

# AWF

Organized in 1914 to protect and perpetuate our wildlife and natural resources.

Albuquerque Wildlife Federation  
PO Box 1234-Albuquerque, NM 87103

January 2002

**General Meeting\_2nd Thursday of every month**

**At 7:00 P.M.**

**Bear Canyon Senior Center - 4645 Pitt NE, Room 5 & 6**

**(North from Montgomery & Eubank, right on Lagrima De Oro left on Pitt BCSC is one block down on the left)**

**\*\* \*\* \* *January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2002 Program* \* \* \* \* \***

## **WATERSHED RESTORATION ON THE RIO PUERCO**

Steve Fischer, Watershed Team Leader with the Bureau of Land Management, Albuquerque Field Office will present a progress report on the activities of the Rio Puerco Management Committee (RPMC) and this groups efforts to restore the Rio Puerco Watershed

The RPMC was authorized in legislation sponsored by Senator Jeff Bingaman. AWF has been represented on this committee. For many years, members and friends of AWF have worked on wildlife habitat projects in this watershed.

### *President's Remarks*

Our past president, Bill Zeedyke, reminded us at our annual potluck dinner in December that AWF began working on the Valle Vidal in 1982. Two Thousand and Two will be the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our volunteer commitment to this magnificent portion of the Northern New Mexico landscape. Include this July work project at the Valle Vidal on your calendar. Other work projects will be announced in the future newsletter.

The board of directors is reviewing program presentations for this year. If you know of a program that would be of interest to our members please contact me at (505) 255 7156

Richard W. Becker, PhD.

## CONSERVATION FUNDING UPDATE

From Jodi Applegate NWF

S.990, PASSED SENATE on 12/20 before the Senate adjourned for the year, S. 990 the American Wildlife Enhancement Act passed out of the Senate by unanimous consent. S. 990 would authorize funding through 2006 for four conservation programs including \$350 million for state fish and wildlife agencies, \$150 million for incentives to private landowners to recover Endangered or Threatened species, and \$50 million each for easement programs targeting regional land conservation initiatives and shrub- and grassland habitats. It is important to note that the bill is only an authorization - which means that Congress would still have the authority to determine at what level the programs should be funded at in the annual appropriations process.

The \$350 million state fish and wildlife agency funding tracks the CARA Title III program closely. The bill creates a sub-account in the Pittman-Robertson program that gives spending priority to declining species. **If fully funded**, this will help state fish and wildlife agencies make significant steps towards preventing species from becoming threatened or endangered.

The \$150 million Endangered Species Recovery Grants program would provide incentive payments to landowners for their efforts to conserve threatened or endangered species on their property, above and beyond what is required under the Endangered Species Act.

The \$50 million for shrub-land and grassland conservation will provide grants for conservation activities on these habitats on both public and private land.

Passage of this legislation in the Senate will allow conservation funding efforts to focus on the House to pass a bill that provides dedicated funding for critical conservation programs. We will be in touch early in 2002 to let you know what you can do to help. S 990 legislation should be posted on the Internet at the Library of Congress website (<http://thomas.loc.gov>)

# ABQ WILDLIFE FEDERATION

## 2002 Officers and Board of Directors

### President

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### BOARD MEMBERS

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(505) 281-9066  
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# AWF

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**Albuquerque Wildlife Federation--PO Box 1234--Albuquerque, NM 87103**

**GENERAL MEETING - THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2002**

**7:00 P.M.**

**Bear Canyon Senior Center - 4645 Pitt NE, Room 6**  
(North from Montgomery & Eubank, right on Lagrima De Oro  
left on Pitt. BCSC is one block down on the left)

**\*\*\*\*\* FEBRUARY 14 PROGRAM \*\*\*\*\***

## **SUE PROBART: TREE NEW MEXICO**

Sue Probart will be the guest speaker at the February 14th meeting. She is with Tree NM and will be giving information on bosque rehabilitation and tree projects her organization is involved with. She will also be interested in generating some volunteer help in the future.

## **PRESIDENTS MESSAGE**

### **Share Your Stories(and What You Have Learned From Your Experiences)**

From the beginning of time mankind has survived and thrived because we have always been storytellers. As your president, I am extending an invitation to our members and friends to share your personal recollections of your outdoor experiences in written form. Some of your stories may be funny, sad, adventurous or informative. I would like to share your stories throughout the year at our monthly meeting. At our annual meeting in December prizes will be given to our best and worst storytellers!!! Please bring your stories to our monthly membership meeting or mail to me at: 1005 Indiana St SE, Albuquerque, NM 87108.

Richard Becker, President

*Associated With The National Wildlife Federation*

2002 TEAM-UP with WILDLIFE SCHEDULE

Team-Up with Wildlife program manager, Bill Zeedyk, has begun scheduling the projects for 2002. The tentative schedule is listed below.

May: Cienegita Meadow, Mountainair Ranger District. Continue wet meadow restoration and thinning and removal of encroaching trees and shrubs.

June: NA

July: Valle Vidal. Assist new Mexico Trout and Quivira Coalition with stream bank restoration structures and revegetation along Comanche Creek. This is our Twentieth Anniversary project at Valle Vidal. So we will have some sort of commemoration.

August: Riparian fencing and structures at Cisneros Park.

September: Continue wetland restoration at Cebolla Canyon, Rio Puerco Resource Area, BLM, Grants Office.

Alternative possibilities might include Sandia Ranger District, Las Huertas Creek, etc.

Membership application for Albuquerque Wildlife Federation, PO Box 1234, Albuquerque, NM 87103

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

city, state, zip \_\_\_\_\_

phone \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

family membership\* (\$25) \_\_\_\_\_

name of person to be NMWF member \_\_\_\_\_

additional NMWF member (\$10/member) \_\_\_\_\_

single membership\* (\$20) \_\_\_\_\_

\* includes one NMWF membership

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12413 Placid NE  
David Weingarten  
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**GENERAL MEETING - THURSDAY, APRIL 11, 2002  
7:00 P.M.**

**Bear Canyon Senior Center - 4645 Pitt NE, Room 6  
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left on Pitt. BCSC is one block down on the left)**

**\*\* \*\* \* \*\* APRIL 11 PROGRAM \*\* \*\* \* \*\***

## **RESTORATION OF THE RIO GRANDE CUTTHROAT TROUT**

The April speaker will talk about the draft plan to restore the Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout in NM waters. The restoration plan is statewide, but early efforts will be in the north part of the state, including the Jemez, and perhaps the Turner ranch east of Valle Vidal. The name of the speaker, from New Mexico Game and Fish Department, was not available at the time of this writing.

## **IT'S THE WATERSHED.....AMIGO!!!**

On April 5 and 6, the NM Watershed Coalition is hosting their Fifth Annual Meeting in Socorro, NM at the Rancher's Steakhouse. Watershed restoration success stories and discussions on regional water planning will be presented. Contact Dale Jones (864-7223). Also on April 6, the Sixth Middle Rio Grande Water Assembly will be held at the UNM Anthropology Building with the theme "Recognizing Each Other's Water Values" (call 293-9208). I encourage our membership to attend these meetings. If you have concerns and questions about water issues in NM, here is your chance to let your voice be heard.

**Richard W. Becker, President**

*Associated With The National Wildlife Federation*

## **HIGH PLAINS PRAIRIE-CHICKEN FESTIVAL SET FOR MID-APRIL**

*from NM Department of Game and Fish news release*

MILNESAND, N.M.-The inaugural High Plains Prairie-Chicken Festival will be held in Milnesand, N.M. on April 12-14. The festival explores the biology and ecology of the lesser prairie-chicken.

Those attending may see and hear lesser prairie-chickens during their ritualistic mating dance, observe radiocollaring and tracking efforts, help with roadside population surveys and learn about the geology, archaeology and history of New Mexico's southeastern plains. Afternoon talks will explore prairie plant communities, shrub control, grazing and provide more information about the birds of the southern Great Plains.

The lesser prairie-chicken is a diminishing species of prairie grouse now found in small populations in Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas and New Mexico. This is the only prairie grouse still living in New Mexico. Although small, localized populations exist, the bird is gone from more than 90 percent of its historic range.

Since the prairie-chicken and its habitat are extremely sensitive to disturbance, only the first 75 people who register will be allowed on the tours. Attendance fees are \$30 for adults and \$20 for kids 14 and under. Minimal facilities are available in Milnesand, including motor home and primitive camping sites. Motel rooms are available in Clovis and Portales. Registration includes two breakfasts, one lunch and one dinner. For more information on the festival, including registration forms and a map to Milnesand, visit the Department's website at [www.gmfsh.state.nm.us](http://www.gmfsh.state.nm.us) or call (505) 476-8000.

## **APRIL 27 DEADLINE FOR PUBLIC HUNT APPLICATIONS**

*from NM Department of Game and Fish news release*

SANTA FE, N.M.- Hunters who plan to apply for public elk, antelope, oryx, ibex, javelina and bighorn sheep draw licenses and deer draw permits must apply by April 27, 2002.

## **190 ELK DEPART NEW MEXICO FOR GREENER PASTURES**

*from NM Department of Game and Fish news release*

*QUESTA, NM* — A total of 190 elk cows and calves left the sagebrush steppes of Northern New Mexico for lush Kentucky bluegrass meadows earlier this month in an exchange for striped bass. The elk were captured by a helicopter net gun team in the Uracca Wildlife Management Area and the San Antonio and Ute mountain areas beginning Feb. 20. Crews from the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish and the Kentucky Department of Wildlife Resources corralled the captured elk at the Uracca Wildlife Management Area for processing. The animals then were trucked to Kentucky in three loads as part of that state's elk reintroduction program, with the last load shipped on March 4.

"This is our fifth year of trapping," says Dan Crank, wildlife biologist for the Kentucky Department of Natural Resources. "This could be our last year, our goal was to get 200 animals a year and we're just 200 short."

This is the first year that Kentucky has taken elk from New Mexico. Kentucky has trapped most of its animals in Utah and some in North Dakota, Oregon, Kansas and Arizona. A critical criterion for state selection is that it must have disease-free elk. "We can't take any animals from any state that's ever had chronic wasting disease, brucellosis or tuberculosis," says Crank. "We just can't do it."

The elk were captured and corralled in lots of 60 to 70. Once that number was reached, they were inoculated with a tuberculosis or TB test, then corralled for three days to let the TB test incubate. The elk also were tested for five of six cervid diseases. "There's no live test for chronic wasting disease," says Darrel Weybright, big game biologist for New Mexico Game and Fish. "They were interested in coming to New Mexico, because we have no incidents of that disease here yet."

The Department selected the Uracca Wildlife Management Area and the San Antonio and Ute mountain areas under a directive from the State Game Commission to take the elk from an area where they were causing predation problems. The Uracca Wildlife Management area provided controlled access to the processing corrals

and proximity to capture areas.

"There's just lots of animals in there," says Weybright. "They are the same animals that cause depredation problems other times of the year in the surrounding areas." These elk, accustomed to the sparse dry habitat of Northern New Mexico, might well think they've died and gone to heaven when they arrive in a state known for its bluegrass pastures. The six million-acre release site in eastern Kentucky is a reclaimed strip mine area and the animals don't need to travel far to find succulent forage.

"There the elk don't move more than a mile or two, their home range is a square mile or two," says Weybright. "That's amazing, ours are much larger than that." In exchange for the elk, New Mexico will receive striped bass from Kentucky, destined for the warm desert waters of Elephant Butte Lake. Kentucky will deliver half a million bass in 2003 and another half a million in 2005, according to Mike Sloane, Department fisheries chief. The elk capture operation was funded by the Kentucky Department of Natural Resources through donations from the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, with personnel assistance from the NM Department of Game and Fish.

### **GAME AND FISH TV PROGRAM WINS MORE TELLY AWARDS**

*from NM Department of Game and Fish news release*

**SANTA FE, N.M.** — New Mexico Outdoors, a television program sponsored by the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, received four awards during the 23rd Annual Telly Awards for non-network programs. Silver Telly awards are given to winning programs; a New Mexico Outdoors show about visiting an old mine where rattlesnakes hibernate won the sports/outdoors category. Three other New Mexico Outdoors programs were given bronze awards as finalists. Those shows explored kokanee salmon fishing at Heron Lake, oryx hunting near Tularosa and fly-fishing on the San Juan River.

New Mexico Outdoors is hosted by George Erickson. The producer/editor is Paul Evans and the videographer is Tim Baca of the Department of Game and Fish. In Albuquerque, the program appears on UPN-50 Saturday mornings at 6:30 a.m. and WB-19 Sunday mornings at 11:30 a.m. In the El Paso area, the show is on CBS-4 Saturday at 12:30 a.m. and Sunday morning at 6:30 a.m.

### **DISEASED RED RIVER TROUT DESTROYED**

*from NM Department of Game and Fish news release*

**RED RIVER, NM** — The discovery of whirling disease at Red River Hatchery forced the destruction of 120,000 catchable rainbow trout beginning March 4. Department of Game and Fish biologists suspected for more than a month that two lots at the hatchery might be infected, but were not able to make a positive identification until late February. "We sampled with PCR — polymerase chain reaction," explains Mike Sloane, fisheries division chief. "It's a way to identify specific organisms by their DNA. There weren't enough spores to identify them in the first test, so we went back and sampled more and identified them as positive."

Department policy is to sample fish for disease not more than two months before they are to be stocked in public waters. Because the raceways at Red River Hatchery are hard side concrete, Sloane believes the source of the disease must be either river water or wildlife vectors, or carriers. Whirling disease requires the presence of a worm that lives in silty soils to complete its cycle, so the infection must have occurred from outside rather than within the hatchery raceways. The Department has budgeted \$1.5 million toward disease prevention at the hatchery.

"The plan is to cover all the raceways to prevent any birds, raccoons or bears from getting in and contaminating them that way," says Sloane. "That's one possibility on how they got infected. The other thing we're looking at is a system similar to Lisboa Springs Hatchery, where we filter the water down to 10 microns and then run it through an ultraviolet light system to disinfect it." The fish were buried to prevent animals from getting into them and spreading the disease. Whirling disease does not affect people but can devastate fish populations once it becomes established in a water system. The Department has a policy not to stock whirling disease-positive fish in public waters, whether or not those waters are already infected with the disease. The destroyed trout represent about 40,000 pounds of fish.

**TEAM-UP WITH WILDLIFE SCHEDULE**

**May 18**---Mountainair Ranger District, Cebola NF. Remove encroaching trees and shrubs from Cienegita wet meadow. Contact: Bev de Gruyter.

**June 15**---Sandia Ranger District, CNF. Install rock structures in Cedro Creek, Tijeras.

**July 19-20-21**--- Valle Vidal Continue restoration efforts at Ring Place Meadow. Special 20th Anniversary celebration of AWF participation.

**August 24**---Tres Piedras Ranger District, Carson NF. Continue restoration activities at Cisneros Park. (Note: This is the fourth Saturday of August)

**September 14**---Rio Puerco Resource Area, BLM. Continue erosion control and wetlands restoration activities at Cebolla Canyon. (Sept 14 is the second Saturday)

\*\*\*\*\*

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phone \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

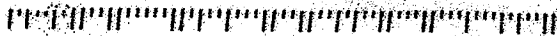
family membership\* (\$25) \_\_\_\_\_

name of person to be NMWF member \_\_\_\_\_

additional NMWF member (\$10/member) \_\_\_\_\_

single membership\* (\$20) \_\_\_\_\_

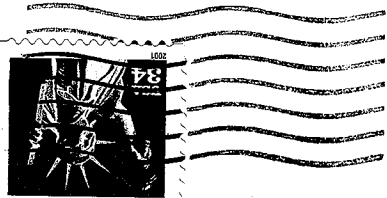
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**GENERAL MEETING - THURSDAY, MAY 9, 2002  
7:00 P.M.**

**Bear Canyon Senior Center - 4645 Pitt NE, Room 6  
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left on Pitt. BCSC is one block down on the left)**

**\*\* \*\* \*\* MAY 9 PROGRAM \*\* \*\* \*\***

**DAVE SEERY: NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION SERVICE**

Dave will describe the Environmental Quality Improvement Program (EQIP) and the Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program (WHIP). These programs are administered by the Natural Resource Conservation Service to help private land owners who want to improve environmental quality and/or wildlife habitat on their lands.

**\*\* \*\* \*\* MAY TEAM-UP FOR WILDLIFE PROJECT, MAY 18 \*\* \*\* \*\***

The May teaming up for wildlife work project will be at Cienagita Meadows, Mountainair Ranger District. This is the same area worked in 2001. We will continue the meadow restoration.

Lets plan to meet at the Sandia Ranger Station in Tijeras on Old South 14 at 7:45 am to car pool or caravan to the site. The route to the site will be signed from Punta de Aqua. Anyone needing directions should call Bill Zeedyk at 281-9066 or Beverly de Gruyter at 281-3304. Please confirm your participation and sign up by phone ahead of time in case we need to cancel due to fire weather hazard.

Trees and brush removed will be cut up into firewood and volunteer's will be able to take it with them if they wish. Bring your lunches, water, gloves and pruning and cutting tools. See you there, May 18.

Bill Zeedyk, project coordinator

*Associated With The National Wildlife Federation*

## PRESIDENTS COLUMN

### Becoming An Informed Citizenry: Questions for A Candidates Debate

At our April 11, 2002 meeting, the AWF Board of Directors discussed hosting a forum with candidates for public office in NM (to be held sometime after the June 4 primary). Candidates would be asked to respond to a series of questions which we formulated in advance that pertain to wildlife in NM. The Board of Directors would like to hear from our members: what questions would you like to pose to the future office holders in New Mexico government? Please call me at (505) 255-7156 or send by email to: [crbecker@swcp.com](mailto:crbecker@swcp.com) <<mailto:crbecker@swcp.com>>. If possible attend our next board meeting on May 9, 2002 (6:00 pm) and present your questions in person.

Richard W. Becker, President

### SMALL GAME RECOMMENDATIONS REQUESTED FROM HUNTERS

*from NM Department of Game and Fish news release*

SOCORRO, N.M. - Migratory bird, upland bird and squirrel hunters who want to make recommendations for the 2002-2003 small game seasons are invited to submit those ideas to the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish now.

"We're in the earliest stages of our recommendations for the coming seasons and this is a great time for hunters to let us know what they're thinking," said Officer Tim Mitchusson, migratory bird and small game biologist for the Department.

Small game seasons include those for blue grouse, doves, pheasants, quail, sandhill cranes, September teal and squirrels. Migratory birds include ducks, geese, American coots, common moorhens, sora and Virginia rails and common snipe.

Comments should be sent to:

Tim Mitchusson

P.O. Box 1036

Socorro, NM 87801

### EAGLE NEST LAKE CLOSED TO PUBLIC FISHING APRIL 1

*from NM Department of Game and Fish news release*

EAGLE NEST, N.M. - A lease allowing public access to Eagle Nest Lake and a purchase agreement for the State of New Mexico to buy the lake from the CS Cattle Company expired Sunday, March 31. The lake now is closed to public angling.

The lake, a popular rainbow and kokanee salmon fishery, had been leased by the Department of Game and Fish for decades from the CS. Approximately 30,000 anglers used the lake each year when it was leased.

During its 2000 session, the Legislature directed the Department of Game and Fish to negotiate a purchase of the lake on behalf of the state. Negotiations between the Department and the CS resulted in a purchase agreement signed last July. The total purchase price for Eagle Nest was \$20 million, less than the appraised value.

"The CS Cattle Company and the Davis family have worked closely with the Department of Game and Fish for more than six years to bring about state acquisition of Eagle Nest Lake," said Julia Davis. "In spite of the best efforts of all involved in the negotiations, a bill providing the funds necessary to complete the purchase failed to pass the 2002 legislative session. CS has decided to move forward with considering other options for the lake and surrounding lands."

Davis said the lake will remain closed to the public while the CS cleans up the property, inventories the resource and develops a plan for the future of the lake. Davis said the CS is willing to resume discussions for a state purchase until it commits to other plans for Eagle Nest.

Scott Brown, assistant director of the Department of Game and Fish, said the Department and the CS Cattle Company greatly appreciate the strong support for the purchase of Eagle Nest expressed by the people and communities throughout New Mexico and surrounding states.

## **WILDLIFE DISEASE THREATS TRIGGER RULE CHANGES** *from NM Department of Game and Fish news release*

SOCORRO, N.M. - The escalating threat of chronic wasting disease prompted the State Game Commission to tighten controls on elk and deer importation and to establish voluntary disease-testing standards for Class A Game Parks. The Commission also amended fish disease-testing requirements by requiring bacterial kidney disease tests on imported trout six months or older. The rules were adopted at the March 29 Commission meeting in Socorro.

"Over the last several years, chronic wasting disease continually has come to the forefront of wildlife management concerns," said Dan Brooks, law enforcement chief for New Mexico Game and Fish. "We don't have chronic wasting disease, we don't want to get it and we're going to try to prevent it. So we've passed some fairly rigid rules."

The rule changes require that imported deer and elk come from facilities that implement whole herd chronic wasting disease testing for at least 60 months before importation into New Mexico. Animals must come from a herd that has completely tested free of the disease for at least five years, and any animals that die for any reason must be tested and found clear of CWD.

"We followed the recommendations of the Western Wildlife Health Committee," said Brooks. "They don't know how long the disease may be in an animal before it manifests itself with clinical signs, so to be safe they're recommending 60 months - that's five years. That's what we recommended and that's what the Commission has adopted."

Recent outbreaks of the disease in South Dakota, Wisconsin and Colorado added urgency to the regulation's implementation. Chronic wasting disease has no inoculation, no cure and there is no live test at this time. The neurological disease is in the same family as "mad cow disease" and sheep scrapie - transmissible spongiform encephalopathy. It attacks the brains of infected deer and elk, causing emaciation, abnormal behavior and death. It is not transmissible to humans but is highly contagious among deer and elk. Chronic wasting disease is present in a number of states and provinces, including Colorado, Nebraska, Wyoming, Wisconsin, Saskatchewan and Alberta. It has not been identified yet in New Mexico.

In a related action, the Commission approved a voluntary chronic wasting disease-testing program for Class A Game Parks. The new program allows park owners to receive state certification and provides assurance to the Department that game parks are testing for the disease.

Game park owners may choose one of two testing standards - whole herd monitoring or herd monitoring. Whole herd monitoring sets a very rigid standard, requiring each animal that dies for any reason to be tested. This option is necessary for game ranchers who wish to sell their elk outside of New Mexico. Herd monitoring allows owners to test a portion of the herd and provides reasonable assurance that no chronic wasting disease is present in the game park. Herd monitoring is geared toward those parks managed as hunting operations.

"The game parks are pretty supportive of our regulation changes because in the end, what protects us also protects them," Brooks said. "The enforcement is actually regulatory, so when ranches make an application, they will either pass muster or they won't."

The Commission also approved amendments to the fisheries section of the importation rules to include testing for bacterial kidney disease along with whirling disease tests. All trout over six months old must be tested for both diseases.

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Membership application for Albuquerque Wildlife Federation, PO Box 1234, Albuquerque, NM 87103

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Address \_\_\_\_\_

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phone \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

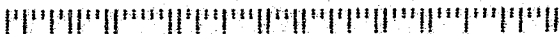
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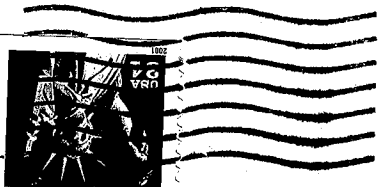
single membership\* (\$20) \_\_\_\_\_

\* includes one NMWF membership



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**\*\* \*\* \* JUNE 13 PROGRAM \* \*\* \*\* \***

**CLIFF DILLS, US FOREST SERVICE SANDIA RANGER DISTRICT  
and  
VICKY ESTRADA USFS MOUNTAINAIR DISTRICT**

Cliff Dills with the Sandia Ranger District will talk about fire and the forest, and the West Side Land Exchange, and Vicky Estrada with the Mountainair Ranger District will talk about the Thunderbird Wildlife Openings Project, Cienegita Meadow, Riley Flat, and Manzano West Side Assessment.

RJ Kirkpatrick with the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish will also be available for a brief time period to relay information concerning the Big Game Regulation Development Process.

**\*\* \*\* \* JUNE TEAM-UP FOR WILDLIFE PROJECT, JUNE 15th \* \*\* \*\* \***

We will be working on Cedro Canyon a couple of miles South of Tijeras. We will meet at Sandia Ranger Station at 8:30 a.m., June 1.

We will be building small rock dams in the portion of the creek that was relocated by construction of South 14 about 20 years ago. Participants should sign up in advance with me, 281-9066, or Beverly deGruyter, 281-3304, and leave their phone number in case we have to cancel due to fire weather restrictions. Bring the usual gear.

**Bill Zeedyk, project coordinator**

*Associated With The National Wildlife Federation*

## PRESIDENTS COLUMN

### We Work For Wildlife - For The Long Haul

Last Saturday (May 18th) ten citizen volunteers worked with ten US Forest Service staff members on a water catchment project near Tres Piedres, NM. This project was partially funded by the National Wild Turkey Federation. This type of project demonstrates that citizen-led conservation organizations (like AWF, NM Trout, NWTF, RMEF, MDF, DU, etc.) can partner with federal and state agencies to make a difference on the land. Private partner funds are available because many of you serve on wildlife banquet committees; attend these fund raising events and make contributions through sponsorships, donation, and by buying raffle tickets.

The project itself enables us to get "up close and personal" with post hole diggers, wire cutters, barbed wire, shovel, screwdrivers, and wrenches. We usually leave tired, sometimes with sore muscles and a little sunburned. We need to remember that all the projects AWF volunteers have worked on (along with other organizations) may be of critical value to wildlife in times of drought.

Richard W. Becker, President

### JULY TEAM-UP with WILDLIFE PROJECT advance information

A little advance info about the July project (July 19, 20, 21). As you know, we are planning a special event to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the Valle Vidal acquisition. The work project itself will be low key, some work at the Ring Place Meadows and/or in the vicinity of Shuree Lodge itself.

The big news is that many of the key figures who were involved in the original negotiations leading up to the donation have agreed to come and share some of the history with us. These include Bill Huey, who was Secretary of Natural Resources at that time; Harold Olsen, who was Director of NM Game and Fish; Jean Hassell, then the Regional Forester; Gerry Gates, Game and Fish planner; Roger Bumstead, Forest Service Wildlife Management; and others. I hope that we have a real good turnout from AWF, NMWF and other organizations.

This will be a one-time-only event. I know from Ron Thibedeau at Questa office, that the Forest Service is also planning to do something special to honor our 20 years of volunteering at the Valle Vidal, so, I want to urge you all to attend.

We will have more details in the July Newsletter.

Bill Zeedyk, project coordinator

### GAME AND FISH RESPONDS TO STATE'S HISTORIC DROUGHT *from NM Department of Game and Fish news release*

SANTA FE, N.M. - There's more to New Mexico's drought than fire restrictions and forest closures. The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish is reducing its farming operations in the middle Rio Grande Valley, preparing to assist in the rescue of endangered Rio Grande silvery minnows and may issue more elk hunting licenses for this fall's hunting seasons.

"In recognition of the needs of the Rio Grande silvery minnow, and consideration for other farms in the valley, the Department decided to severely reduce the use of water on the Ladd S. Gordon Waterfowl Management Complex," said Lisa Kirkpatrick, assistant chief of the Department's Conservation Services Division.

"The primary purpose of the waterfowl areas is to provide feed and resting areas for migrating waterfowl

during the winter months," Kirkpatrick said. "Because of water shortages, the Department decided to not plant corn this year and will instead purchase corn to be placed in the fields for feed this fall."

Alfalfa has been planted this spring; however, it will only be harvested once in May and then watering of the crop will cease and the remainder will be left for ground cover, Kirkpatrick said. "The reason for harvesting the alfalfa is to provide some hay that may be used by the Department to feed wildlife in areas where drought conditions are creating forage shortages that may increase depredation problems on private land," she said.

Feeding and watering wildlife is a provision of the State Drought Emergency Plan, implemented earlier this spring when the Gov. Gary Johnson declared a State of Emergency.

Larry Bell, director of the Department, is prepared to use his authority granted by the State Game Commission to increase by up to 20 percent the number of elk hunting licenses being authorized for the fall seasons, if that is deemed necessary.

"These drought conditions make it imperative that we do everything we can to prevent damage to wildlife habitat as well as to private crops," Bell said. "We would rather harvest animals during legal hunting seasons than allow them to do extensive damage to our range lands on a starvation diet." Fewer animals competing for sparse resources should improve their chances for survival, Bell said.

The Fisheries Division is monitoring water supplies for its hatcheries and will either stock fish or move them to another hatchery should problems develop, said Jared Langenegger, assistant chief of Fisheries. Glenwood and Seven Springs hatcheries most likely would be impacted first, he said. Some scheduled stockings also have been rerouted due to low water conditions encountered at lakes and streams. The Department also is prepared to assist the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other agencies in the capture and recovery of wild Rio Grande silvery minnow eggs and hatchlings, if necessary.

"The Department will continue to react to the drought and its potential impacts to the best of our ability," Bell said. "However, we are facing historic conditions and it's extremely difficult to predict what we can and should do to manage our wildlife resources during a drought as severe as this one appears to be."

Fire restrictions already apply to state wildlife areas, however, if the drought continues closures could be instituted.

### **EAGLE NEST LAKE PURCHASE APPROVED** *from NM Department of Game and Fish news release*

SANTA FE, N.M. - The ongoing bid for the purchase of Eagle Nest Lake by the State of New Mexico was finally resolved May 24, when the Legislature approved a bill appropriating the final \$15 million needed to buy the lake. The bill, introduced by Senator Carlos Cisneros of Taos and Senator Pat Lyons of Cuervo takes \$4 million from New Mexico Department of Game and Fish monies; \$9.6 million from the General Fund, including the Capitol Projects Fund; and \$1.4 million from severance tax bonds. These will be added to the \$5 million already appropriated from Department funds to make up the \$20 million total.

"There is still a lot of work to be done on the final closing by both the state and the owners, CS Cattle Company," said Scott Brown, assistant director for the Department of Game and Fish. "At this time, the lake is still under ownership and management by CS Cattle, consequently, state licenses are not required."

The lake, a popular rainbow and kokanee salmon fishery, closed to the public on April 1, 2002 when the lease expired. It was leased by the Department of Game and Fish for decades from the CS Cattle Company and used by approximately 30,000 anglers each year. The initial bill to buy the lake failed to pass the 2002 legislative session, but the new bill passed both the Senate and the House during the extraordinary session held on May 24 and signed by Governor Johnson.

Brown said the Department and the CS Cattle Company greatly appreciate the strong support for the purchase of Eagle Nest expressed by the people and communities throughout New Mexico. Brown added that several state agencies will be involved in planning and management of the lake once its purchase is finalized. Those agencies include the Department of Game and Fish, New Mexico State Parks and the State Engineer's Office.

**TEAM-UP WITH WILDLIFE SCHEDULE**

**June 15**---Sandia Ranger District, CNF. Install rock structures in Cedro Creek, Tijeras.

**July 19-20-21**--- Valle Vidal Continue restoration efforts at Ring Place Meadow. Special 20th Anniversary celebration of AWF participation.

**August 24**---Tres Piedras Ranger District, Carson NF. Continue restoration activities at Cisneros Park. (Note: This is the fourth Saturday of August)

**September 14**---Rio Puerco Resource Area, BLM. Continue erosion control and wetlands restoration activities at Cebolla Canyon. (Sept 14 is the second Saturday)

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Membership application for Albuquerque Wildlife Federation, PO Box 1234, Albuquerque, NM 87103

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

city, state, zip \_\_\_\_\_

phone \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

family membership\* (\$25) \_\_\_\_\_

name of person to be NMWF member \_\_\_\_\_

additional NMWF member (\$10/member) \_\_\_\_\_

single membership\* (\$20) \_\_\_\_\_

\* includes one NMWF membership

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# AWF

*Organized in 1914 to protect  
and perpetuate our wildlife  
and natural resources.*

**Albuquerque Wildlife Federation--PO Box 1234--Albuquerque, NM 87103**

**GENERAL MEETING - THURSDAY, JULY 11, 2002**

**7:30 P.M.**

**Bear Canyon Senior Center - 4645 Pitt NE, Room 6**  
(North from Montgomery & Eubank, right on Lagrima De Oro  
left on Pitt. BCSC is one block down on the left)

**\*\*\* \*\* JULY 11 PROGRAM \*\*\* \*\***

There will not be a regular program at the July meeting. Instead we will discuss proposed changes to the Big-Game Regulations. **The program will begin at 7:30 pm.** See President Becker's remarks on the next page for further information.

**\*\*\* \*\* VALLE VIDAL TEAM-UP FOR WILDLIFE PROJECT \*\*\* \*\***  
**\*\*\* \*\* DELAYED UNTIL AUGUST 24th \*\*\* \*\***

The Valle Vidal 20th anniversary Celebration must be rescheduled. Due to the impact of the Ponil Fire and other fires on the Questa ranger District workforce, we have agreed to postpone the work project and celebration to August 24th. Invited guests have been advised and plan to attend as originally planned.

As a result of the postponement until August 24, we will be canceling the scheduled work project at Cisneros Park on the Tres Piedras District.

Bill Zeedyk, project coordinator

*Associated With The National Wildlife Federation*

## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

### AWF Discussion Meeting on Proposed Big Game Regulations

At our June 13, 2002 meeting, R. J. Kirkpatrick, NM Dept of Game and Fish, discussed proposed changes in Big Game Regulations for 2003-04 and 2004-05. The Dept is making a concerted effort to inform the hunting public in NM about these changes. The Dept is asking for comments. The NM State Game Commission will take action at their October, 2002 meeting. To provide an opportunity for discussion we are devoting our JULY 11, 2002 meeting for this purpose.

The Albuquerque Wildlife Federation Board of Directors has changed our general membership meeting START TIME to 7:30PM. The Board meets at 6:00pm.

P.S. AWF would like to make a donation to NM Dept of Game and Fish to help in the purchase of radio collars (\$280 each) for the three year Sandia-Manzano Mountain Bear Study scheduled to begin 1 July, 2002. If you would like to make a contribution come to our July meeting or mail a check to the AWF, PO Box 1234, Albuquerque, NM 87103. Thanks.

Richard W. Becker , President

### SANDIA BEAR STUDY BEGINS JULY 1

*from NM Department of Game and Fish news release*

SANTA FE, N.M. -Bears in the Sandia and Manzano Mountains are the focus of a new three-year study by the Department of Game and Fish scheduled to begin July 1, 2002. At least 15 nuisance bears will be radio-collared per year and tracked by airplane to determine their movements, home range and what impact bear removal has on the total population in the area.

"There's immense interest in this population because of its proximity to Albuquerque," said Bill Dunn, Department bear program manager. "There is concern over the high harvest we had and the number of bears we moved last year. Are we adversely affecting the number of bears in the mountain range? These data will tell us."

The Sandia bear population was reduced an estimated 38 percent- from 123 to 76 bears - last year, said Dunn; a result of the combined effects of hunter harvest, depredation kills and relocation. Biologists hope to learn what nuisance bears do once they are trapped and relocated - what percentage returns to the trap site, establishes a new home range or is killed by resident bears. They also expect to discover how much I-40 serves as a barrier to bear travel between the Sandia and Manzano mountain ranges, and what impacts that may have on the genetic diversity of those bears.

"We've studied the Sangre de Cristo and Gila bear populations, but what about this small island right here?" said Dunn. "Does that information apply here, or do we need to find out more?"

Many Department officers question whether bear relocation is useful, since those bears often are killed by resident bears or by officers when they become nuisance bears somewhere else.

"Just to capture and remove one bear takes a full day for at least one district officer," said Dunn. "Last year we spent around \$35,000 in salaries just moving bears in the Sandias, not to mention time taken away from officers' other duties. We need to consider how we're managing bear populations in rural and semi-urban areas."

Biologists potentially could collar as many as 35 bears a year as they are trapped and relocated.

"Many members of the public wanted to help during Operation bear Den last year," said Dunn. "Most of the radio eartags for that study were purchased with money donated by private individuals and conservation groups. If people wish to help on the Sandia bear study, we certainly would welcome it."

Individuals and organizations wishing to donate money to help purchase radio collars may contact Dunn at (505) 476-8034.

### **SILVERY MINNOWS RELEASED INTO RIO GRANDE**

*from NM Department of Game and Fish news release*

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. - About 2,000 tagged silvery minnows were released into the Rio Grande from the Alameda Bridge on June 6, part of a joint agency effort to restore the endangered fish to native waters. Officials who helped release the fish included Larry Bell, New Mexico Game and Fish director; Dale Hall, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service director and Albuquerque Mayor Martin Chavez.

"We're trying to augment minnow populations in the Albuquerque reach," said Joy Nicholopoulos, field supervisor for the New Mexico Field Office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. "It's from the Angostura Diversion Dam to the Isleta Diversion Dam, a pretty good stretch of river."

The fish were held in plastic bags and floated in the Rio Grande to acclimate to river temperatures before their release. Officials donned hip waders over business suits to venture into the river shallows, where they opened the bags and ceremoniously poured the native fish into the water. Most of the released fish were taken from captive stock at the Albuquerque BioPark and the rest were taken from research projects dating to 1998. The tagged fish will be monitored for direction, rate and extent of movement.

The Department now has around 25,000 silvery minnows at its Rock Lake Hatchery to be released later this year. The minnows hatched from eggs collected in the Rio Grande between Albuquerque and Elephant Butte Reservoir during an induced minnow spawn in May. The eggs were taken to the Albuquerque BioPark to hatch, then distributed to Rock Lake as well as Dexter National Fish Hatchery and New Mexico State University Propagation Unit.

The recovery effort draws on numerous state and federal agencies, including Game and Fish, the Environment Department, the Interstate Stream Commission, the federal Bureau of Reclamation, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the City of Albuquerque and the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District.

"I'm just very pleased with the collaborative effort," said Nicholopoulos. "The Fish and Wildlife Service cannot recover these species alone and everybody's really pulling together to help."

### **GAME AND FISH MONITORING FIRES' IMPACTS ON WILDLIFE**

*from NM Department of Game and Fish news release*

RATON, N.M. - The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish is monitoring forest fires around the state for their impacts on wildlife. In the northeast quadrant of the state these fires include the 91,000-acre Ponil Fire, the 600-acre Roybal Fire in Pecos and the 3,200-acre Montoya Fire near Canjilon.

Anyone seeing injured wildlife should contact the Northeast Area Office of the Department of Game and Fish, (505) 445-2311.

Although low-intensity controlled burns can improve habitat for wildlife, the intense heat generated by wild fires sterilize soils, reducing the viability of the land for years. Rains following wild fires also can clog streams with ash, making them unsuitable for trout and other fish species.

**TEAM-UP WITH WILDLIFE SCHEDULE**

**\*\* \*\* July Valle Vidal project moved to August \*\* \*\* \*\***

**August 22, 24, 25**---Tres Piedras Ranger District, Carson NF Cisneros Park project canceled. It is replaced by the Valle Vidal project and 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. See August newsletter for further details.

**September 14**---Rio Puerco Resource Area, BLM. Continue erosion control and wetlands restoration activities at Cebolla Canyon. (Sept 14 is the second Saturday)

\*\*\*\*\*

Membership application for Albuquerque Wildlife Federation, PO Box 1234, Albuquerque, NM 87103

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Address \_\_\_\_\_

city, state, zip \_\_\_\_\_

phone \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

family membership\* (\$25) \_\_\_\_\_

name of person to be NMWF member \_\_\_\_\_

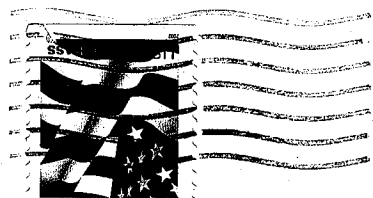
additional NMWF member (\$10/member) \_\_\_\_\_

single membership\* (\$20) \_\_\_\_\_

\* includes one NMWF membership

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# AWF

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Albuquerque Wildlife Federation--PO Box 1234--Albuquerque, NM 87103

## **GENERAL MEETING - THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2002, 7:30 P.M.**

Bear Canyon Senior Center - 4645 Pitt NE, Room 6

(North from Montgomery & Eubank, right on Lagrima De Oro  
left on Pitt. BCSC is one block down on the left)

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### **\*\* \*\* \*\* NOVEMBER 14 PROGRAM \*\* \*\* \*\***

#### **GERALD BURTON:**

#### **TROUT 101, TROUT BIOLOGY AND TROUT FISHING TECHNIQUES**

Gerald Burton will be with us to give information on what trout are all about. He will pass on information to help the less skilled in trout harvest.

#### **\*\* \*\* \*\* TEAM-UP FOR WILDLIFE \*\* \*\* \*\***

There is no project this month.

#### **\*\* \*\* \*\* PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE \*\* \*\* \*\***

#### **A TIME TO BE THANKFUL**

This is the time of year when many of us take to the field to enjoy our opportunities to hunt, fish and hike. For some it is a time when family and friends gather around a campfire after a hearty dinner and share stories (some of them true) about the day's events and past adventures. As we partake of these out of doors adventures, let us all remember how fortunate we are to live in a state and country where we have this freedom. This is a time to be thankful.

Richard W. Becker, PhD, President

#### **COCHITI FISHING ACCESS**

At the October 10, 2002 AWF Board of Directors meeting, Cynthia Piirto, Outdoor Recreation Planner with the US Army Corps of Engineers discussed the effort of Cochiti Pueblo to close access to public fishing at the Al Black Recreation Area. This is a well known cold water fishery enjoyed by many folks living in this area. Letters have been sent to the USACOE and our congressional delegation expressing the opposition by AWF to this closure.

Stay tuned for further developments.

Richard W. Becker

*Associated With The National Wildlife Federation*

**NEW MEXICO BEAR SEASONS SET**

from NMDG&F. - Bear hunting in New Mexico will be restricted in some areas for the 2003-04 and 2004-05 hunting seasons. Most bear management units will be open Aug. 1-29 to hunting with dogs and any legal weapon. All bear units will be open Aug. 30-Sept. 22, archery only and no dogs. Most units will reopen Sept. 25-Nov. 15 to dogs and any legal weapon.

The exceptions to these include: The state wildlife management areas open to bear hunting will be open Aug. 1-31, any legal weapon, permits issued through a drawing; Units 8 and 14 will be open only during the archery season and again between Oct. 15 and Nov. 15. In Units 8 and 14 dogs must be used during the Oct. 15-Nov. 15 period and only male bears may be killed.

The commission reduced the bag limit in all units to one bear.

Big Game Units 8 and 14 include the Sandia and Manzano mountains of the Cibola National Forest. Sprawling urban communities in those mountain ranges are reducing bear habitat and the Department of Game and Fish has trapped a record number of nuisance bears in those communities this summer and fall. Citizens have expressed concern that hunting is further damaging the population and the commission responded to those concerns with these reductions in hunting pressure.

The Department of Game and Fish will continue a three-year study of bears in Units 8 and 14.

**GAME COMMISSION CHANGES DEER, ORYX DEADLINES**

from NMDG&F - The deadline to apply for New Mexico's oryx hunting licenses and deer entry hunts has moved up to Feb. 1, 2003. This is three months earlier than in 2002. This deadline also applies to all population reduction/depredation hunts (deer, elk, antelope, javelina and oryx), bear entry permits for state-owned wildlife management areas and two public-land spring turkey hunts.

The deadline to apply for elk, antelope, ibex, javelina and bighorn sheep licenses is April 26, 2003.

\*\*\*\*\*

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

city, state, zip \_\_\_\_\_

phone \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

family membership\* (\$25) \_\_\_\_\_

name of person to be NMWF member \_\_\_\_\_

additional NMWF member (\$10/member) \_\_\_\_\_

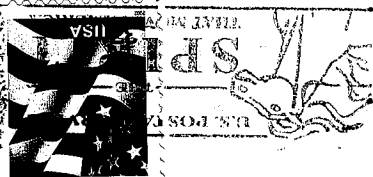
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# AWF

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**Albuquerque Wildlife Federation--PO Box 1234--Albuquerque, NM 87103**

**ANNUAL MEETING - THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2002, 6:30 P.M.**

**Bear Canyon Senior Center - 4645 Pitt NE, Room 6  
(North from Montgomery & Eubank, right on Lagrima De Oro  
left on Pitt. BCSC is one block down on the left)**

**\*\* \*\* \* AWF 2002 ANNUAL MEETING AND POTLUCK \* \*\* \*\* \***

Join us on Dec 12, 2002 at 6:30pm for our annual celebration. We will elect our new officers (see below), and have our traditional potluck dinner. Bring a food item to share and a good story, wildlife photo, etc.

**\*\* \*\* \* ANNUAL ELECTION \* \*\* \*\* \***

The nominations committee slate of candidates for our 2003 AWF Officers and Board of Directors is:

President: Richard W. Becker

Vice-President: Bill Zeedyk

Treasurer: Lois Jones

Secretary: Cecil Haas

Board of Directors: Chris Chadwick, Jeff Davis, Dale Jones, Jim Hines, Jim Hubert, Randy Isler.

Nominations from the floor are welcome, of course. Members can elect up to eight board members at this meeting. The elected president can appoint additional directors, which must then be conformed by the sitting board. Appointed directors can bring the board up to a maximum of twelve directors.

**\*\* \*\* \* PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE \* \*\* \*\* \***

The AWF Board of Directors have resolved to carry forward our work into 2003. Bill Zeedyk will discuss a new format for our Team Up For Wildlife Projects. At the Annual Meeting we will discuss our meeting schedule--do we continue to meet monthly vs every two months vs every quarter. Give this serious thought and tell us your opinion at the meeting.

We thank all of you for your service to AWF and our wildlife. Special thanks to Cliff and Joyce Mendel, Andy Iskra, Mike Gustin. See you at our celebration!!!!

Richard W. Becker, PhD, President

*Associated With The National Wildlife Federation*

**ALBUQUERQUE STUDENTS HELP RELEASE BEARS IN SANDIAS**

*NMDG&F News Release:* SANDIA CREST, N.M. - Three little bears will spend the winter in the Sandia Mountains with the help of students from Longfellow Elementary and Del Norte High schools. The bears, one adult and two unrelated cubs, were released in the Sandias after rehabilitation at the Wildlife Center in Espanola. The students assisted the release as part of their class curricula.

"We just completed a unit on bears in school and this field trip caps it off," said Longfellow teacher Naomi Julian. "The students were concerned and wrote to the Game Commission about bears in the Sandias and Manzanos."

The Longfellow students observed the release and learned about bear management issues from Game and Fish officers, who discussed the problems inherent in managing bears close to urban Albuquerque.

"We're trying to keep bear populations stable in this area," said Chris Chadwick, Northeast Area public affairs officer, "but as more and more people move into the mountains, that gets harder to do."

The Del Norte High School students were interested in wildlife career opportunities and had some first-hand experience carrying the tranquilized cubs to a den where they would spend the winter - or at least a day or two. "I don't expect these cubs to stay here," said Rick Winslow, Albuquerque district wildlife officer.

The adult bear was released first on its own two feet, while the cubs were tranquilized and placed together in a straw-lined den. Cubs are released in pairs to enhance their chances for survival. Without their mothers' protection, cubs are extremely vulnerable to predation.

The education program helped the officers as well, who not only must manage bears but also teach the public proper bear "etiquette" while visiting or living in the mountains. Officers stress that a fed bear is a dead bear, because once a bear is habituated to human food it usually becomes a nuisance bear and eventually must be killed. With public cooperation, the Sandias and Manzanos can be home to both people and bears. For more information on bear behavior, call the Department in Albuquerque at 841-8881 or in Santa Fe, 476-8000 or visit [www.gmfsh.state.nm.us/](http://www.gmfsh.state.nm.us/).

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Membership application for Albuquerque Wildlife Federation, PO Box 1234, Albuquerque, NM 87103

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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