilderness areas by exploiting opportunities defined by the Wilderness Act of 1964, namely, through citizen consultation required of the agencies managing the public domain, and by the existing ability of citizens to petition Congress for legislation. The WSC represented the interests of its members by acting as grassroots organizer, coordinator, spokesman for and statewide leader of wilderness preservation and protection campaigns. Member organizations were independent and equal partners, a source of WSC leaders, contributors of manpower, providers of special services and talent, and a source of funding. By the mid-1970's the WSC claimed to represent over 30 New Mexico conservation organizations with a combined membership 10,000 citizens.³⁹ Personal memberships were also allowed and by 1975 WSC mailings were going out to 1600 addresses.⁴⁰ The working core of the organization was always a relatively small number of people who shared the day-to-day administrative duties, internal and external communications, performed the functions needed to support its growing knowledge base of the state's wildlands, carried out grassroots organizing, and managed interactions with other organizations and the congressional delegation.

The Wilderness Study Committee was born as the result of an event in January 1968 involving three New Mexico Mountain Club members, Milo Conrad, Jack Kutz, and George Hankins. Conrad was a trail runner, backpacker, and club wilderness coordinator. Kutz and his wife, LaDonna, were prominent local rock climbers and Save the Grand Canyon Committee leaders. Hankins was a prodigious hiker, locally famous for backcountry search and rescue, and known as the "the old man of the mountain" for his familiarity with the Sandia Mountains bordering Albuquerque. These three, representing a group of members from a collection of local outdoor recreation and conservation organizations, met with George Proctor, supervisor of the Cibola National Forest, to recommend that the Forest Service add to its list of wilderness candidates two in the Sandias.

Proctor's response to the trio was a polite rejection of their request based on the proximity to the city. When that answer was communicated the next night in a meeting with those they were representing the result was dismay, followed by an animated group discussion. Emerging from that discussion was a collective decision to explore ways to organize and advocate for more wilderness areas, not just in the Sandias Mountains, but statewide.⁴¹ Over the next two years, through the efforts of a few led by Milo Conrad, Corry McDonald, and Bob Watt, a spectrum of conservation and outdoor recreation organizations within the state came together to create the New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee in early 1970. Its immediate goals were inspired by

the Wilderness Act. The Act removed the ability of the President and the executive branch of government to designate wilderness areas and assigned role solely to the Congress. It also mandated agencies managing the public domain to consult with the public during major decision-making processes and the initial implementation of the Wilderness Act. Making Congress the only source for wilderness designation gave citizens an opening to influence that process that did not exist before. The national conservation organizations, especially The Wilderness Society, had taken early steps to assist and train grassroots clubs and associations how to take advantage of these opportunities. It had assigned staff to develop and conduct week-long training programs in wilderness advocacy including lobbying members of Congress. Milo Conrad had been an early recipient of this training and put it to immediate use by leading the founding of the Wilderness Study Committee and serving as a prominent spokesman for over a decade.⁴²

The Wilderness Study Committee was a broad coalition of the state's outdoor recreation, wildlife, hunting and fishing, caving, river-running, and conservation organizations. As it matured it created a model for efficiently organizing citizen efforts and conducting effective wilderness campaigns. As mentioned earlier, Dave Foreman joined the WSC in 1972 and quickly rose to become one of its most influential leaders. In 1973 The Wilderness Society took notice of Foreman and offered him the position of Southwest Representative. In 1975 he became the chairman of the WSC board and served in that capacity until December 1977 when The Wilderness Society called him to Washington to become its grassroots liaison with Society congressional lobbyists.⁴³

The Wilderness Study Committee initiated the first comprehensive citizen-led wilderness inventories in New Mexico. This huge undertaking provided the factual basis for seeking wilderness designation. Inventories produced physical descriptions of the landscape, wildlife and habitats present, evidence of human activities, intrusion, or lack thereof, opportunities for solitude, maps of proposed boundaries, and characteristics that would qualify an area for wilderness designation. The WSC began with inventories of the national forests in the early 1970's and after completing these turned to preliminary evaluations of BLM-managed public lands in 1975.

Throughout the 1970's the WSC was a high-performing and exceedingly active organization, meeting regularly, publishing an excellent newsletter, and holding annual symposiums on wilderness advocacy. It also developed and regularly held special training workshops on the skills necessary for conducting wilderness inventories, citizen organizing, and informing and lobbying the congressional delegation. In addition to regular contact and two-way conversations with the state's delegation, it performed the same functions with federal land management and state agencies. Leading members, and particularly Corry McDonald, were noted for their personal relationships with senators and representatives. McDonald frequently wrote bills himself that spelled out the details of wilderness legislation the WSC was seeking. These drafts would be shopped around the delegation looking for a sponsor if no member was already taking the initiative to produce a bill on his own. McDonald's style could be authoritarian and that annoyed some people. Dave Foreman was one.⁴⁴ McDonald had a strong attachment to the national forests in northern New Mexico, and a much weaker attachment to the arid grasslands, mesas, and mountains of the south. When the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service proposed several

wilderness areas on the Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge south of Socorro McDonald dismissed them as unworthy, questioning the wilderness characteristics of a desert landscape within sight and sound of roads and railroads.⁴⁵

The 1970's were a time when conservation and environmental protection were popular and bipartisan cooperation on wilderness legislation was not unusual. The state's delegation was approachable, willing to listen to wilderness proposals, and judge them fairly on their merits, in keeping with the views of their constituents and their own personal values and priorities. Ranching, farming, mining, and the petroleum industries dominated the politics in the southern half of the state. Representatives from the southern district were typically Republican, locally popular, and often opposed to wilderness but without adding the vitriol that is heard today. Republican representatives from the more urban areas and the more Hispanic northern districts could be quite amenable to wilderness legislation. Representative Manuel Lujan, a Republican representing Albuquerque and surrounding areas, was such a man. He could disappoint wilderness activists, but his basic integrity and clearly stated values made his choices understandable and often predictable.⁴⁶

Representative Lujan was the original author of the New Mexico Omnibus Wilderness Act of 1980, with Domenici submitting an identical bill, S.2583 soon afterwards. The Act, signed by President Carter, was the greatest achievement of the Wilderness Study Committee although it was unhappy about the wildlands that were not included or were reduced in size. It created eight new wilderness areas containing 382,500 acres and added another 222,560 acres of wildland to existing wilderness areas. A table of New Mexico's wilderness areas and dates created is found on page 35. The Act also created the Chaco Culture National Historic Park, the Salinas National Monument, and added five new wilderness study areas to the Forest Service's list.⁴⁷ As of this the end of 2022 it remains the largest single addition of wilderness within the state since the Wilderness Act of 1964. As welcome as it was, the Omnibus Wilderness Act created less than two-thirds of the land area the WSC was seeking for the same wilderness areas. Domenici's influence had also added the poison pill of "releases," land released from being considered as having and future potential as wilderness areas and managed as such. Particularly concerning was the release of beautiful and dramatic wilderness-worthy land with caves needing protection along the Guadalupe Escarpment north of Carlsbad Cavern National Park.⁴⁸

During the more favorable environment of its first decade the WSC had led a citizen effort that helped produce 783,682 acres of "big W" wilderness. During the next seven years the WSC and its BLM Wilderness Coalition arm were responsible for another 126,050 acres. After 1987 the well went dry. Republican senators and representatives willing to sponsor or vote for wilderness legislation were getting harder to find in New Mexico and elsewhere. Senator Pete Domenici became more critical of the value of wilderness when weighed against other uses. His interests in all forms of energy production, his focus on the national budget and abhorrence of deficits, the lucrative economic value of natural resource extraction and commercial development frequently darkened his appraisals of the value of wilderness. By 2006 environmentalists in his own party gave him the worst lifetime score of any Republican senator for his voting record on environmental issues.⁴⁹ By the mid 90's when Foreman and friends returned to the state Domenici was a powerful senator who defended its military bases, its national laboratories, and its economic engines of agriculture and resource extraction. He was

admired for his intelligence, pragmatism, and general likeability. He remained popular and well respected statewide until his retirement in January 2009.

The New Mexico BLM Wilderness Coalition (BLMWC)

The Wilderness Act of 1964 originally applied to all federal agencies managing the public domain other than the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). BLM manages a category of the public domain termed "public land" and was exempt from the act. The U. S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Park Service fell under the umbrella of the Wilderness Act. This made the national forests, refuges, grasslands, parks, monuments, and historical sites potentially eligible for congressionally designated wilderness areas. The agencies managing them had until 1980 to determine what wilderness-worthy lands were present and provide the President with their findings, after which he would notify Congress of his recommendations. The passage of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 reorganized the BLM, modified its mission, and brought it under the terms of the Wilderness Act. It had until 1992 to similarly evaluate its public land and report its findings to the President who would provide his recommendations to Congress regarding wilderness designations.⁵⁰

Public lands harbor some of the most lovely, dramatic, and iconic landscapes in America and some of our largest cohesive wildlands and wilderness. Public lands can be vast, and in New Mexico are greater in area than the National Forests. BLM-administered lands in the state comprise 13.1 million acres, as compared with 9.1 million acres in the national forests. Of the other agencies, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service manages about 400,000 acres residing in nine refuges while the National Park Service administers less than 300,000 acres. The BLM is the land baron and also oversees the most acreage of grassland fit for grazing.

The Federal Lands Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA and called flip-mah in casual conversation) expanded BLM's mission to include more consideration for the long-term health and protection of public lands, and the inclusion of wilderness is a reflection of that change. The Wilderness Study Committee had already anticipated the passage of FLPMA and began their scoping study of BLM wildlands in 1975. With the passage of FLPMA the Wilderness Study Committee was going to be back in the business of detailed, comprehensive, and defensible statewide wildland inventories again. The BLM released its initial findings in early 1979 listing 104 units comprising 2,241,769 acres that would be screened for wilderness characteristics. The New Mexico State Office announced a generous number of public meetings that it would hold around the state to explain its activities. Its announcement added that it would accept written comments until June 30, 1980 and that it would make its final decision on what units would be permanently removed from further consideration as wilderness in September. This put enormous pressure on conservation organizations to verify that the BLM had a process that was fair and consistent, and that nothing wilderness-worthy was dropped from further consideration.⁵¹

When September arrived it was clear that what qualified for wilderness in BLM eyes was much too restrictive compared with the definition conservationists found in their reading of the Wilderness Act. The BLM had decided that out of the 2,213,000 acres of land initially considered worthy of consideration, only 885,000 acres were to be scrutinized for potential

recommendation to Congress as wilderness candidates.⁵² The front page headline of the Wilderness Study Committee May 1980 newsletter was "Write BLM NOW!". Harold Walling was the new board chair and Judy Bishop his vice chair. Judy's views did not appear in the newsletter but Walling's hair was on fire. His WSC had already identified 100 potential BLM WSA's and decided that 59 of those containing 1,346,588 acres were worthy of a detailed survey to fix their boundaries and confirm that required wilderness characteristics were present. "Las Cruces District is a disaster!" Walling declared, going on to notify the membership that there would soon be a special follow-up alert.⁵³

Walling had good reason for concern. Despite objections and comments from WSC and its coalition members, BLM's subsequent reassessments and adjusted proposals only got worse. In 1991 its final decision and the recommendation to the president had whittled down the qualified Wilderness Study Areas to 22 containing 487,186 acres and releasing an additional 420,400 acres from future consideration for wilderness designation.⁵⁴ Not knowing, in 1980, that this was the future the WSC did the only thing it could do: Push ahead, develop the best case for wilderness additions that was possible, and then look for willing sponsors for the wilderness legislation they sought. That was the avenue that the Wilderness Act had created for the public and the WSC had already proved that it worked.

In 1982 the Wilderness Study Committee and a portion of its coalition decided to make the fight to preserve BLM wilderness-worthy lands a special priority. Early in the year they agreed to create the New Mexico BLM Wilderness Coalition (BLMWC), a special arm of the WSC, to carry out a program of wilderness inventories and produce a document that could challenge the BLM recommendations. Thereafter the BLM Wilderness Coalition became the prominent statewide representative speaking for conservation organizations in meetings and hearings with the BLM, Congress, and other stakeholders. New Mexico was divided into five areas, each staffed by one to three coalition members trained in inventory work, and charged with assembling teams to conduct detailed wilderness inventories and maps of all WSC-identified candidates. Judy Bishop was named the new coalition's statewide coordinator. Principal organizations supporting the coalition were, in addition to the WSC, the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club, The Wilderness Society, and the Gila Wilderness Committee.⁵⁵ For the next five years this small team, supplemented by field volunteers, threw themselves, heart and soul, into this task. The high level of their work would produce a report that became a standard for detail, thoroughness, and availability.

The final report of the BLM Wilderness Coalition wilderness inventory was published in book form and titled *Wildlands: New Mexico BLM Wilderness Coalition Statewide Proposal*.⁵⁶ *Wildlands* proposed 55 wilderness areas spread throughout the state embracing 1,879,289 acres. Jim Fish was the compiler of *Wildlands* data and its editor. He prepared the final manuscript using his personal computer and his own darkroom to convert the 35 mm photographic slides taken by inventory teams to the black and white prints appearing in the published copy.⁵⁷ During the last few years of the BLM Wilderness Coalition he and Judy Bishop were a partnership representing the BLMWC at hearings and meetings and providing the BLM with endless pages of written comments. The 1988 BLM proposal released a year after *Wildlands* contained 27 candidates with 545,072 acres. The final recommendation in 1991 was, as mentioned above, a paltry 22 Wilderness Study Areas containing 487,186 acres.

After releasing its 1988 proposal the BLM convened a stakeholders meeting that included organizations representing sportsmen, outdoor recreationists, conservationists, representatives of oil and gas companies, business, the ranching and farming community, and others. Jim Fish remembered it as a two day meeting and during that time the audience considered, in detail, every one of the BLM's 22 WSA candidates. A sincere attempt was made by the BLM leaders to reach a consensus among the participants regarding boundaries, fences and fence lines, salt and watering facilities needing rancher access, user access points, roads, ways, gates, and the like. Objections and requests for changes were solicited by the BLM. Changes were made on site, and agreements reached including boundary adjustments and access details to the apparent satisfaction of all parties. Special attention had been given to rancher requests and no objections remained. At the end of the negotiations the BLM checked again with the audience and no one indicated dissatisfaction with the results. With that the New Mexico State Director observed that with the changes made and the consensus reached the WSA's were acceptable to everyone. Fish said that the representative from the Cattle Growers Association of New Mexico then startled the audience by saying "We are totally opposed to wilderness and always will be." With that he and the ranchers present got up and walked out of the room.⁵⁸

Jim Fish had participated in the meeting in good faith representing his constituents and assumed everyone else would do the same openly and honestly. He was furious. Fish was already opposed to allowing livestock to graze in wilderness areas long before that day, privately declaring "Wilderness with livestock on it is not wilderness." Fish had grown up on a 10,000 acre family ranch in southwest Texas and knew well the hardships and rewards of ranching. This background only further hardened his attitude against the position taken by the ranchers. Disgusted by their behavior, attitude and duplicity he decided afterward, in his words, to "declare war" on public land grazing. He resigned from his position with the BLM Wilderness Coalition and subsequently formed the Public Land Action Network (PLAN). The objective of PLAN was to expose the problems livestock create for public lands and wilderness. PLAN would seek the removal of livestock from the entire public domain.

Over the next few years PLAN grew to about 2000 members from all across the United States. Fish was a regular attendee and participant in grazing policy hearings by the agencies and Congress. His immediate goal was an amendment to the Wilderness Act that would prohibit livestock grazing in wilderness areas, but he could never gain the support needed from the large national conservation organizations to mount an effective campaign. The nationals believed that working to add wilderness to the system was more important than initiating a new and difficult campaign to eliminate public land grazing. Fish finally gave up and closed PLAN in 1995, but he never dropped his opposition to public land cows and ranchers never forgot his war.⁵⁹

The New Mexico Wilderness Coalition

Jim Fish characterized the BLM Wilderness Coalition as always being a small organization of only 10-15 members with a single purpose: Perform the inventories and work necessary to produce *Wildlands*. He said that shortly after *Wildlands* was published the BLMWC dissolved, the year probably 1988. That would have been in keeping with its charter from the WSC and the coalition of conservation organizations it represented. Fish and Judy Bishop did, however, continue to attend hearings and meetings as representatives of the BLMWC for several more

years. During that time they also provided written comments to agencies and Congress regarding BLM's wilderness proposals and management actions, always representing and defending the positions taken in *Wildlands*.

Shortly after the BLMWC dissolved, an organization called the New Mexico Wilderness Coalition (WC) was created, probably formed from BLMWC members and volunteers.⁶⁰ There may have been a desire by BLMWC members to keep southern New Mexico activists involved in wilderness advocacy as the Wilderness Study Committee seemed to be drifting towards a more Albuquerque-Santa Fe-centered and northern New Mexico-focused organization. Whatever the reason or the process, the new Wilderness Coalition chose a well-known leader to get things started.

In 1989 Maynard H. "Dutch" Salmon became the New Mexico Wilderness Coalition's first state coordinator and held that position until 1995. Salmon was an avid outdoorsman, hunter, and fisherman from Silver City. He was a regionally popular story-teller and writer of books and magazine articles. He had established High Lonesome Books as a book store and publisher for regional and borderland authors who found it difficult to get their work published by the larger establishments. He also was the founder and a long-serving Chairman of the Gila Conservation Coalition seeking protection of the wild Gila River and its headwaters in the Gila Wilderness. His books and periodical submissions were filled with his experiences and insights gained from hunting, fishing, backpacking, and river running in the Gila region. He received a number of awards for his writing and for his conservation work over his lifetime, remaining active in conservation and an author until his death in 2019.⁶¹

The New Mexico Wilderness Coalition claimed many of the same organizations as members that already belonged to the fading New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee. The press often confused it with the Wilderness Study Committee or the BLM Wilderness Coalition as well as, it seems, did some of its own members. It remained a small organization over its short lifespan under Salmon, rarely appearing in the archives of the state's newspapers. It took much the same positions on issues that the Wilderness Study Committee took and the BLM Wilderness Coalition had taken. It appears that it never incorporated or registered with the state.

In spite of Salmon's local prestige and influence, the WC was never large enough or active enough to be a force for wilderness legislation or changes in wilderness management. While it claimed to speak for a number of conservation organizations, the stronger voices were the recognizable member organizations of its coalition, such as the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club and the New Mexico Wildlife Federation. It did, however, add another voice to the Gila Conservation Coalition's crusade to protect the Gila River from dams, diversions, and water extraction schemes.

During this period (1990-1995) the conservation issues I found in New Mexico's newspapers were related to wildlife, hunting and fishing, licenses and regulations for the same, the Gila River, or the never-ending discussion of grazing vs. overgrazing, grazing fees, the fate of the privately owned Valles Caldera, and Valle Vidal, and the plight of ranchers versus the threat livestock pose to public lands and wildlife. One might have expected that the completion of the BLM wilderness inventory and presentation of candidates to Congress would have prompted

legislation from New Mexico, but none was forthcoming other than the Domenici-Bingaman bill that expanded the Bisti/De-Na-Zin wilderness by 16,500 acres in 1996.⁶²

In spite of its low profile, the Wilderness Coalition gave a home to wilderness stalwarts living in southern New Mexico and kept them in communication. Bob Tafari (biologist-ichthyologist), Tom Wootten (horticulturist-naturalist), and Greg Magee, (horticulturist/landscape architect/naturalist), all with intimate knowledge of southern New Mexico wildlands, were active in the Wilderness Coalition serving at various times on its board. All three later became founders and board members of the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance.

In 1995 Dutch Salmon stepped down as state coordinator of New Mexico Wilderness Coalition and it merged with the New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee, at that time led by John Wright, also an active Sierra Club member. A five member board was formed with Wright as its chair. This was the organization that Foreman and friends encountered when they again took up residence in New Mexico. The newly merged organizations could be schizophrenic about the name and the initialisms of the merged configuration. The press was generally unaware and confused by the merger. It was listed as the New Mexico Wilderness Coalition/Wilderness Study Committee (NMWC/WSC) in the flyers for the 1995 Wilderness Conference sponsored by the Wildlands Project. Former members I have talked with tend to refer to it according to their affiliation prior to the merger. Today the short-lived merger is mostly forgotten.⁶³

Seeking Change: The 1995 New Mexico Wildlands Conference

Early in 1995 Dave asked Susan Morgan to put together a statewide New Mexico wildlands conference to be sponsored by the Wildlands Project. The stated purpose was to bring known wilderness leaders together to begin considering strategies to help revive wilderness activism and promote legislative success. The College of Santa Fe was selected as the venue and attendance was by invitation only. Susan had previous experience organizing events and eagerly set about building an organizing committee. She remembers that among those on her committee was "a beautiful young couple with long hair" recently arrived from Missouri -- Martin and Julie Heinrich.

An early invitation to help prepare for the conference was extended to the NMWC/WSC. John Wright, the chair, rejected the invitation and voiced the opinion that hosting conferences was more properly the purview of the NMWC/WSC. An invitation to participate in conference was left open, however, and NMWC/WSC was listed as a cooperating organization in the formal conference agenda. Members Wright and John Simpson represented the NMWC/WSC and helped facilitate two strategy sessions.⁶⁴

The 1995 New Mexico Wildlands Conference was a landmark event held over the weekend of September 22-24 and attracting over 100 attendees. Representatives from a broad array of organizations were present, including some promoting animal welfare. The conference brought together old conservation friends and acquaintances with long-standing ties from across the southwest. Morgan called it her favorite conference of the many she had been involved with because of the friendly and relaxed atmosphere generating feelings of reunion and renewal. The conference was divided into two parts, the first being a presentation and discussion of issues

needing attention, the second an exploration of strategies that could be used to attack those issues. The issues were titled:⁶⁵

- Mexican Wolf
- BLM Wilderness and Public Lands Giveaway
- Logging Without Laws
- Endangered Species
- Grazing

The principal speakers during the course of the conference were:

- Susan Morgan/Dave Foreman: *Opening Remarks and Welcome*
- Ron Mondt: *How the Wildlands Project is Organized*
- Jim Strittholt: *What is Conservation Biology*
- Jim Baca: *The Threat to Our Public Lands*
- Lawson LeGate: *What Worked in Utah*
- Brant Calkin: *SUWA ROADSHOW*⁶⁶
- Dave Foreman: *Building a New Mexico Wilderness Network/Around the Campfire*

A highlight of the conference was the presentation by Wendy Brown describing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service program for planned reintroductions of Mexican Grey Wolves in New Mexico and Arizona.⁶⁷ The USFWS process would require local hearings to inform the public of its plans and solicit comments before approving and conducting actual reintroductions. Later, in closing remarks to the audience, Foreman made a diplomatic appeal for wildlife supporters across the spectrum of organizations present to attend the wolf reintroduction hearings. Conference organizers used this opportunity to hold a gathering immediately after the close of the conference to discuss how to take advantage of the hearings. Nancy Morton became a key figure in developing the plan that emerged. Attendees agreed to return home and begin organizing to flood the hearings with wolf reintroduction supporters.⁶⁸

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife wolf reintroduction hearings in New Mexico, Texas, and Arizona were dominated by wolf supporters. Foreman personally arranged to bus people from the Albuquerque area to the Roswell hearing and commended Wes Leonard for "an outstanding job" of mobilizing local Sierra Club members and the public for the El Paso hearing. That story was repeated at the hearings in New Mexico, Texas, and Arizona. Audiences were filled with those favoring wolf reintroduction and reflected their collective sentiment in the nearly unanimous presentation of individual statements made at the audience microphones.⁶⁹

Brant Calkin's presence and presentation to the audience at the conference had special significance. Calkin was a biologist raised in New Mexico and having a long association with the Sierra Club serving in local, regional, and national offices. He and Susan Tixier (pronounced tuh-shay), a Santa Fe environmental lawyer, had left New Mexico in 1987 to lead the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance. Both were prominent and successful in New Mexico when SUWA recruited them to help it revive and rebuild. They accepted their new jobs working for poverty-level pay, Brant as executive director and Susan as associate director. Calkin became the selfless point of SUWA's spear, planning and setting goals, managing the organization, and leading its conservation campaigns. Tixier became its legal mind and its great communicator.⁷⁰

Tixier was born and raised in Aspen, Colorado and had been legal council for the executive committee of the national Sierra Club. When SUWA found her she was on special assignment to assist conservation organizations in New Mexico.⁷¹ Susan had wasted no time in New Mexico where she co-founded the New Mexico Environmental Law Center. Once in Utah, over 50 herself, she decided to found the Great Old Broads for Wilderness after she heard Senator Orin Hatch (Republican from Utah) oppose wilderness designation because it prohibited the use of motorized vehicles thereby discriminating against the elderly. She found Hatch's statement an insult to the elderly.⁷² Tixier became the SUWA legal counsel, public explainer, and bridge builder. Susan could appear anywhere in Utah, seemingly at any time, giving presentations and holding forums, panel discussions, debates, and outdoor events for citizens, local officials and their communities.⁷³

When Calkin arrived at the Wildlands Conference he had been an activist with a 30-year association with the Sierra Club. He was named a national board member and then president of the Sierra Club in the mid-1970's. In 1984 the Sierra Club bestowed on him its highest honor, the John Muir Award. During the 1970's and 1980's Calkin had served New Mexico state government as both volunteer and an appointee to conservation commissions and the land office.⁷⁴ He was a backpacker, a hunter, an outdoorsman, and a private pilot. He could disappear for weeks in the outback of the Grand Canyon, Mexico, or on a body of water in a kayak. Now he was entering his sixties as one of New Mexico's and Utah's most prominent and successful conservation leaders. Calkin had stepped down from his executive director's post with SUWA early in 1995 and now, as a regular staff member, he was singing his swan song in a yearlong performance of what was titled the SUWA Roadshow.

Calkin came to Santa Fe in the midst of his whirlwind journey across America presenting slide shows displaying the beauty and wonders of Utah's red rock wilderness, and warning of the threat posed to it by the Utah delegation's so-called wilderness bill, H.R.1745. The bill would create a paltry amount of wilderness while permanently opening all the remaining undesignated wildland in Utah for resource extraction and development. By September Calkin was well into the total of 120 cities in 24 states that he would visit before year's end to raise opposition to H.R.1745. To save SUWA money on travel he was living out of a well-worn VW van. In recent months SUWA's campaign against H.R.1745 had stimulated widespread public opposition among those who heard about the legislation. Senators and representatives were already receiving thousands of angry letters and hundreds of Washington office visits from constituents living in states throughout the country protesting H.R.1745. Not yet foreseen at the September Wildlands Conference was the outcome of Calkin's news-making journey and SUWA's outstanding national campaign. On December 14 Utah Representative Hansen, on the floor of the House, would, at the last minute, yank his H.R.1745, a bill that he had successfully moved through committees and was now scheduled for floor consideration and a vote. The surprise in the chamber and gallery was palpable and Speaker Newt Gingrich was reportedly angered by this extraordinary event and the waste of valuable yearend time it represented. The reason for Hansen's unusual action was a last minute vote count that revealed too many Republicans, responding to their constituents, had decided to break with party loyalty and professional courtesy and vote against the Utah delegation's bill.⁷⁵ Merry Christmas, Utah!

Calkin's presence at the 1995 Wilderness Conference challenged New Mexicans to step up their game. He had announced three goals for SUWA when assuming the position of executive director: 1) build the membership; 2) nationalize the Utah wilderness issue; 3) defend the wildlands until they gained wilderness protection.⁷⁶ The Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance was fast becoming a powerful force for conservation in its state. The political environment was very different in New Mexico, and a national campaign was not appropriate, but the general goal was the same: build public support to create wilderness from wildlands and seek protection for both. It sounds simple but it is hard work requiring thoughtfulness, imagination, courage, dedication, and personal sacrifice.

Calkin, Tixier, the staff of SUWA, and its volunteer members were proving to be up to the task. They would achieve their immediate goal of blocking their delegation's disastrous wilderness bill. Afterward they would be partially rewarded with the 1996 declaration of the giant Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument and, over the following ten years Congress would approve two wilderness area designations over the objections of the Utah delegation. SUWA would also go on to protect Utah wilderness from these kinds of onslaughts again and again. It was not until Democrats won both chambers of Congress and Barack Obama won the Presidency that Utah would benefit from wilderness legislation. In 2009 Utah gained fifteen wilderness areas and in one of his last acts as President in 2016 Mr. Obama declared Bears Ears National Monument (over the objections of the Utah delegation). SUWA had created a national constituency for its campaigns to preserve Utah's red rock wilderness and it remains alive today.

The Decision to Form the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance

The Wildlands Conference and the success of the wolf reintroduction hearings would have reminded attendees of what was possible and the potential rewards. "Old-timers" from the early days of the Wilderness Study Committee would have recalled their successes of the 1970's and '80's and how they were achieved. SUWA's revival was another reminder and in the regional news, readily available for anyone willing to notice and analyze. The message from the conference and the wolf hearings was that it could be made to happen in New Mexico. That had been Foreman's motivation from the beginning and was behind the decisions to make the conference a problem identification and strategy-building exercise for an audience of known leaders and activists. It was time to begin defending the land and its wildlife more vigorously.

Attendees may have left the conference wondering, "who is going to lead it?" Amongst those present there was probably a suspicion and perhaps a hope that it might involve Dave Foreman and associates. As time progressed it became evident that, in spite of its best intentions, it wasn't going to be the New Mexico Wilderness Coalition/Wilderness Study Committee.⁷⁷

Dave and Nancy, Bob and Phillenore and their friends had observed that the WC/WSC was not focused on a manageable set of issues, "it seemed to be going off in all directions." The four had begun regularly attending board and membership meetings, at times joined by others in their circle of friends and contacts. There was little interest in suggestions they raised intended to increase member participation, focus efforts, and further activate the wilderness program. A suggestion to increase the size of the board to expose it to new ideas and stimulate growth was dismissed. Nancy's request that the number of membership meetings per year be raised from one to four to stimulate participation was met with a lukewarm response, but followed by change to

three membership meetings per year. A few months later John Wright called her to say that people were complaining about "too many meetings."⁷⁸ The status quo was comfortable and not going to change. The WC/WSC leadership was satisfied its program of taking positions on issues, meeting with BLM, Park Service, and Forest Service personnel regarding land management, organizing club outings, and certainly a good number of other things. But these weren't creating campaigns that could change public opinion and influence lawmakers and agencies the early Wilderness Study Committee or SUWA, and wildland protection was suffering for it.

It is unfortunate that the WC/WSC took so little advantage of the talent and experience being offered. Foreman and friends were not outsiders. A number were former members and leaders of the Wilderness Study Committee, the WC/WSC's parent organization at a time when it was most successful. All were willing workers. All were conservation activists. Several were state, regional, or national figures who knew how to generate citizen support, organize campaigns and movements, and work within the political system. This group included, in addition to Dave, Nancy, Bob and Phyllenore: Jim Baca, former state land commissioner, former national head of the Bureau of Land Management, soon to become mayor of Albuquerque; Bob Langsencamp, former chair of the Wilderness Study Committee, former deputy state land commissioner, member of Governor Apodaca's Wilderness Commission; Kathy Love, a UNM law school student studying to become an environmental lawyer; Jack Humphrey, executive director of the Sky Island Alliance, former canvas director for Citizens for a Better Environment, former field manager for Greenpeace; Rick Aster, Professor of geophysics, New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology, intimately familiar with BLM lands in southern New Mexico; Todd Schulke, environmental studies biologist, later member of several state government forest health committees, cofounder of the Center for Biological Diversity, later to become a two decade board member and officer of the Wilderness Alliance; and Martin Heinrich, executive director of the Cottonwood Gulch Foundation (providing environmental education for young people), later to become Wilderness Alliance board member, its second board chair, Albuquerque city councilman, New Mexico District 1 Representative to Congress, and New Mexico U.S. Senator. As Foreman, Morton, and the Howards have said, "We were organizers,we just knew how to get things done."

Dave Foreman recalled a conversation with Susan Morgan during this period in which she floated the idea of creating a new, formal, non-profit organization, with a full-time paid staff, able to accept large donations, and solicit grants from individuals, other non-profits, foundations, and government agencies. She was describing an organization like the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance under Brant Calkin and similar conservation organizations operating across the country. Both were familiar with this category. Such a step would require the startup to seek New Mexico incorporation and 501(c)(3) non-profit status granted by the IRS.⁷⁹ All straightforward tasks, but time consuming. Susan's proposal probably made Dave uneasy for a time. His preferences were for lean, hungry, and focused grassroots clubs composed of volunteers as exemplified by the early versions of the Wilderness Study Committee and Earth First!.⁸⁰ It was his belief that these groups produced the most inspired, daring, committed, and effective wilderness activists. Regardless, he realized the times were changing (his words), and seeing the value of Susan's proposal he bought in.

Susan's proposition was shared with others within the Foreman circle of friends and contacts and found appealing. Thought was given to the idea that the WC/WSC could simply be converted to such a non-profit, but then a problem was identified. The Wilderness Study Committee had registered with the state in 1976 as a non-taxable educational corporation but not with the IRS. No problem there, but it limited it to small donations; however the Wilderness Coalition was an informal (unregistered) organization without a clear financial history. The mingling of its funds with WSC made the status of the merged organization's financial balance sheet uncertain. This could be a problem if the books of a new formal organization based on the WC/WSC were to be audited by a potential donor or the IRS and found lacking. A new wilderness organization, separate from the WC/WSC, one starting with a clean balance sheet, was necessary.⁸¹

Executing the Decision

By this time it was early 1997. Foreman and his circle of friends and associates had met several times and agreed that the idea of starting a formal non-profit with a paid staff should be pursued with the members of the WC/WSC. It was agreed that they would present the idea at the upcoming membership meeting. While participant's recollections of the meeting lack detail, they state that there was no formal planning. There was probably an agreement that they should attend as a group and possibly who would speak. The goal was to convince the membership to dissolve the WC/WSC and reorganize as a formal non-profit with a much larger and more diverse board. If the membership of the WC/WSC could be persuaded to make the change, then the new Wilderness Alliance would inherit a well-known and highly knowledgeable core of members representing all regions within the state, especially the southern half. If the idea was rejected, then the Foreman group planned to separate from the WC/WSC and build a new, formal non-profit from the ground up. As they said, "we just knew how to get things done."⁸²

The first WC/WSC membership meeting of 1997 was held, probably in March, on the campus of New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology in Socorro. Most, if not all, of those previously mentioned in the group attended. Their presence swelled the audience in the small room to twenty five to thirty.⁸³ Toward the end of the meeting, when regular business had been concluded, Dave Foreman rose to present his group's idea of dissolving the WC/WSC and creating a new, formal 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation led by a fifteen-member board and a paid staff. Bob Tafarielli remembers Dave as a charismatic and spell-binding speaker, "an old time Bible-thumping preacher."⁸⁴ His presentation was an overview of what was needed and what was possible with an organizational change. Dave was followed by Bob Howard who methodically furnished the details of how such a transformation could be accomplished. Last to speak was Martin Heinrich who gave a summation that Tafarielli simply described as "Martin, convincing in his own way."⁸⁵

The unsuspecting audience was overwhelmed. Initial reactions ranged from surprise and dismay, perhaps shock, to interest and enthusiasm. It was soon obvious that the advocates for change were more than just these three speakers, but included a contingent who had traveled down from Albuquerque and points north. This raised questions about the motives of this group and its commitment to a statewide wilderness program. The doubters foresaw future favoritism accorded the more well-watered, more forested mountains of the northern half of the state where wildlands were mostly managed by the Forest Service. This would put the southern half of

the state, much of it lying in the Chihuahua Desert, home to wildlands managed by the BLM, at risk of being disadvantaged, if not outright ignored. There was a history supporting this concern. Some leaders of the early Wilderness Study Committee had little interest in the arid wildlands of southern New Mexico and exhibited that prejudice. Foreman responded by reminding them that he had resided in Glenwood in the southern portion of the state for six years when employed by The Wilderness Society and was simultaneously a leader of the WSC. He had coordinated the first inventories of BLM wildlands in the mid-1970's. He may have reminded them that he was also the joint author of *The Big Outside* and had identified the dry, volcanic West Potrillo Mountains near Las Cruces as a prime target for a massive wilderness area.⁸⁶ It was pointed out that others present, namely Rick Aster, and Bob Langsencamp, were both well-known and well-traveled southern New Mexico conservationists.⁸⁷ Furthermore, Jim Baca had been state land commissioner and head of the national BLM. He was certainly attuned to the wilderness value of southern New Mexico's public lands and unlikely lend his name to a movement that ignored the part of the state containing the majority of BLM-managed land.

Wesley Leonard, the respected leader of the El Paso Group of the Sierra Club, was a friend of Dave's, a former Earth Firster, and a great proponent of Chihuahua Desert wilderness. He was in favor of the proposal.⁸⁸ Wilderness Coalition board member Greg Magee was enthused by the idea and similarly committed to the desert wild.⁸⁹ Former Wilderness Coalition board member Bob Tafanelli was uneasy about the change but willing to vote for it. After a while it could be sensed that the audience was beginning to accept the idea of a new, activist replacement for the WC/WSC. A motion was made to create a new formal organization named the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance with a fifteen-member board replacing the New Mexico Wilderness Coalition/Wilderness Study Committee. The New Mexico Wilderness Coalition would reorganized and registered with the state as non-profit operating as a coalition of independent conservation organizations much as before.

The vote was overwhelmingly in favor of creating the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance. Dave and Nancy agreed that all but two present voted to create a new, formal, non-profit. Others say more may have voted against the proposition, and some reluctantly voted for the proposition. All agree that at least John Wright, the chairman of the WC/WSC, was opposed as well as one other member of the audience and probably one or two board members. After voting the attendees were invited to walk over to Rick Aster's house following the close of the membership meeting to begin planning the transition. About a dozen gathered in Rick's living room where Bob Howard was unofficially elected as chair of the new board, some board members were tentatively identified, and next steps were agreed upon.⁹⁰

Building the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance

Shortly after the meeting Bob Howard mailed an announcement to the members of the WC/WSC of the change to the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance and announcing a meeting at Dave and Nancy's home in Albuquerque to formally elect board members and officers. He invited members of the previous board to join the new board and John Wright was invited to remain on as board chair. Greg Magee accepted the offer to join the new board, but Wright and other board members rejected it and membership in the Wilderness Alliance. The meeting was held and a full slate of fifteen board members was formally selected, officers were named, and assignments for the tasks needing to be done were accepted. Bob Howard was formally elected

board chair, Jeff Regenold as vice-chair, Nancy Morton as secretary, and Rick Aster was named treasurer. Kathy Love and Nancy Morton became the subcommittee working with Howard to draft the bylaws and submit the application for incorporation. Bob Howard dealt with fundraising, organizational details, agendas, meetings, public relations, and planning. Bob needed more help and Phillenore took on the tasks of bookkeeper and accountant, membership recruiting and recording, and communications including producing a regular newsletter. Bob handled the daily routine, and the task of incorporating the Wilderness Coalition as a revamped organization of organizations and filling its new board. Phillenore handled the Wilderness Alliance application for IRS 501(c)(3) approval as a formal non-profit. The extent of their contribution was summarized by founder Wesley Leonard, "Bob and Phillenore were the Wilderness Alliance for the first two years."⁹¹ They modestly characterize that as an exaggeration, but Bob and Phillenore were certainly its engine and public face.

Raising the funds necessary to get the Wilderness Alliance off the ground was one of the first objectives. Bob had a list of about 40 potential members but much more than membership contributions were needed. Foreman's connections with Doug Tompkins paid off and his Foundation for Deep Ecology made an early contribution, passing money through the Wildlands Project for a small fee. Brian O'Donnell and Melissa Watson of the Wilderness Support Center in Durango, Colorado were helpful in locating potential donors. The Wilderness Society, the Sierra Club, and the Wilberforce Foundation all provided monetary support. Various individuals also responded. Phillenore recalls that "one day \$2000 dropped through the transom in a letter from a local contributor."⁹²

Bob Howard's 1997 end-of-year report as board chair states that the first organizational meeting of the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance was held May 3, 1997. Articles of Incorporation and associated bylaws and standing rules were filed and accepted. The organization had become official. The board was fully filled with fifteen members and four meetings were held during 1997. Committees were organized for Honchos (task leaders), Membership, Fund Raising, Native American Outreach, Staff Search, Nominations and Elections, Inspectors of Elections, Campouts, and Newsletter. Funds had been received from Director donations, individuals, transfers from the New Mexico Wilderness Coalition, Rockwood Fund, and the Foundation for Deep Ecology. Out of about 150 members about 40 were considered to be activists and about two dozen had been evaluated for areas of expertise. Two newsletters put together by Phillenore had been sent out to a mailing list of 450. Finally, a "terrific campout in the San Mateo Mountains next to the Apache Kid Wilderness" had been held.⁹³

The Articles of Incorporation for the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance are stamped "Filed" with the New Mexico Corporation Commission, May 9, 1997," its official birthday.⁹⁴ Incorporators were Robert E. Howard of Santa Fe and Nancy A. Morton of Albuquerque. IRS approval for 501(c)(3) tax status took another two years, finally occurring in August 1999.⁹⁵ The founders of the Wilderness Alliance, made up of its original fifteen-member Board of Directors, were:⁹⁶

Rick Aster (Treasurer)
Jim Baca

Socorro
Albuquerque

Pam Eaton	Denver
Dave Foreman	Albuquerque
Robert E. Howard (Chairperson)	Santa Fe
Jack D. Humphrey	Albuquerque
Bob Langsenkamp	Santa Fe
C. Wesley Leonard	El Paso
Kathleen J. Love	Albuquerque
Greg Magee	Las Cruces
Nancy Morton (Secretary)	Albuquerque
Jeff Regenold (Vice-Chair)	Los Alamos
Joe Rodríguez	El Paso
Bob Tafarielli	Las Cruces
Thomas H. Wootten	Las Cruces

Howard's reports in 1998 indicate that things were moving fast. By June he could report that Todd Schulke had sponsored a successful fundraising event at the Harwood Art Center in Albuquerque in April. The landscape photography of Michael Berman was featured and Berman, Jim Baca and Dave Foreman participated in a panel discussion.⁹⁷ The wilderness program had been defined with goals, strategies, and specific objectives. IRS 501(c)(3) certification and related tax-exempt status was still pending. Paid membership was slightly down to 135, but 35 of those were new members. He also reported that the "New Mexico Wilderness Coalition had been reorganized, in concept, as a true coalition of organizations," and that the final draft for the incorporation of the Wilderness Coalition was ready for board approval.⁹⁸

Howard continued to struggle with getting the revived New Mexico Wilderness Coalition off on its own, finally achieving that goal on March 23, 2000 when it received its state certificate of incorporation. Richard Aster and Martin Heinrich were registered as incorporators. Jim O'Donnell was the Coalition's first statewide coordinator and the organization began with a number of businesses and conservation groups as members. After a year it changed its public name to the Coalition for New Mexico Wilderness. The Coalition was initially very active with a large number of organizations and businesses. Its leadership initially came from the Wilderness Alliance staff and board, but later went on its own. At its peak it claimed over 300 business and organizations as members. It cooled with time and filed for dissolution in 2006. Much of its role has been assumed by the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance which routinely assembles and hosts coalitions made up of conservation organizations and foundations when new campaigns are initiated.

On March 4, 1999 the Wilderness Alliance hired its first staff member, 23-year-old Ed Sullivan, as Program Coordinator. He was soon made the first Executive Director of the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance. On March 17 Michael Scialdone came to work as Wilderness Inventory Coordinator.⁹⁹ Both men briefly lived with Dave and Nancy as they got settled in to their new jobs and found places of their own. In October Tisha Krouse, soon to become Tisha Broska, was hired as a contractor "to do whatever needs to be done." Today, as Deputy Director working under Mark Allison, Executive Director, she continues to function in much the same manner after over two decades of service in many positions, including a period as acting

executive director. Tisha's hiring was soon followed with the addition of Matt Clark, Jim O'Donnell, and Steve Capra,

The first new-hires became the highly effective core of the growing staff that was to follow. Sullivan, while young, was an enthusiastic and remarkably capable leader serving the Wilderness Alliance well. He was able to grow the membership to several times its original size during his three years as executive director. Having served on the staff of Tom Udall's successful campaign for the House of Representatives he understood the importance of fund raising and organizing. He was very good at both.¹⁰⁰

Bob Howard, as board chair, had been insistent that the first task of the new staff would be a total re-inventory of all New Mexico wildlands for potential wilderness area additions. Michael Scialdone was recruited and hired specifically for this assignment. Scialdone, a geologist going by the nickname, Scial (pronounced "shell") had just finished performing a similar task in southern Utah for the Wild Utah Project, a affiliate of the Wildlands Project. New Mexico is a big state and Scial needed help. Board member Greg Magee, a horticulturist, landscape architect, and naturalist, was happy to leave the board to become Scialdone's assistant. They divided the state into northern and southern halves. Although they worked together at times, Greg, a Las Cruces resident, was the lead in the south. Scial, living in Albuquerque, took the northern half. To help accomplish the work on the ground they recruited and trained a cadre of volunteers. They completed inventories of BLM-managed wildlands in the spring of 2002 before turning their attention to the national forests managed by the USFS.¹⁰¹ In a similar amount of time they added an inventory of the national forests. It was a comprehensive update of the previous inventories of the New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee and its BLM Wilderness Coalition.

The results of this mammoth project filled two file cabinets with reports, maps, and findings. This voluminous archive was summarized in a digital document containing photos, text, data, and maps.¹⁰² It was then distributed internally via compact disk (CD) and provided to federal agencies, funding sources, politicians and their staffs, and to any interested parties. Their inventory has since been used by the Wilderness Alliance as the starting point for a continuous process of review that updates and amends its wilderness archive. This practice has been invaluable. It is not unusual for data and information in Wilderness Alliance files to be more accurate, relevant, and recent for a specific area than that in agency files or those of other organizations.

In April of 2000 Bob Howard was approached by Dave Foreman and Michael Soulé and asked to attend a board meeting of The Wildlands Project. Bob attended and left the meeting a member of the board. At the next board meeting he was elected chairperson.¹⁰³ 2000 was also the last full year that Bob would serve as board chair of the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance, having held that post and performed its duties admirably during the four critical years of its earliest history. Those founders and staff I interviewed had the highest regard for Bob, loyally aided by Phyllenore, and for what they accomplished. His last Chair's Report of December 2, 2000, noted recent accomplishments but then turned to the future. It is a document that still deserves our attention.¹⁰⁴

Howard begins by characterizing the organization as having developed from an adolescent to a young adult. For the year it had exceeded its fundraising target by 15%, its membership target by 35%, and it was nearly fully staffed and looking at some good candidates for Wilderness Protection Coordinator. The Wilderness Alliance had been a significant presence at the Denver Wilderness 2000 Conference in September. Good connections were being made via political efforts. The Coalition for New Mexico Wilderness (the renamed New Mexico Wilderness Coalition) was going strong. The Wilderness Alliance was getting good press and probably increasing public awareness of and support for wilderness.

Turning his attention to the bigger picture, Howard makes note of the growing specie extinction crisis and the findings of conservation biology. Conservation biology (the subject of his new position with the Wildlands Project) offered guidance for the role the Wilderness Alliance must play. In three short paragraphs he provided a primer on the principal concepts: wilderness area size should be maximized; wildlife corridors linking them are needed; buffers around both should be considered. Then he asks and answers his own question: "Where does wilderness fit? Wilderness fits at the very core of wildness, at the crossroads of ecosystem function, and at the center of addressing the extinction crisis." Looking ahead he reminded the board that America's demographics are changing and distractions are diverting people's attention away from wilderness and nature. The organization must engage peoples bodies, minds, and spirits with wilderness, because "Without majority popular support for wilderness, we cannot permanently protect wilderness." He then admits that full conversion of New Mexico's deserving wildlands to designated wilderness will take a long time, concluding: "We need to rethink our wilderness protection possibilities, and include every kind of wilderness protection action we can think of in our strategy ...[because]... Protection of wilderness, on the ground, should be the focal center of all our strategy and operations." (Emphasis his.)

Bob Howard's term as chair ended with the board elections in the spring, 2001. At that time he stepped down and was succeeded by Martin Heinrich who served as chair for a year, then was followed by Randy Gray, a conservation biologist employed by the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service. Bob remained actively engaged as a board member for six more years, retiring in 2007.

Becoming a Leader in the Wilderness Community

The first 25 years of life of the Wilderness Alliance, from founding through 2022, can be viewed as a succession of three eras, the third continuing forward. Each was a product of its leadership, the times, and the situations it faced. The three eras were separated by transition periods in which it adjusted, reoriented, and emerged with a new leadership team.

During the first era, 1997-2002, Ed Sullivan came on as the first executive director and Bob Howard, Martin Heinrich, and Randy Gray served as board chairs. This was the team that built the young organization, making sure its foundation was strong, and setting its course for the future. It was a course faithfully followed for the next two decades. The first two wilderness campaigns, Cabezon and Ojito, were initiated during this era. Sullivan resigned in mid-2002 and a period of transition followed ending when a new, permanent executive director was found.

Wesley Leonard was elected board chair in 2004 and with his recommendation the board promoted Steve Capra to become its executive director. Capra had spent time with The Wilderness Society before coming to the Wilderness Alliance and was a visionary leader and excellent speaker and writer. Leonard and Capra formed a close-knit partnership from 2004 to 2009. The Wilderness Alliance under this pair built on the earlier foundation, growing the organization in size and influence, with Leonard always insisting on a clear and unwavering focus on wilderness addition and protection. Ojito Wilderness was added in 2006 and Sabinoso in 2009. The wilderness campaigns that were eventually successful in the third era, wildlands in Doña Ana County and the northern Rio Grande/Sangre de Cristo area, were initiated under Capra/Leonard.

Wesley Leonard resigned near the end of 2009 and organization entered another transition period during the interval 2010 through 2012. This was the period of the rise of Tea Party conservatism within the Republican Party and increasing resistance to wilderness legislation. In 2011 Capra reacted to this looming obstacle by initiating national monument campaigns for wildland protection in Doña Ana County and along the northern Rio Grande. These became successes early in the third era. Late in 2011 Ken Cole, a lawyer and banker, with experience in international foreign aid to assist poor Hispanic and indigenous communities became board chair. Ken was also one of the state's premier birders and his life list included over 8000 entries from all over the world at that time. He was to eventually increase that number to over 10,000.

Capra resigned in late 2012 and associate director Tisha Broska was promoted to interim executive director serving in that capacity until Mark Allison, director of a homeless/affordable housing non-profit, was hired as executive director in June, 2013, initiating the third era. Allison was an avid wilderness explorer and family man with two sons, outdoors year-round. The third era would see national monuments declared and large additions of wilderness. But Mark would miss the first of the monuments. The Wilderness Alliance celebrated the declaration of Rio Grande del Norte National Monument in March, 2013, just two months before his arrival.

A subtle indication that the organization was ready for change was modification of its mission statement early in Allison's tenure replacing "enjoyment" with "respect" to read:

*The New Mexico Wilderness is dedicated to the protection, restoration, and continued respect of New Mexico's wildlands and Wilderness areas.*¹⁰⁵

This seemingly minor attitudinal change was in keeping with its subsequent attention to cultural sensitivities, conservation biology and rewilding issues. It is revealed in evolving Wilderness Alliance programs and communications. Rewilding consciousness is evident, harking back to the earliest days of the organization and its connections with Wildland Project through Dave Foreman and Bob Howard. The Wilderness Alliance was always an advocate of wolf reintroduction, initiated in the state by Dave Parsons, another founder, but it had little involvement in other wildlife issues. It was limited by resources but also purposely sought a narrow focus, justifying this by expressed belief (or hope) that "if we build it (meaning wilderness) they will come (meaning wildlife). Wildlife, biodiversity, and the goals arising from conservation biology have become more common in Wilderness Alliance communications and used as reasons for its positions and actions.

During the Allison era the board has had three chairs, Ken Cole (2011-2017), Nancy Morton (2017-2021), and Wendy Brown (2022-present). Allison and Cole expanded Hispanic and Native American involvement in Wilderness Alliance initiatives and cemented working relationships with the congressional delegation, other conservation organizations, foundations, and donors. This has continued throughout the congressional tenures of Senators Tom Udall, Martin Heinrich, and Ben Ray Lujan who have been supportive of wilderness and worked to find avenues for legislation even when it appeared there were none. Democratic Party representatives Deb Haaland, Xochitl Torre-Small, Michelle Lujan-Grisham, Teresa Leger Fernandez, and Melanie Stansbury have been similarly supportive over the years. Republican representatives have been consistently opposed to wilderness, not sponsoring it and either voting against it or not voting. Deb Haaland, a Laguna Pueblo member, became Secretary of Interior under President Joe Biden in 2021 and took on long-standing issues involving Native Americans and the public domain while elevating conservation considerations in her decision-making. This has made for a much better working environment for conservationists than the one that existed during the previous Donald Trump administration.

The third era has now lasted for more than a decade and has been a period of remarkable stability and growth, broadening the vision without changing the core mission. It has been characterized by strong and well-organized campaigns, cordial relationships with the congressional delegation, increased communication, especially via the internet, more sponsored events, and the introduction of cooperative arrangements and agreements with Pueblos, Hispanic organizations and communities, and the U.S. Forest Service. Additional staff have been hired specifically for these assignments. The Wilderness Rangers program is an example. Young seasonal employees assist the Forest Service by monitoring wilderness area conditions and visitor use. In addition, the Wilderness Alliance seeks and hires Hispanic and Native American staff from those regions where wildland and wilderness programs are planned or being conducted. This has greatly increased the effectiveness of its outreach to these communities enabling the collaboration that is possible today.

Wilderness area designations came slowly during the first dozen years in the life of the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance. The wilderness inventories by Scialdone and Magee guided the selection of what were thought to be promising candidates for its first campaigns. In 2001 there were sufficient staff and volunteers to mount the ambitious Cabezón Wilderness Campaign and it kicked off in August. Cabezón Peak is the volcanic plug standing tall on the horizon thirty-five miles northwest of Bernalillo, the Sandoval County seat. The Wilderness Alliance selected a 210,000 acre collection of seven wilderness area candidates, the easternmost enclosing Cabezón. The other six lay clustered to the west of the winding Rio Puerco River. It was a picturesque combination of jutting volcanic peaks, flat-topped mesas, and grasslands, mostly lying in Sandoval County with overlap into McKinley County.

Jim Fish had inventoried these same wilderness candidates fifteen years earlier for the New Mexico BLM Wilderness Coalition, describing them as the Boca del Oso Wilderness Complex. The Wilderness Alliance was proposing almost double the area that Fish had recommended for protection. Fish had encountered rancher opposition to wilderness during his inventories. Tensions only worsened later after he founded the Public Land Action Network and personally,

in his words, "declared war" on all ranchers grazing livestock on the public domain and sought to have their animals permanently removed. The young Wilderness Alliance may have not known of this history and the depth of suspicion and animosity towards wilderness pervading ranching communities. More likely, it did know and thought it could counter it with strong organizing. A useful lesson was about to be learned.

The hill the Wilderness Alliance must climb to achieve a new wilderness area requires generating evidence of enough local support to convince a member of the congressional delegation to sponsor the necessary legislation. That is the immediate goal of grassroots organizing. That can, and in this case proved to be, a difficult task. New Mexico's Senators were Pete Domenici (R) and Jeff Bingaman (D). The District 3 Representative was Tom Udall (D). Bingaman and Udall would have been more than sympathetic if local support were proven. Bingaman was chair of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, the entry point for Senate wilderness legislation. If he favored a bill it would likely make it through his committee. Domenici probably would have been uninterested in such a large wilderness designation, especially if demonstrated natural resources were involved.

It has been explained to me that ranchers have influence several orders of magnitude greater than their numbers. In the eyes of the public, much of the business community, and local governments ranchers' interests and concerns carry considerable weight. Ranchers tend to insist on independence and freedom from interference in their affairs. Potential threats or inconveniences that might disrupt that independence and freedom are not taken lightly, and are usually claimed to threaten their livelihood. Local communities and much of the general public are sympathetic to underdogs, and especially to ranchers and their travails. The perceived nobility of their way of life and its history, real or imagined weighs heavily in their favor. Whether this characterization is correct or not, something like it played out at the turn of the millennium.

From the beginning the campaign ran into stiff opposition from ranchers and local governments. While the McKinley County Commission immediately came out in favor of the wilderness proposal, the Sandoval County Commission, the Village of San Ysidro, and the Bernalillo Town Council went on record early with resolutions against wilderness. Wilderness Alliance volunteers worked hard in the little communities and nearby urban areas whose support they needed. They held numerous meetings with individuals, local groups and town officials. They reinforced that by gathering 2000 petitions in favor of wilderness. At least one member is said to have donated labor to a rancher. It was to no avail. Ranchers raged against wilderness. The Sandoval County Commission and the towns in question, Cuba, San Ysidro, and Bernalillo never changed their minds. By 2004 the campaign showed signs of stalling. In 2005 it was more popular within Albuquerque, but no better at the local level in Sandoval County. By 2006, lacking the support it needed, the Wilderness Alliance was forced to fold its tent and withdraw.¹⁰⁶

In 2002, while the Cabezón campaign was still hot, the Wilderness Alliance started a second campaign aimed at what became a more achievable goal, the Ojito wildlands midway between Cabezón Peak and Bernalillo.¹⁰⁷ The Ojito campaign was a relatively short, worthy test of campaign management. Martin Heinrich was the board chair at the time and actively promoted it

through the newsletter and his work with businesses and organizations in the Coalition for New Mexico Wilderness.

It was successful enabled by an imaginative negotiated land settlement involving the Zia Pueblo, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Department of the Interior. The agreement removed Zia opposition to Ojito and the reluctance of BLM and Interior to changes in land classifications. The key to success was finding a deal involving the 13,000-acre strip of BLM land important to the Pueblo and lying between the 12,000-acre proposed Ojito wilderness area and the Zia reservation boundary. An agreement was reached within Interior that allowed the BLM to withdraw the protective classifications from the offending strip and sell it to the Zia Pueblo at market value. The land was then to be held in trust for the Zia Pueblo by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (also within the Interior Department) under the requirement that it remain relatively undisturbed and a suitable buffer for the wilderness area. All the major local players were satisfied. There was little community opposition, rather, just the opposite. The Bernalillo and Sandoval County commissions passed resolutions in favor of the agreement. Even ranchers were OK with it.¹⁰⁸ Legislation was drawn up and jointly sponsored by Representative Tom Udall and Senator Jeff Bingaman. Senator Pete Domenici and Representative Heather Wilson, both Republicans, signed on as co-sponsors. The Ojito Wilderness Area Act became law on October 26, 2005, the first Wilderness Alliance campaign success.¹⁰⁹

Ojito's small size, 11,183 acres, in no way detracts from the value of the accomplishment. Ojito is a jewel where one finds solitude in the presence of dramatic landscapes and interesting natural history. It also preserves the source of an important paleontological discovery of giant dinosaur fossils. Ojito was an excellent education for the young Wilderness Alliance. It involved a variety of players with different interests from Hispanic, Pueblo, and Anglo cultures. They lived in villages, towns, and cities. They represented federal, state and local governments, businesses, and advocacy organizations. The campaign required the involvement and assistance of the New Mexico delegation. It took three years of concentrated effort. The reward was priceless.

The George W. Bush administration (2001-2009) and congressional Republicans were openly hostile to many environmental protections including those for roadless wildlands and wilderness. In addition to the Bush administration, Senator Pete Domenici was skeptical of large-area wilderness designations and favored releasing portions of the public domain for private development and resource extraction. Domenici was one of the most powerful in the senate and chair of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee from 2003 to 2007. During that time wilderness bills from New Mexico had to pass his scrutiny as well as find strong local support. Bingaman understood that hurdle and would have discussed any wilderness proposals with Domenici before submitting a bill. If Domenici was opposed, he likely would have held the legislation waiting for a more favorable time. From 2007 to 2013 Democrats controlled the Senate and Bingaman became head of the committee. Out of respect for and deference to the aging Domenici, Bingaman chose not to advance New Mexico wilderness legislation that Domenici opposed, knowing that he would retire from office in January 2009.¹¹⁰

During the Bush years (2001-2009) other states were awarded the passage of 58 wilderness bills and New Mexico had to be content with only Ojito. In January 2009 Barack Obama moved

into the White House as the country dove into a deep recession. Sabinoso Wilderness, 16,030 acres east of Las Vegas along the Canadian River, made it through the gate two months after inauguration day. After that wilderness legislation became a low priority for government. The financial emergency creating the Great Recession and the struggle to pass the Affordable Care Act regulating medical insurance occupied the government for the next two years as wilderness legislation languished on the sidelines.

January 2009 also saw Representative Tom Udall become Senator Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich sworn in for his first term as the Congressman from New Mexico's District 1. Four years later Heinrich would win the seat of retiring Senator Jeff Bingaman. Together Udall and Heinrich would make a great team. They would lean into the creation of two national monuments, Rio Grande del Norte and Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks and afterward they would complete the wilderness additions for Doña Ana County and northern New Mexico that Bingaman had methodically laid the groundwork for nearly ten years earlier. The two, especially Heinrich, would take on renewal and increased funding for the Land and Water Conservation Act and the legislation promoting White Sands to National Park status.

In 2011 Republicans, heavily influenced by an ultra-conservative Tea Party faction, took control of the House and held sway for four years. For the first two they put a stop to all wilderness legislation. During the next two years only three wilderness bills made it through. One of them was New Mexico's Columbine-Hondo Wilderness (44,700 acres) in 2014. Those four years of a Republican-dominated House were the most hostile to wilderness of any era before or since the passage of the Wilderness Act of 1964.¹¹¹

Both Brant Calkin and Bob Howard had urged protection of wildlands until they can be made wilderness areas, Howard adding that all means available must be employed. Even before the congressional elections of 2010 the national conservation organizations had foreseen that Republicans would blockade wilderness legislation if they gained control of the House. The conservation community needed to find "all-means-available" solutions to make up for the loss of a legislative pathway to wildland protection. National monument campaigns became the order of the day because of a president's ability to unilaterally designate a monument.¹¹² A properly worded national monument declaration could protect an even larger expanse of wildlands than that qualifying for wilderness. That also left open the option for wilderness designation within the monument later when a more favorable environment returned. The New Mexico Wilderness Alliance switched its two major wilderness campaigns to monument campaigns in January 2011 and became the most successful grassroots wilderness organization in the nation for the next three years.

Two national monument candidates proposed by the Wilderness Alliance, Rio Grande Del Norte (242,555 acres) and Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks (496,330 acres), were the first two landscape-scale national monuments declared by President Obama, the former in 2013, the latter in 2014. Both had strong support from local communities and interest groups, thanks to excellent negotiating and organizing by the Wilderness Alliance. John Olivas, living in the tiny mountain community of Chacon in Mora County, led the campaign for Rio Grande del Norte lying north of Taos. Jeff Steinborn and Nathan Small led the effort for the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument in Doña Ana County, working and living in Las Cruces. All

three gentlemen were popular in their communities and all three were elected to public office while leading their wilderness and monument campaigns. Polling revealed ever-increasing favorability for their monuments as time progressed. Local sentiment in Dona Ana County exceeded 70 per cent favorable during the last two years of the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks campaign.¹¹³ Rio Grande del Norte was similarly popular.

In 2014 Columbine-Hondo Wilderness (44,698 acres) near Taos finally made it through the congressional maze. It was one of only three wilderness area bills to squeeze through during President Obama's second term and an especially sweet success. This was a long-sought-after designation going back to the days of the Wilderness Study Committee in the 1970's. It was also a surprise given the dark cloud of congressional disfunction at the time. Again, many thanks to the skill and determination of New Mexico's congressional delegation.¹¹⁴

The Columbine-Hondo wilderness campaign was an example of never-ceasing, excellent organizing and negotiating. Local attitudes against wilderness began to change in 2008 after the hiring of John Olivas, the Wilderness Alliance northern field representative. Olivas was an fifth generation Hispanic native of Mora County living in the house his predecessors built two centuries earlier. He was a graduate biologist with a Master's Degree in Environmental Science and a former employee of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. He was also hunting guide and outfitter with a charming and beautiful family. During the course of the wilderness and national monument campaigns John was elected a member of the Mora County Commission in 2010 and soon after made its chairman. Olivas presents a quiet and warm demeanor and listens carefully before speaking. His rural northern New Mexico roots gave him a natural understanding and genuine sensitivity to both the Hispanic and Native American communities whose support for wilderness was previously lacking. In John they, and others, found someone they could trust to understand and respect their interests. Over a five-year period John brought together conservationists, Hispanic ranchers and town-folk, Native American tribal councils, mountain bicyclists, county and local officials, and the Forest Service.¹¹⁵

In 2019 the wilderness dam burst with the passage of the John D. Dingell Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act. This legislation included provisions for 13 wilderness areas originating from Wilderness Alliance campaigns (270,336 acres total). All but one of those wilderness areas resided within either Rio Grande del Norte or Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monuments. That brought wilderness area contributions attributable to campaigns initiated by the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance to 326,217 acres. New Mexico's total area under wilderness protection had grown to 1,970,368 acres. With two donations of land adjacent to Sabinoso Wilderness from the Trust for Public Land in 2017 and 2021, New Mexico's total acreage under wilderness protection is now 1,978,911 acres.¹¹⁶

As of the end of 2022 there have been no other wilderness additions since 2019. Legislation introduced by Senator Martin Heinrich and Representative Xochitl Torres-Small upgrading White Sands National Monument to national park status was passed by Congress and became law on December 20, 2019. Two years earlier fossilized trails of human foot prints were discovered within White Sands boundaries. About a year after the new national park was named the footprints were dated as being made over 20,000 years ago. This was more than 7000 years earlier than the generally accepted time of arrival for humans in North America. The discovery

is as consequential as the Clovis (New Mexico) findings of archaeologists in 1932 setting the original estimates of human arrival at 13,000-13,500 years ago. This has the paleontological community reexamining its theories for how and when humankind could have arrived in the western hemisphere so early during the lingering ice age.¹¹⁷

Today the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance often goes by its nicknames, New Mexico Wild or NMWild, taken from its internet address, nmwild.org. Its record of achievement is admired beyond our state's boundaries and is a testament to the wisdom of those that created and nurtured it. Its record of persistence and accomplishment is the just reward for all who have worked or volunteered for it over its first 25 years. The national celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act was held in Albuquerque in October 2014. Coming on the heels of the two recent national monument designations, the Wilderness Alliance was hailed by speakers as one of the premier grassroots conservation organizations in America.

In closing, it is fitting to recall that NM Wild grew out of the New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee. Four of its founders, Dave Foreman, Bob Howard, Bob Langsencamp, and Wesley Leonard served on the board of the Wilderness Study Committee during its first decade. Bob Tafaanelli, a fifth founder, had been a member and participated in the BLM wilderness inventories. The Wilderness Study Committee began as a beehive of activity rising to become a powerhouse projecting influence and generating tangible accomplishments. Foreman and Langsencamp had both chaired its board and led several of its campaigns. The New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee had been their training ground. These five and other early-day WSC members who joined the Wilderness Alliance brought that experience and those skills and practices with them. Over the years NM Wild has built wilderness coalitions, partnerships with Hispanic and Native American communities, and gained strong support from an able congressional delegation. The result has been a record of success that reflects well on the founders of the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance and their vision of what was possible. New Mexico and America are better for it.

Acknowledgements

This paper benefitted from the generous contributions of time and counsel from the founders and others during its preparation. Considerable background information and editorial corrections were provided by Dr. Susan Morgan, Dr. Phyllenore Howard and, especially, Dr. Bob Howard. Greg Magee helped clarify the transition from the New Mexico Wilderness Coalition/Wilderness Study Committee to the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance. In addition to these four the following reviewed early versions of the manuscript, adding details of which I was unaware and sending me off to do more research: Dr. Rick Aster, Wesley Leonard, and Dr. Bob Tafaanelli, are also founders of NM Wild. I thank them all.

In early 2015 Mark Allison, Executive Director of the Wilderness Alliance, and Ken Cole, Board Chair, provided the approval on behalf of the staff and board to pursue this project, part of a larger effort to document the historical roots of the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance and its recent monument and wilderness campaigns. This is a portion of that story. I am grateful to have been given the opportunity to pursue it.

TABLE: NEW MEXICO WILDERNESS AREAS

Wilderness Area Name	Date Designated	Legislation Acreage	Present Acreage	Source or Citizen Advocate
Gila	3-Sep-1964	438,626	558,065	Wild.Act
Pecos	3-Sep-1964	165,000	223,333	Wild.Act
San Pedro Parks	3-Sep-1964	41,132	41,132	Wild.Act
Wheeler Peak	3-Sep-1964	6,051	19,150	Wild.Act
White Mountain	3-Sep-1964	28,230	49,963	Wild.Act
Salt Creek	23-Oct-1970	8,500	9,621	USFWS
Bosque Del Apache	3-Jan-1975	30,850	30,427	USFWS
Bandelier	20-Oct-1976	23,267	23,267	NMWSC
Chama River Canyon	24-Feb-1978	50,300	50,300	NMWSC
Manzano Mountain	24-Feb-1978	37,000	36,970	NMWSC
North and South Sandias	24-Feb-1978	30,930	37,877	NMWSC
Carlsbad Caverns	10-Nov-1978	33,125	33,125	NMWSC
Aldo Leopold	19-Dec-1980	211,300	202,016	NMWSC
Apache Kid	19-Dec-1980	45,000	44,626	NMWSC
Blue Range	19-Dec-1980	30,000	29,304	NMWSC
Capitan	19-Dec-1980	34,000	34,658	NMWSC
Cruces Basin	19-Dec-1980	18,000	18,000	NMWSC
Dome	19-Dec-1980	5,200	5,200	NMWSC
Latir Peak	19-Dec-1980	20,000	20,506	NMWSC
Withington	19-Dec-1980	19,000	19,000	NMWSC
Gila, Pecos, Wheeler Peak, White Mountain Additions	19-Dec-1980	226,560	see original wilderness	NMWSC
Bisti/De-Na-Zin	30-Oct-1984	27,840	45,670	WSC/BLMWC
Cebolla	31-Dec-1987	60,000	61,600	WSC/BLMWC
West Malpais	31-Dec-1987	38,210	39,540	WSC/BLMWC
Ojito	26-Oct-2005	11,183	11,183	NM Wild
Sabinoso	30-Mar-2009	16,030	19,344	NMWild/A.S.
Columbine-Hondo	19-Dec-2014	44,698	44,698	NM Wild
Ah-shi-sle-pah	12-Mar-2019	7,242	7,242	NM Wild
Aden Lava Flow	12-Mar-2019	27,673	27,673	NM Wild
Broad Canyon	12-Mar-2019	13,902	13,902	NM Wild
Cerro del Yuta	12-Mar-2019	13,420	13,420	NM Wild
Cinder Cone	12-Mar-2019	16,935	16,935	NM Wild
East Potrillo Mountains	12-Mar-2019	12,155	12,155	NM Wild
Mount Riley	12-Mar-2019	8,382	8,382	NM Wild
Organ Mountains	12-Mar-2019	19,916	19,916	NM Wild
Potrillo Mountains	12-Mar-2019	105,085	105,085	NM Wild
Rio San Antonio	12-Mar-2019	8,120	8,120	NM Wild
Robledo	12-Mar-2019	16,776	16,776	NM Wild
Sierra de las Uvas	12-Mar-2019	11,114	11,114	NM Wild
Whitehorn	12-Mar-2019	9,616	9,616	NM Wild

End Notes

¹ Bob Howard, personal communication, 2/20/2023. Howard was the founding board chair of the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance, itself born from an idea of Susan Morgan and brought to life by Dave, Nancy and friends.

² Clay Risen, "Dave Foreman, Hard Line Environmentalist, Dies at 75," *New York Times*, Sept. 28, 2022.

³ Dave Foreman, "Around the Campfire," *Wild Earth Special Issue: The Wildlands Project*, 1992, cover to page 2. See also Dave Foreman, "The Wildlands Project and the Rewilding of North America," *Denver Law Review*, v76, 2, January 1998, 535.

⁴ Bob Howard, personal communication regarding the involvement of Dave Parsons and himself in the creation of the Rewilding Institute, 2/18/2023. Afterward Parsons and Howard both served as Conservation Fellows of the institute. See also the Rewilding Institute website, <https://rewilding.org/bobhoward> and <https://rewilding.org/dave-parsons/>.

⁵ Dave Foreman, "About Dave Foreman's Around the Campfire," downloaded 1/2/2023 from the Rewilding Earth website, <https://rewilding.org/about-tri/about-dave-foremans-around-the-campfire/>. See also "Thank Goodness Nancy was here!" <https://rewilding.org/thank-goodness-nancy-was-here/>, and <https://rewilding.org/susan-morgan/>.

⁶ James Morton Turner, *The Promise of Wilderness* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2012), 202-210. Morton details the changing attitude of national conservation organizations and the rise of Earth First!. The role of national politics during this same period is examined in: James Morton Turner, *The Republican Reversal: Conservatives and the Environment from Nixon to Trump* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018), 8, 9, 14, 54-97. See also Christopher Manes, *Green Rage: Radical Environmentalism and the Unmaking of Civilization* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1990). *Green Rage* covers the entire period as seen by an active participant.

⁷ Susan Zakin, *Coyotes and Town Dogs: Earth First and the Environmental Movement* (New York: Viking, 1993), 13-29.

⁸ Dave Foreman's association with the Black Mesa Defense Fund is presented in Jack Loeffler, *Headed Upstream* (Santa Fe: Sunstone Press, 2010), 149, and in "A Talk with Jack Loeffler (Part 1): Indigenous World Views, Desert Lessons, Direct Action, downloaded from *Rewilding Earth Podcast*, <https://rewilding.org/a-talk-with-jack-loeffler-part-1-indigenous-worldviews-desert-lessons-direct-action/>, 1/2/2023. Foreman's role in the Albuquerque Environmental Center the Wilderness Study Committee is given in "Conservationist to talk to Sierra Club Members," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, Santa Fe, Dec. 1, 1972.

⁹ Jack Kutz, *Grassroots New Mexico: A History of Citizen Activism* (Albuquerque: The Inter-Hemispheric Education Resource Center, 1989), 7-9. The New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee was initiated in 1968 and was founded in 1970 by members from a number of wildlife, hunter, and conservation organizations within the state and supportive of wilderness. It started as an "organization of

organizations." Prominent among them were the New Mexico Wildlife Federation, the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club, the New Mexico Mountain Club, and local river running, caving, and climbing organizations. It sought to take advantage of citizen opportunities to nominate wilderness candidates under to terms of the Wilderness Act of 1964 and subsequent environmental laws. The Act made citizen consultation a part of the Interior and Agriculture Department's process for selecting wilderness candidates that were to be recommended to Congress by 1980.

¹⁰ Forman-Morton interviews, Howard interview, and personal communication from Bob Howard, 1/18/2023.

¹¹ Much of the text that follows is based on interviews with the following: Dave Foreman and Nancy Morton, 12/13 and 12/20 of 2017; Susan Morgan, 12/6/2021; Bob and Phyllenore Howard, 9/10/2016; John Wright, 3/25/2021; Greg Magee, 11/6/2015; Wesley Leonard, 1/21 and 3/3 of 2016; Bob Tafarielli, 6/11 and 6/12 of 2015. A recorded video conference was held with Bob Howard, Greg Magee, Wesley Leonard, and Bob Tafarielli on 2/3/2021.

¹² New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee, *Wilderness Newsletter*, May 20, 1972, v1,3. Foreman's assignments and activities with the New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee are also sprinkled throughout the entries in the NMWSC newsletters during the period from 1972 to 1978 when he was active with the group. A nearly complete collection of the newsletters during this period can be found in the Corry McDonald archives at the Center for Southwest Research, University of New Mexico. The NMWSC is incorrectly labeled as the NM Wilderness Society in this file. Titles of collection contents can be viewed at https://nmarchives.unm.edu/repositories/22/resources/1665/collection_organization

¹³ New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee, *Wilderness Newsletter*. April 1, 1975, v4,1. Corry McDonald Archives, University of New Mexico Center for Southwest Research, Corry McDonald Collection MS488BC, Box 4, Folder 14.

¹⁴ Zakin, *Coyotes and Town Dogs*, 27.

¹⁵ Susan Morgan interview.

¹⁶ /Zakin, *Coyotes and Town Dogs*, 122-134. Zakin gives a colorful rendition of the EF! creation story/myth.

¹⁷ Dave Foreman and Howie Wolke, "memo to the Hardcore, RE: Earth First," undated, no distribution list. The digital copy I have has a penciled note of "spring or summer 1980," downloaded on January 5, 2019 but apparently no longer available. The first newsletter of Earth First! titled *Nature More*, Volume 0, Number 0, July 1980, was a six-page epistle type-written and signed by Dave Foreman describing the organization and its goals and naming Susan Morgan as its future editor. This was followed by Dave Foreman, "Memo to the leading intellectual and literary lights of EARTH FIRST," dated September 1, 1980, no distribution list. Source: Environment and Society Portal, <https://www.environmentandsociety.org/node/5678> downloaded December 5, 2021.

¹⁸ Martha F. Lee, *Earth First: Environmental Apocalypse* (Syracuse, New York: 1995), 86-87.

¹⁹ Dave Foreman and Bill Heywood, *Ecodefense: A Field Guide to Monkeywrenching* (Chico, California: Abzug Press, Third Edition, 2002).

²⁰ Susan Zakin, *Coyotes and Town Dogs*, 1-9 see also Dave Foreman, *Confessions of an Eco-Warrior* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1991), 109-116, 124,125. Analyses of the results and ethics of ecotage are discussed by Curt Manes, *Green Rage*, 164-190; Manes analysis was revisited by other authors, notably 28 years later by Keith Makoto Woodhouse, *The Ecocentrists: A History of Radical Environmentalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2018) 121-142. The involvement of Tompkins and Chouinard is presented in Johnathan Franklin, *A Wild Idea* (New York: Harper Collins, 2021), 119-121.

²¹ James Morton Turner, *The Promise of Wilderness*, 212-215. Also see Lee, *Earth First: Environmental Apocalypse*, 146-150. Direct action typically refers to peaceful protest as advocated by Dr. Martin Luther King, Mohandas Ghandi, and others.

²² Woodhouse, *The Ecocentrists*, 134-141; Manes, *Green Rage*, 84-89, 99-102; see also Roderick Frazer Nash, *The Rights of Nature: A History of Environmental Ethics* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989) 190-195.

²³ Both Nancy Morton and I heard this from Forest Service District Rangers in northern California and Oregon. Over a period of about 50 years trees in economically harvestable areas would be clearcut in patches (logging units) that would (if possible) allow natural regeneration of the fastest growing species. Over time the boundaries of logging units would converge covering all mountainsides and valley bottoms. By creating a patchwork of units in varying stages of replanting, growing, or harvesting this cycle could conceivably continue indefinitely. It ignored ecosystem health as well as other consequences such as water quality degradation from logging runoff.

²⁴ These laws included the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA, 1969), the Clean Air Act (1970), the Clean Water Act (1972), the Endangered Species Act (1973), and the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (1976).

²⁵ Zakin, *Coyotes and Town Dogs*, 256, 257.

²⁶ Forman-Morton interviews.

²⁷ Dave Foreman, *Confessions of an Eco-Warrior*, 213-215; see also Dave Foreman and Nancy Morton, "Good luck darlin.' It's been great.", *Earth First Journal*, v10, 1990, 5.

²⁸ Jack Humphrey interview with Dave Foreman, "Episode 1: Dave Foreman on the History and Definition of Rewilding," Rewilding Earth Podcast, August 30, 2018. Available from Rewilding Earth website, downloaded on 2/9/2023 from <https://rewilding.org/episode-1-dave-foreman-on-the-history-and-definition-of-rewilding/>.

²⁹ Dave Foreman, *Rewilding North America: A Vision for Conservation in the 21st Century* (Washington: Island Press, 2004), 111-143. Foreman makes the case for rewilding for the lay reader. A more technical presentation of the basic concepts is found Michael Soulé, ed., *Conservation Biology: The Science of Scarcity and Diversity* (Sunderland, MA: Sinauer Associates, 1986).

³⁰ Greg Hanscom, "Visionaries or dreamers?" *High Country News*, April 26, 1999, accessed online 11/26/2022 at https://www.hcn.org/issues/153/4946/print_view.

³¹ David Quammen, *Wild Thoughts from Wild Places* (New York: Scribner, 1998), 61. Quammen relates Soulé's comments. Also, Dave Foreman, "Around the Campfire," *Wild Earth*, 13-4, 2,3, adds more of the exchange.

³² Franklin, *A Wild Idea*, 119-121. Recall that this wasn't great timing for Dave. His trial over charges stemming from the 1989 FBI sting operation started in May and it would have been stressful from then until September when a plea agreement was reached that had the effect of reducing his sentence to a misdemeanor with five years probation.

³³ Reed Noss, "A Regional Landscape Approach to Maintain Diversity," *BioScience*, 33, 11, 700-706.

³⁴ *Wild Earth Special Issue: The Wildlands Project*, 1992. Included are an explanatory background overview by Foreman and articles by the founders and others describing the mission, goals, underlying biological science. A list of local affiliate organizations is provided and the means of communicating and working with them. Michael Soulé presents the vision statement (p. 7) and Reed Noss lays out the technical basis for the scientific program. In 2003 Foreman and other wilderness activists would form the Rewilding Institute to consolidate and focus grassroots rewilding efforts, still retaining ties to the Wildlands Project, which continued as a research and development organization that worked to demonstrate and spread application of its findings. In 2008 the Wildlands Project would change its name to the Wildlands Network.

³⁵ Foreman and Morton interviews, 2017; Susan Zakin, *Coyotes and Town Dogs: Earth First and the Environmental Movement* (New York: Viking, 1993).

³⁶ Morton, Nancy, Senior Instructor, Undergraduate Program Director, College of Nursing, Clinical and Translational Science Center, Health Sciences, University of New Mexico, 2016. Downloaded from the UNM Health Sciences VIVO website, 2/22/2023: <https://vivo.health.unm.edu/display/n4427>.

³⁷ Interview with the Howards, 9/10/2017 and personal communications during January, 2023. Sierra Club officer data from "History: Officers and Directors, Sierra Club website, <https://vault.sierraclub.org/history/officers.aspx>; accessed 1/25/2023. The NMWSC Newsletter of Feb.1982 lists Jack Kutz as chair, Judy Bishop as vice-chair, Sue Pfeiffer as Treasurer, LaDonna Kutz as Secretary, and Bob Howard as a member of the board.

³⁸ Corry McDonald, *Wilderness: A New Mexico Legacy* (Santa Fe, New Mexico: Sunstone Press, 1985), 31.

³⁹ Corry McDonald, Chairman, Letter to Wilderness Study Committee, March 29, 1976, Corry McDonald Archives, University of New Mexico Center for Southwest Research, Corry McDonald Collection MS488BC, Box 4, Folder 12. In this letter to WSC Coalition leaders McDonald lists 35 member organizations with a combined membership "approaching 10,000." The letter announces the WSC Coalition 1976 Spring Wilderness Symposium in Albuquerque. In an April 9, 1976 letter to Senator Pete Domenici, McDonald's opening sentence reads "On behalf of the 10,000 persons in the thirty-five or so

conservation organizations in New Mexico whom we represent on matters related to wilderness, we urge your support of timber management reform as reflected in S2926/HR11894." He also extends an invitation to the senator to attend the spring symposium and barbecue.

⁴⁰ New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee, *New Mexico Wilderness Newsletter*, April 1, 1975, p.13, located in Box4 Folder 14 of the Corry McDonald Archives.

⁴¹ Jack Kutz, *Grassroots New Mexico: A History of Citizen Activism* (Albuquerque: Inter-Hemispheric Education Resource Center, 1989), 5-9.

⁴² "Trio to be feted for Civic Endeavors," *Albuquerque Journal*, Wednesday, Dec. 9, 1970, E-2. Milo Conrad was an electronics technician who also was the New Mexico Mountain Club wilderness coordinator. Conrad was a trail runner and outdoorsman from Albuquerque. He was well known for establishing and organizing the annual La Luz Trail Run, a ten-mile race from the foot of the Sandia's to its Crest. He set the first records and continued to organize and manage the race for a decade, even after being diagnosed with multiple sclerosis about 1970. A dedicated hiker and backpacker, Conrad was a strident voice for wilderness protection giving slide shows, talks, and writing letters to newspaper editors, politicians, and agency heads. During the 1960's and 1970's his name appeared frequently in the newspapers, often with Corry McDonald, another early leader of the organization. Conrad was declared by the WSC to be its founder and his signature on his many letters on behalf of the organization often carried that title. He received other honors for his humanitarian work and his conservation leadership. He died in 1994, more than two decades after starting his struggle with multiple sclerosis.

⁴³ New Mexico Wilderness Newsletter, June 1975, vol 5, n2, p.6. The results of the annual election for WSC officers is announced, Foreman's first communication as chair appears on p.1,2. His transfer to Washington D.C. is announced in the March 1978, vol 7, n1, p.5, newsletter, and his replacement, Bob Langsencamp, is announced in the June, 1978 vol 7, n2, p.4 newsletter, Corry McDonald archives. See also, Suzan Zakin, *Coyotes and Town Dogs*, 26,27, 85, 86.

⁴⁴ John Wright interview, 3/25/2021, and Wesley Leonard, personal communication. Wright mentioned McDonald's authoritarian tendencies. Wesley has told me on several occasions that he believed McDonald and Foreman shared a mutual and strong dislike for each other. I have heard Dave express a deep frustration with a Sandia engineer that was probably McDonald. In *Wilderness: A New Mexico Legacy*, p127, Corry expressed his distaste for "some hotheads who felt moved to action in methods which might have paled those in Ed Abbey's *Monkey Wrench Gang*. I think we know who he had in mind.

⁴⁵ Corry McDonald, *Wilderness: A New Mexico Legacy*, 74-75.

⁴⁶ Dick McAlpin, Tribune Staff Writer, "Lujan to do more research before making road decision," *Albuquerque Tribune*, June 16, 1971; "Lujan tells why he's against Crest Road," *Albuquerque Tribune*, June 17, 1971. Characteristic of Lujan was his carefully considered and fully explained decision to oppose the Ellis Loop Road in construction along the Sandia Crest through a proposed wilderness and an existing game refuge. First he had met with the Forest Service and was driven through the clearcut that being made prior to road construction, terminating at a planned observation point. Standing overlooking the northern escarpment, he said, "It's so beautiful I could stay up here forever," revealing his sentiments if not his decision. That came the next day in Washington at his desk when he wrote USFS of his decision to reject the road, later giving the press his reasons.

⁴⁷ 96th Congress, Public Law 96-550, Dec. 19, 1980, An Act to designate certain National Forest System lands in the State of New Mexico for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System, and for other purposes. This is commonly referred to as the 1980 New Mexico Omnibus Wilderness Act.

⁴⁸ Letter, Milo Conrad, Land Use Planning Representative and Founder, New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee, to Honorable John F. Seiberling, Chairman, Public Lands Subcommittee, House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee, House Office Bldg., Washington, D.C., Nov. 17, 1980. Conrad makes the WSC case for adding wilderness area protections to the most endangered wildlands in New Mexico not covered by the Domenici's bill, S-2583 which was being considered for the New Mexico Omnibus Wilderness Act; indeed, Domenici had targeted the Guadalupe Escarpment for "release."

⁴⁹ Republicans for Environmental Protection, *Congressional Scorecard 2006*, downloaded from Internet Archive, Wayback Machine, https://web.archive.org/web/20070615183627/http://www.rep.org/2006_scorecard.pdf, 1/12/2023.

⁵⁰ Federal Lands Policy and Management Act of 1976, Public Law 94-579, Approved Oct. 21, 1976, 43 U.S.C. 1701 through 1782. The FLPMA is often informally referred to as "flip-ma" in conversation.

⁵¹ "New Mexico Wilderness Review: Initial Inventory Decision," U.S. Dept. of Interior, Bureau of Land Management, Santa Fe, July 9, 1979, p18.

⁵² "New Mexico Wilderness Study Area Decisions," U.S. Dept. of Interior, Bureau of Land Management, New Mexico State Office, November 1980. Table II: Intensive Inventory Decisions, page 1-5.

⁵³ Undated newsletter, Wilderness Study Committee, (May 1980 penciled in), similar to a 4-page letter from the chairman announcing officer election results and BLM decisions., Box4, Folder 14, Corry McDonald Archives.

⁵⁴ *New Mexico Wilderness Study Area Report: Statewide Summary*, Bureau of Land Management, Sept. 1991, 2.

⁵⁵ "We need to accelerate our schedules to meet BLM deadlines," New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee Newsletter, April 1982, no volume or number markings, Box4, Folder 14, Corry McDonald Archives.

⁵⁶ Jim Fish, ed., *Wildlands: New Mexico BLM Wilderness Coalition Statewide Proposal* (self-published and printed locally, 1987). Financial support provided by individuals, Recreation Equipment, Inc of Seattle, The Wilderness Society, the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club with additional contributions from its groups in Albuquerque, El Paso, and Santa Fe, and the New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee.

⁵⁷ Jim Fish, interview of August 11, 2015. Fish was a scientist by vocation and a writer and photographer by avocation. He joined the BLMWC in 1983 and was assigned the Boca del Oso Complex of WSA's along the Rio Puerco River plus the El Malpais area near Grants that was designated the El Malpais National Monument in 1987.

⁵⁸ I have not found a reference or a written record for this meeting but one may exist in the BLM State Office. Jim Fish was my source and these paragraphs are based on our interview of August 11, 2015. He remembered the year as 1988 but that it could have been 1989. Fish had built a beautiful, rustic little winery in Placitas and we talked about his experiences over a nice glass of red.

⁵⁹ Jim Fish interview, 2015. Ranchers began organizing over concerns about public land issues in the 1980's. People for the West was typical of these groups, and Fish was in the news often enough to catch their attention, for example: Associated Press, "Animosity growing in public lands debate," *Carlsbad Current-Argus* (Carlsbad, New Mexico), December 16, 1991; also see Karl F. Moffett, "Ag Industry Cleans Away the Tarnish," *Albuquerque Journal* (Albuquerque, New Mexico), April 22, 1991.

⁶⁰ I have been unable to find any accounts or records that describe the actual events that contributed to the formation of the New Mexico Wilderness Coalition. It appears in print in 1989 with Dutch Salmon as statewide coordinator. (See Rene Kimball, "Wilderness Use Remains a Thorny Issue," *Albuquerque Journal* (Albuquerque, New Mexico), September 24, 1989. The NMWC took on an expanded role not unlike that of the New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee. Judy Bishop was a member of the NMWC but apparently never its leader. Bob Howard believes that the BLMWC and the NMWC were the same, with simply a change in the public name.

⁶¹ High Lonesome Books, Dutch Salmon's Country Sports Blog, a source for M.H. "Dutch" Salmon obituary, brief biography, list of honors, organization memberships, and a bibliography of his books and magazine articles. Accessed and downloaded on January 11, 2023, from <https://www.high-lonesomebooks.com>.

⁶² Title X, Miscellaneous, Section 1022, Bisti/De-Na-Zin wilderness expansion and fossil forest protection, Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996, Public Law 104-333, 104th Congress.

⁶³ For example, Wesley Leonard remembers the merged organization of 1995-1997 as the Wilderness Study Committee. Bob Tafarielli and Greg Magee refer to it as the Wilderness Coalition, as do most people. The press did not appear to have known about the merger.

⁶⁴ Foreman/Morton, and Morgan interviews. Martin Heinrich was to later become an Albuquerque city councilor, a congressional representative, then elected to fill retiring Senator Jeff Bingaman's seat in 2013. Heinrich's legislative ability and commitment to conservation became invaluable to the passage of wilderness and environmental legislation.

⁶⁵ "Agenda," *New Mexico Wildlands Conference*, The College of Santa Fe, September 22-24, 1995. The conference was sponsored by The Wildlands Project. Actual attendance numbers are not reported. Daniel Gibson, "Earth Defenders Not Giving Up," *Santa Fe Reporter* (Santa Fe, New Mexico), October 4, 1995, states that there were several hundred attendees. Susan Morgan estimated 150 in a conversation.

⁶⁶ SUWA: Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance. The Roadshow refers to Calkin barnstorming trip through America to raise awareness and opposition to pending legislation threatening Utah's red rock wildlands. Attendees to his 120 presentations were urged to organize and flood Congress with letters and visits by citizens urging protection of the redrock wildlands. And they did.

⁶⁷ Wendy Brown went on to manage the USFWS endangered species recovery program for the Southwest Region. After her retirement Brown joined the board of the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance and at the time of this writing is serving as Board Chair.

⁶⁸ Susan Morgan, personal communication, 12/12/2022.

⁶⁹ Susan Morgan interview 12/6/2021 and Forman and Morton interviews, 3/14/2017, 3/21/2017.

⁷⁰ Scott Groene, "Brant Calkin," *Canyon Country Zephyr*, August-September 1999, online and downloaded on 1/26/2023 at <https://www.canyoncountryzephyr.com/oldzephyr/archives/zephyr-august-september-99.html>. Scott Groene gives a summary of Calkin's time with SUWA:

⁷¹ "Local Folks," *Santa Fe Reporter*, Santa Fe, June 8, 1988.

⁷² Brian Calvert, "Remembering friends, current and past," *High Country News*, Nov. 23, 2015, accessed at <https://www.hcn.org/issues/47.20/remembering-friends-current-and-past>, 2/2/2023.

⁷³ Sorry, too many entries to deal with. You will have to go find them yourself: <https://www.newspapers.com>, search for Susan Tixier.

⁷⁴ "History: Officers and Directors, Sierra Club website, <https://vault.sierraclub.org/history/officers.aspx>; accessed 1/25/2023. "Governor appoints SF man: names 4 others to vacancies," *The New Mexican*, Santa Fe, Jun. 28, 1970, (Governor Dave Cargo appointed Calkin to the Policy Board and Advisory Committee on Air and Water Pollution); Brant Calkin, "Commission Aids Wilderness Heritage," *Albuquerque Journal*, Albuquerque, Dec. 28, 1975. Governor Jerry Apodaca created the 15-member New Mexico Wilderness Commission in 1975 with Calkin as its chair. Its first meeting was held on 10/6/1975 and it functioned until 1977; Steve May, "Sierra Club seeks environmental bill," *The New Mexican*, Santa Fe, Sep. 10, 1972. Calkin was the member of the state Environmental Improvement Board task force that recommended the legislation. For reference to Calkin serving as Secretary of Natural Resources and assistant to Jim Baca, State Land Commissioner see "Election '86: Campaign Notes," *The New Mexican*, Santa Fe, Dec. 15, 1985.

⁷⁵ Ray Wheeler, "Congress weighs the fate of Utah's wild lands," *High Country News*, Paonia, CO, Issue 50, December 25, 1995, available online from HCN archives at <https://www.hcn.org/issues/50/1537>. Be sure to read the four sidebars also.

⁷⁶ Scott Groene, "Brant Calkin," 1999.

⁷⁷ In all my interviews there was never a hint from those I talked to, in and outside the WC/WSC, that it was lacking in good intentions or purpose. The critique, when offered, was that the organization had lost its mastery of basic organizing and campaign leadership and was not focused. It was further handicapped by being small and unable to raise the money necessary for a robust wilderness campaign requiring travel, advertisement, and the materials and events needed to generate media attention and public involvement.

⁷⁸ Foreman and Morton interview, 3/14/2017, interview with the Howards, 9/10/2017.

⁷⁹ Foreman and Morton and Howard interviews.

⁸⁰ I heard Dave express this opinion, privately and publicly, on several occasions over the years.

⁸¹ The Howards, 9/10/2016; Foreman and Morton, 12/13 and 12/20/2017.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ The actual number present is unknown. The estimated number comes from Magee, Foreman, Morton, and Tafari. A normal attendance would probably have been 15-20. A large attendance from Albuquerque and places north helped swell the numbers.

⁸⁴ This was not the only observation. In the 1980's David Brower toured with Foreman giving conservation presentations and lectures. Brower was, himself, famous as a public speaker. He had this to say about Dave's speaking abilities: "I will talk *before* Dave Foreman, but not after. Anybody who talks after Dave Foreman must be an anticlimax." Source: David Ross Brower, interviews conducted by Ann Lage in 1999, "Reflections on the Sierra Club, Friends of the Earth, and Earth Island Institute" Regional Oral History Office of the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, California, 2012, p. 187. Accessed on 2/4/2023 at: https://digitalassets.lib.berkeley.edu/roho/ucb/text/brower_david.pdf.

⁸⁵ Bob Tafari, personal telephone communication, January, 2023.

⁸⁶ Dave Foreman and Howie Wolke, *The Big Outside* (New York: Harmony Books, 1989, 1992) 361. The backpack through the north-south length of the West Potrillo was described in my interview of Dave on 3/21/2017.

⁸⁷ Rick Aster, personal communication, 12/3/2022.

⁸⁸ Interviews of Wesley Leonard, January and March, 2016.

⁸⁹ Interview of Greg Magee, 11/06/2015.

⁹⁰ Foreman and Morton, 12/13 and 12/20/2017, Magee interview and personal communication of 12/15/2022.

⁹¹ Foreman and Morton interviews, Magee interview, the Howards interview, personal communications from Bob Howard, December 2022 and January 2023. Wesley Leonard, telephone communication, 12/15/2022.

⁹² The Howards, 9/10/2016; Foreman and Morton, 12/13 and 12/20/2017.

⁹³ Bob Howard, "Chairperson's Report - 1/10/98," *New Mexico Wilderness Alliance*.

⁹⁴ "Articles of Incorporation of the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance," Filed in the Office of the NM State Corporation Commission, May 9, 1997, Corporation Department.

⁹⁵ "New Mexico Wilderness Alliance," Pro Publica Nonprofit Explorer, Research Tax-Exempt Organizations, available online at <https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/850457916>.

⁹⁶ see "Articles of Incorporation, note 75.

⁹⁷ T.D. Mobley-Martinez, "Love for the land led Berman from science to art," and "A wilderness pinned down," *Albuquerque Tribune*, Albuquerque, 4/17/1998. See also Wesley Pulka, "Artists lens exposes human blot on NM landscape," *Albuquerque Journal*, Albuquerque, 4/12/1998. Berman was already famous for his black and white desert photography artistry and would later become a member of the Wilderness Alliance board.

⁹⁸ Bob Howard, "Chairperson's Reports of 3/28/98 and 6/6/98," *New Mexico Wilderness Alliance*.

⁹⁹ Bob Howard, "Chairperson's Report - 3/21/99," *New Mexico Wilderness Alliance*.

¹⁰⁰ All the founders that I talked with were highly complementary in their appraisal of Sullivan. That includes the Foreman and Morton, the Howards, Wesley Leonard, Greg Magee, and Bob Tafanelli.

¹⁰¹ "Inventory Update: The BLM Inventory Is Complete," *Call of the Wild*, Newsletter of the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance, v6, 1, Spring 2002, 6.

¹⁰² Michael Scialdone and Greg Magee, interview of 11/06/2015 while camped in the foothills of the Black Range.

¹⁰³ Bob Howard, personal communication, 1/17/2023.

¹⁰⁴ Bob Howard, "Chair's Report 12/02/2000" *New Mexico Wilderness Alliance*.

¹⁰⁵ "Mission Statement," *New Mexico Wild*, newsletter of the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance, v12-1, Spring-Summer, 2015, 3.

¹⁰⁶ A number of newspaper articles covered the evolving political battle: Tania Soussan, "Restraints on Rich Land," *Albuquerque Journal*, (Albuquerque, Aug. 5, 2001) 13; Patrick Armijo, "San Ysidro Fights Cabezón Wilderness Plan," *Albuquerque Journal*, Feb. 1, 2002; Elaine D. Briseño, "Ranchers Gather to Fight Wilderness Proposal," *Albuquerque Journal*, Dec. 21, 2002; Michael Davis, "Council Delays Cabezón Vote," *Albuquerque Journal*, April 25, 2003.

¹⁰⁷ The first notice of Wilderness Alliance involvement with Ojito is in *Call of the Wild*, Newsletter of the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance, v6-2, Summer 2002, 9.

¹⁰⁸ Laura Paskus, "The little wilderness that could," *High Country News*, November 28, 2005.

¹⁰⁹ Public Law 109-94, 109th Congress (S.156), The Ojito Wilderness Act, October 26, 2005.

¹¹⁰ When I was a Wilderness Alliance board member Capra explained to me the reasons for Bingham's choices those last few years before his retirement. The example of Domenici's own Dona Ana County wilderness proposal reflects his views regarding wilderness designation and how much is appropriate. In 2004 the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance and the Wilderness Society were beginning to organize support for the candidates that would eventually become most of the wilderness areas designated by the

2019 John Dingell Act. In late 2005 Domenici began quietly preparing his own legislation for Doña Ana County. His bill would create half as much protected area as the Wilderness Alliance proposal and release 65,000 acres of BLM land west of Las Cruces for development. When his proposal was revealed in January 2006 it received strong local objections from the public and city and county governments. Domenici then entertained the formation of a group of stakeholders to negotiate a county-wide consensus proposal that he could consider. Las Cruces city government hosted stakeholder group and it met many times until early 2007, year later. At the same time Wilderness Alliance organizing had generated a background of growing public support for its proposal. Domenici was clear losing. There was not, however, an all-parties-agreed-to-consensus among the stakeholders. With that, Domenici walked away and dismissed any future negotiation on the subject as pointless. Consensus had never been achievable given the diversity of stakeholder interests and membership: home builders and realtors, ranchers, conservationists, sportsmen, chamber of commerce, neighborhood associations, and members of the public. Archives of the Las Cruces Sun-News in 2006 and early 2007 provide a running account of the events. The eventual result years later was the immensely popular 2014 designation of the Organ Mountain-Desert Peaks National Monument (496,300 acres) followed in 2019 by the popular John Dingell Act designating 241,500 acres of wilderness area inside the monument.

¹¹¹ In spite of the Reagan administration's alignment with the "Sagebrush Rebellion," the largest number of wilderness areas created during an eight-year period since 1980 occurred during the Reagan years. The second term of Obama saw the least, partially due to Republican opposition to wilderness on principle, and partially due to an intention to block any legislation that might boost the popularity of the Democratic party and the President.

¹¹² Interview with Brian O'Donnell, then executive director of Conservation Lands Foundation, 4/6/2016. O'Donnell said that the national organizations had already made plans for this change in the fall of 2010 before the election was held.

¹¹³ memo: GBA Strategies to Interested Parties, "Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument Survey Results," January 21, 2014. 72 per cent of 400 voters contacted were in favor of the monument. An earlier and more precisely written question describing the monument was presented to 1000 voters in a poll released by Stephen Clermont/Third Eye Strategies in a memo to interested parties, "Doña Ana County and Statewide Poll Results on the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument," October 3, 2012. This larger poll indicated that 83 per cent of Doña Ana County voters and 82 per cent of voters statewide favored creating the national monument.

¹¹⁴ I interviewed Sen. Martin Heinrich on May 27, 2018 and suggested that with Republicans so hostile to wilderness there must not be much chance for wilderness legislation going forward. He strongly disagreed, describing how he keeps on working to find a way to advance his legislation and never gives

up, ending with "I'm playing the long game." Heinrich said much same to Hayden Carpenter when interviewed about the chance that his White Sands National Park legislation would be successful: Hayden Carpenter, "Our Next National Park Could Be in New Mexico," *Outside Magazine*, July 3, 2018. Accessed online 2/8/2023 at <https://www.outsideonline.com/2321341/could-white-sands-new-mexico-next-national-park>.

¹¹⁵ Stacy Matlock, "U.S. House clears bill that affects New Mexico wilderness," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, December 5, 2014; also J.R. Logan, "One of those really special places," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, November 26, 2014; also Linda Calhoun, "Warm welcome for new wilderness area," *Albuquerque*

Journal, December 25, 2014; also, "Thank you, Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, former Sen. Jeff Bingaman, and Reps. Ben Ray Luján and Michelle Grisham, for supporting our community and protecting the Columbine-Hondo Wilderness." *Albuquerque Journal*, December 30, 2014, a political ad paid for by the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance, The Pew Charitable Trusts, and The Wilderness Society with 30 signatories representing 4 towns and villages, Taos County, Taos Pueblo, two chambers of commerce, the International Mountain Bicycling Association, two backcountry riding, hunting and fishing groups, 7 conservation organizations, two land grants, League of United Latin American Citizens, Amigos Bravos, and several business.

¹¹⁶ "Secretary Haaland Celebrates Expansion of Sabinoso Wilderness, Advancing Effort to Conserve and Restore Public Lands," Press Release, U.S. Department of the Interior, 7/19/21.

¹¹⁷ Katherine Kornei, "Footprints Mark a Toddler's Perilous Prehistoric Journey," *The New York Times*, New York, October 23, updated October 26, 2020. Dating of these footprints and other trails found at White Sands was revealed in: Lizzie Wade, "Human footprints near ice age lake suggest surprisingly early arrival in the Americas," *Science*, 23 September, 2021, available at <https://www.science.org/content/article/human-footprints-near-ice-age-lake-suggest-surprisingly-early-arrival-americas>.