

The Bosque Watch



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Bosque Watch is published quarterly by the Friends of the Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge, Inc., P.O. Box 340 San Antonio, NM 87832 email: friends@sdsc.org

From the President

What's Next?

The past two years have been significant for the Friends of the Bosque. We have discovered what we can do if we focus on the task at hand. The Friends added the Christina Ann Lannan Education Annex, a new Visitor Center entrance and the Nature Store in 2006. This year we're adding Chupadera Peak to the refuge. We didn't say we couldn't do it. We found out that we could. You should all be very proud, for without your help, it never would have happened. The Friends are finding out just what they can do.

We are moving into a new phase, we're growing up, becoming more professional and more engaged with the Bosque. Leigh Ann Vradenburg is now our Executive Director. The Lannan Foundation funded the position for two years as we transition into the organization we can be. The Friends Educational Director position has moved from a contract position to an employee.

What's next? This past Saturday, the Friends of the Bosque del Apache NWR met with Leslie Elgood, a 28-year veteran of hands-on fundraising having worked with various non-profits, religious and health agencies. With Leslie's help, the Board began to see what steps it needs to take for us to move to the next level. We will be developing an

operating and business plan which will lay out our goals for the next year, three years and five years into the future. We will develop fundraising projects that will ensure the sustainability of the

Friends organization and fund projects on the ground at the

refuge.

Why fundraise? The reality is that the government is cutting funds for the refuge system. The more that we can do to offset these reductions, the more the refuge can do to maintain the Bosque we love. You will be seeing more fundraising opportunities and requests for funds. One, the Costa Rica birding trip is already half way filled. There will be more funding requests for specific projects at the refuge. That is all a part of the new reality that we find ourselves in today.

Who knows,

**Chupadera Purchase
Drive Over the Top!
See Pages 5-7**

you might even be asked to adopt a crane?
--Jon Morrison

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For details, visit www.friendsofthebosque.org and click on
'Birding Trip to Costa Rica', or
<http://www.holbrooktours.com/FriendsofBosqueCostaRica2008/>

Hurry! Limited to 15 participants

From the Refuge Manager

Change --By Tom Melanson

You've heard the saying "The only thing that remains constant is change" and that holds true here at Bosque, particularly when it concerns staff. Earlier this year, Mike Browne, our Facilities Management Coordinator, retired after 19 years here at the refuge and 38 with the government. Prior to arriving at Bosque, Mike had worked at the White Sands Missile Range and served in the Air Force. He was followed into retirement May 25 by Administrative Officer Terri Jones after 21 years (to the day) here at Bosque. Terri tracked budget expenditures and kept several refuge managers (including myself) out of trouble over the years. She also saw and heard lots of things during her career and has threatened that she will write a book about it someday!

Due to budget reductions we were unable to hire a replacement for Mike and his duties have been spread among the remaining staff. We were able to fill Terri's position and are pleased to announce that Christina Carnagey, who has served as the Fire Program Technician for our New Mexico Fire District here at Bosque for the past five years, will be filling Terri's old job. Christina's promotion will now pose a challenge for Fire Management Officer Chris Wilcox to find an equally capable individual to follow Christina (good luck Chris). Also in the fire program, Firefighter Andy Lopez was promoted to Station Manager at Bosque following the transfer of Travis Dotson and we are currently recruiting for three Firefighters to fill vacancies at Bosque and Sevilleta.

Last, but certainly not least, Outdoor Recreation Planner Maggie O'Connell recently accepted a promotion as a Visitor Services Specialist in our Washington D.C. office, where she will be working on hunting and fishing programs as well as the development of a new nationwide birding initiative for refuges. We wish her well with this

new challenge and we're confident that she will tirelessly continue to advocate for Bosque on all future funding issues! We are currently recruiting to fill this position which is so critical to the successful operation of the refuge.



Meet Our Nature Store Manager

If you have visited our Bosque Nature Store recently, you may have been greeted warmly by Jeanne Emmerson. Jeanne came on board as store manager April 16. She was on the staff

of the Silver City Chamber of Commerce, when the Friends' ad for a Nature Store Manager caught her eye.

Jeanne brings to the Nature Store an eclectic background, and a ten-year love affair with Bosque del Apache. "It has always been one of my absolute favorite places in the world," Jeanne says.

Emmerson also brings hands-on experience at nature-related gift shops at the Childrens Museum and Zoo in Las Vegas, Nev., and the Children's Museum of Natural History in Utica, N.Y. She was affiliated with the renowned Best Friends animal sanctuary in Kanab, Utah, as an animal caregiver in its bird and wildlife research facility.

Asked her impressions after a month in her new position, Emmerson responded: "I am very impressed with what I have inherited, especially the book collection."

The Friends of the Bosque del Apache

National Wildlife Refuge is a registered 501 (C) (3) non-profit corporation incorporated in New Mexico. The Friends promotes appreciation and conservation of wildlife and habitat through environmental education and natural history experiences at Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge.

Executive Director

Leigh Ann Vradenburg
505-838-2120
e-mail: friends@sdcc.org

Officers

President: Jon Morrison
Vice President: Jerry Goffe
Recording Secretary: Cat McGrath-Farmer
Corresponding Secretary: Bob Merkel
Treasurer: Tom Sizemore

Nature Store

(In the Refuge Visitor Center)
Open 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. weekdays
8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. weekends & holidays. 505-835-1828

Friends Educational Series 2

Damsels and dragons at Bosque del Apache - Gary Froehlich

Sat., July 28, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon – Meet at the Visitor Center for slides & discussion followed by field observation. Learn more about the lives of damselflies and dragonflies: when, where, and how to look for them; and how to identify the various species. (Bring mosquito repellent and, if you have them, close-focusing binoculars.) Call 505-835-1828 for more information.

Herons, Egrets and Other Waders - Celestyn Brozek

Sat., Aug. 25 – 12:00-5:00 p.m. – Visitor center and field; limit 12. Overview of the family and their biology illustrated with slides, followed by tour observing herons, egrets and ibises. Call 835-1828 for required reservations.

A Travel Guide to the Milky Way with Amy Estelle

Sat., Sept. 22, 7:30 p.m. – Limit 45. Meet at the Visitor Center. Join amateur astronomers for a guided trip through the Milky Way: from double stars to star clusters and from nebulae to a great rift. Visitors will use the unaided eye, binoculars, and telescopes to experience an astonishing night sky. Ages 12 and up. For required reservations, call 505 835-1828.

Artists' Reception

Sat., Oct. 6, 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. – Visitor Center - Meet many of the Artists who convey the beauty of the Bosque...Leon Miller, Sharon Fullingim, Valerie Graves, Skeeter Leard, Sandy Seth, Jerry Goffe... and see a few of their paintings, sculptures, photographs, and more! Refreshments, musical entertainment. It's free...no reservations needed. Call 505-835-1828 for more information.

Editors' Note

Jerry Goffe's popular **Photographers Corner** was omitted from this issue because of space limitations. It will return in the next issue.

Do You Smell Smoke?

By Christopher Wilcox, Fire Management Officer

As you may or may not have been aware, the refuge's Unit 19 (a 70-acre tract east of Highway 1 just north of the display pond) was set alight on December 12, 2006 as part of the refuge's continued resource management program. If you were visiting the refuge that sunny December day, you probably saw several FWS wildland fire engines, and over a dozen fire personnel working in and around the unit carrying shovels, hoses, flares and drip torches (a small fuel tank with a handle, nozzle and igniter used to ignite the vegetation). The burn was safely conducted as planned and initial monitoring data, based on first order fire effects, suggests that the burn was successful in meeting management objectives (see accompanying article).

What one observing the prescribed fire activities may perceive as an operation simply conducted on a "good day to burn", is in fact an undertaking initiated 6 to 12 months or more prior to striking the match. Once the use of fire has been selected for a resource area as the appropriate tool to assist in improving habitat or protecting adjacent resources from the adverse affects of unplanned wildfire, fire managers begin the processes of risk analysis, hazard mitigation and regulatory compliance and resource monitoring.

Fire Managers begin by surveying the proposed burn site to determine the composition of the vegetation's associated attributes. Computer modeling software is utilized to assist in predicting fire behavior under varying conditions of ambient air temperature, relative humidity, wind speed and direction, and vegetation moisture, to name a few variables. From those modeling outputs specific to the site, fire personnel can identify acceptable ranges for those conditions to meet the resource objectives and maintain a manageable range of fire behavior. Analyses of the prescribed fire complexity are conducted to determine the affect of the fire on values within the fire area as well as adjacent values.

Mitigation measures are identified and implemented based on the potential risk to a value. For the Unit 19 burn, a specialized sprinkler system was fabricated specifically to protect several acres of willow within the interior the burn area and reduce the risk to firefighters from being burned while protecting the pocket of trees. Mitigation measures may also include constructing multiple or more sizable fire breaks or bringing in additional firefighting equipment and personnel to ensure that the fire does not escape or adversely impact an identified sensitive resource.

Before the December burn was ignited, there were regulatory requirements to be met. In New Mexico, all parties (private, state or federal) who will produce smoke by burning must register their respective burn plans with the

state's Department of Environmental Quality, Air Quality division. Once registered, one must gain permission from the state on the day prior to the burn to produce smoke emissions. Permission is based on the calculated emissions which would be produced and the forecast ability of the atmosphere to disperse the smoke rapidly.

Monitoring is another behind-the-scenes step that, although often unnoticed, is an important part of prescribed burning. Monitoring data collected before, during and after burns is used to evaluate current management practices. This ensures that resource objectives are being met for both short term and cumulative effects from ongoing management practices.

In the Unit 19 burn, data loggers, which measure temperature, were placed within the burn at multiple locations to determine heat intensity and duration in specific points. Cottonwood trees were wired with data loggers in the soil at the base of the trees, behind the bark at the bases, and three meters in the canopy of the trees to capture temperature data at each of the levels and validate or dispute effectiveness of firing patterns to generate the prescribed fire intensity to meet the objectives.

Unit 19 Goal to Restore Native Plants

By John Vradenburg

The goal of the prescribed burn last December in Unit 19 was to shift the plant community away from a cattail-dominated wetland to a screwbean mesquite, saltgrass, and sacatone savannah. This prescription was determined by looking at the site's history. Problems with water delivery through the uplands to wetlands downstream had resulted in increased surface water and created favorable conditions to shift the plant community away from plants that prefer drier sites with higher soil salts to the cattail-dominated cohort.

Last December's burn in Unit 19 was preceded by preliminary burns in 2005 and the spring of 2006, and by selected herbicide applications, repeated mowing, and improved water management. Fire was chosen as the first management action to remove accumulated plant material and expose mineral soils to promote plant germination of more desirable species.

Although it is too early to determine the effectiveness of these multiple burns, initial results indicate a spread of the desired short emergent perennial plants (including Baltic rush, three-square bulrush, saltgrass, and sacatone) and bi-annuals and annuals (including foxtail barley, smartweed, millet, and sprangletop). Drier areas have bacharis, screwbean mesquite, and saltgrass, which are making advances into areas that three years ago were dominated by cattail. The new plant community will provide a diversity of height and structure and allow a greater diversity of birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians to meet the seasonal demands of their life cycle.

Bags

Is the fence festooned with balloons or rags?

No, they're plastic grocery bags.

The dogs once stalked a whitish lump
until it didn't run or jump.

Everything that looks like that
is not always a pussycat.

I've heard about the tin can trees;
these bags stir with the slightest breeze.

Perhaps they capture spirits too
fluttering yellow, white, and blue.

Bags fill the irrigation ditch along with crates
and buckets, which you'd think someone

would want to claim

but recycling is not the game.

I missed the day the workmen came
to burn the tumbleweeds and blame
the householders who made the mess;
they don't recycle junk, I guess.

If we'd reuse a plastic sack,
our streets and fields would soon be back
to pristine cleanliness and beauty;

Too bad we don't see it as duty.

Barbara DuBois

the number of individuals of each species that are seen. And both are conducted by ordinary birders, both avid and amateur, serving as prime examples of "citizen science". Beyond this, however, there are some significant differences between the two counts – the most obvious being the time of year at which they are conducted, as their names suggest. The CBCs are strictly defined. A CBC location is defined by a specific latitude and longitude, and given a specific name. The count is conducted on a single day, chosen from a two-week period centered on Christmas Day (more or less), and is restricted to a 15-mile-diameter circle centered at the specified location.

By contrast, the Spring Count is held only on International Migratory Bird Day, which is always the second Saturday of

May. On the other hand, the Spring Counts are not restricted to a "count circle". Rather, they fall into one of three categories – the Stationary Count (30-meter-diameter area, such as a back yard), the Traveling Count (where a record is kept of distance traveled), or the Area Count (where an estimate of area covered is recorded). In New Mexico, we primarily conduct counts specific to a given county, and report the results as a compilation of Traveling Counts. In addition, we have a friendly competition between counties to see which one reports the most species.

Both counts can be great fun. The weather can be glorious or dreadful at either time of year, though in spring dreadful usually just means very windy. Unexpected species can be encountered at either time of year, too, but in my experience the spring surprises are more frequent and more "exotic". In winter, there are typically fewer species encountered generally, but numbers of individuals can be truly daunting (think ducks and geese and cranes and blackbirds!). In spring migration, there are many, many more species encountered, and generally fewer individuals of each. The Spring Counts cover entire counties, which are really large in New Mexico, and so cover a variety of habitats.

I have helped out on the Socorro 4 County count since 1996 (before that I helped out on the Eddy County count for two years). While others count in the Magdalenas, the San Mateos, the La Jolla / Sevilleta area, as well as various back-yard feeders and other locations in Socorro itself, I have counted at Bosque del Apache and the area around San Antonio. Over that time, there have been as many as 4-5 of us, and as few as 1 (me).

A typical count for me, if there is such a thing, starts at sunrise and continues until after dark. Having always scouted the area in the days just before that second Saturday, I have a good idea of where to find what habitat (e.g., which impoundments have been drained, which fields mowed, etc.). An intense morning and afternoon of birding is followed by a meeting of count participants at the refuge Visitors Center, where a tally of species seen, as well as those missed, is conducted. After the "count party", some of us continue birding, with an emphasis on finding the missing species.

County totals have ranged from a high of 204 species in 2002 to a low of 153 in 1998. My own totals, just from the refuge, have ranged from 127 species (also 2002) to 106 (2007). Unexpected species have included Little Blue Heron, Tricolored Heron, Glossy Ibis, Northern Goshawk, Black-throated Blue, Golden-winged, and Chestnut-sided Warblers, Bobolink, and Bronzed Cowbird.

While both counts can be fun, with exciting finds, good camaraderie, and spectacular sights, the main benefit is to the birds. These census records provide a good indication over time of the populations of the species involved. And since birds are excellent and sensitive indicators of environmental quality, these statistics can serve as warnings when something in the environment has gone awry.

If you haven't already, consider participating in future counts. For the Socorro County Spring Count (IMBD), or information about other counties, contact Bruce D. Neville bneville@unm.edu; for Christmas Bird Count, visit <http://www.nmos-birds.org>, the website of the New Mexico Ornithological Society.

Bird Counts – Because Birds

Count -- By Gary Froehlich

Many people are familiar with, or at least aware of, the National Audubon Society's annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC). Far fewer are aware of the annual Spring Count, held in association with International Migratory Bird Day. I suspect the primary reason for this situation is that the Spring Count is a relatively recent invention, while the CBC is over 100 years old. The first CBC was held on December 25, 1900. On that day, counts were conducted in 25 locations, with 27 individuals participating. In December 2000, there were some 1,823 count locations, with a total of 52,471 participants. Small wonder so many have heard of them!

By contrast, the Spring Count was conceived in conjunction with International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD), itself first observed in 1993. IMBD was created by the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center and the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, but is now under the direction of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Both counts serve as a census of birds, and both report not just the number of species observed, but also

VICTORY ON CHUPADERA SUMMIT

Chupadera Peak Goal Reached

By John Bertrand

It is said that faith can move mountains. Our Friends organization has just proved it! We set out from scratch a year ago to raise \$63,000 to purchase the 6,272-foot Chupadera Peak from the present owner and donate it to the refuge. That goal has been surpassed, and purchase of the property is in progress.

Chupadera Peak is the highest point in the Chupadera Mountain Range which borders the western boundary of the refuge. The summit, which lies a few hundred yards outside the refuge boundary, was owned by the Highland Springs Ranch, developers of several thousand acres formerly known as the Armendaris #34 Land Grant south and west of the refuge. Included in the purchase is 140 acres which encompass the peak. This additional acreage will provide a buffer from Highland Springs's proposed development of 350 20-acre "ranchette" home sites.

Chupadera peak is the natural destination of the refuge's popular 9-1/2 mile round trip Chupadera Wilderness Hiking Trail. However, with the summit in private ownership, the trail currently terminated at the boundary fence, just short of the peak. After title is transferred to the refuge, the trail will be extended.

The trail, in its 1,700 foot ascent, winds its way up



Panoramic view from the summit

the eastern slope of the mountain, passing through the refuge's 5,282 acre Chupadera Wilderness. In spring-time, the route is redolent with wild flowers. Hikers reaching the summit are afforded a 360-degree panoramic view of the Magdalena and San Mateo mountain ranges, Fra Cristobal Mountain, Elephant Butte Lake, and the refuge to the east.

The refuge currently is proceeding with the analysis required before it can formally accept the land as part of the refuge. After title is transferred by the Friends, Chupadera peak will be the highest elevation on the refuge. Refuge Manager Tom Melanson is exploring the steps needed to extend the wilderness designation of the adjoining Chupadera Wilderness to cover the newly acquired 140-acre parcel.

A Monumental Achievement

When the Friends set out just a year ago to raise \$63,000 to add Chupadera Peak to the refuge, it seemed like a monumental task. The genesis of the effort was a request which then Deputy Refuge Manager Deb Davies made to president Jon Morrison early in 2006 seeking the Friends' help to acquire the peak. After Davies' sudden death in April, her wide circle of friends contributed generously to a fund established for a yet-undesignated memorial.

In fulfillment of his commitment to Davies, Morrison contacted the land's owner during the spring and negotiated a \$63,000 selling price. By July 1, when the decision was made to launch a fund-raising drive, it was a natural, with the Davies family's enthusiastic assent, to commit almost \$10,000 subscribed to Deb's memorial fund to the effort. The rest is history.

The success of the drive is a tribute to the refuge and the high regard in which it is held. While there were 267 identified donors of amounts from \$10 to \$4,500, several thousand dollars were contributed anonymously as visitors from far and wide dropped currency into a collection box installed in December in the visitor center, presided over by an elfin hiker-doll struggling up a cardboard replica of Chupadera Mountain. Friends members responded enthusiastically to appeals in our own publications...the 2007 *Habitat!* visitors news magazine and the Watch.

continued on page 7

Donors, under \$450

Marie Acosta	Steven Elkins	Anita Makuluni	Timothy & Luba
Mary Lou Alcorn	C. S. Fenstermaker	Stuart & Kathy Marcus	Scardino
Art & Catherine Arenholz	Jeffery & Lyn Fey	Gail McDonald	Steve & Kim Schaffer
Eric Arons	Emily Freeland	Shasta McGee	Stephen Schmid
Janice Arrott	Friends of Palotti	James & Jacqueline McGrath	George & Judy Sears
Richard Aster	Kirk & Tamara Gadzia	Betty McLeod	Kathie Senter
Gary Axen	Sally Gall	Bruce & Mary Meinhold	Mark & Aileen Shepherd
Steve & Caryl Baron	Mary Beth Garton	Tom & Sheri Melanson	Col. & Mrs. John Sherburn
Clark Barry	Willis & Jana George	Philip Melnick & Paula Rebert	Jennifer Shotwell
John Bartley	Nancy Gilbertson	Hilda Meyer	William & Pamela Smith
Paul Bauer	Elizabeth Glass	Katja Meyer	Linda Sparke
Gary Bautsch & Roxanne	Allen Glazner	F.M. Michael & Barbara J.	Roger Squires
Legatz	Marie Glendenning	Langner	Robert Stamm
Aline Hoyt Berge	Jerry Goffe	Stefan Milkowski	Priscilla Stollenwerk
Janet Berge	James Gold & Norma	Gretchen Miller	Kelli Stone
Kenneth Berge	Hammes	Matt Miller	Tony Stout & Brie-Anne
Budd Berkmen	Jennifer Goldman	Matthew & Stephanie	McKernan Stout
Robert Bless	Jodell Gott & Susan Hooper	Mitchell	Nancy Szymanski
A.M. & Patricia Boring	Valerie Graves	Walter & Lila Mitchell	George Tangalos
Heather Borkowski	Julie Gregory	Letitia Morris & Mark Higgins	Russell & Carol Thompson
Penelope Boston	Prescott Grey & Georgette	Joseph & Joyce Motto	Bill Titus
Don Boyd	Evans Grey	Gene & LaRayne Neubauer	Alton & Betty Todd
Stan & Jane Boynton	L.M. & Ruth Guier	Don Neuville	Sei Tokuda
Ella Braden	Ed & Jan Gunlock	Oasis - Foley's - Coronado	Jose & Clare Villa
Walter Brisken	Dale & Agnes Hamilton	Center	John & Leigh Ann Vradenburg
Wendy Brown	M. E. Hammes	Gabriel & Concetta Orlando	E.F. & Joann Wade
Daniel Brummett & Linda	Timothy Hankins & Mary Nutt	Charles & Susan Oviatt	Craig Walker
Dillon	Tom Harper & Anna	James & Sandra Padgitt	Joel Weisberg
Colleen & Jason Buchanan	Appleby-Harper	Thomas Palmer	Mary Whiteman
Matthew Bush	Donald & Vida Heckerman	Matthew Palotti	Barbara Whitney
Campbell Family	Matthew & Lynn Heizler	Dianne Parker	Eric Wong
Robert & Laura Campbell	Col. & Mrs. James Heupel	Judith Pasich	Mike & Linda Wood
Lee & Sheryl Carnegie	Garnet Hilton & Carol Ufford	Blanche Patterson	Liila Woods
Claire Chandler	Walter & Bettie Hines	Luann Pavletich	John Zarola
Laura Chomiuk	Dorothy Hinze	Marilyn J. Pennington	
Ed Churchwell	Laura Hmelo	Daniel Perry & Socorro	
Dom & Elizabeth Ciccone	Gary & Penelope Hoe	Gonzalez	
Tom & Linda Collins	Clinton & Jacqueline Janes	Anne S. Petty	
Michael Cordeniz	Stephan Jansen	Roy Poole	
Megan Curry	Mary Johnson	Jane Porter	
Claudia Cyganowski	Mary Lou Jorns & Bob	Donald Precoda	
Stephen & Mary Pat Day	Wicksness	Esther Pringle	
William & Muriel Denke	Steve Jose	Kathy Purcell	
Betty Devine	Charles & Lucy Kester	Roger & Gertraud Radloff	
Evelyn Devine	Darnell Kirksey	Frederick & Mary Raje	
Max & Sophie Devine	Justin Koh	Calvin & Jacque Reaves	
Richard Devine	Alma Kwak	Refuge Staff	
Ernest & Betty Dorko	Lannan Foundation	David & Jean Rios	
Barbara DuBois	Colin Lee	Cay & Dick Roberts	
Chris Durand	Jamie Levine	Arthur Rohr & Lynn Udick	
Lillian Ebermann	Claudie Lewis	Marian Royal	
El Camino Real Heritage	Noralane Lindor	Jim, Mary & Jeanne Ruff	
Center Foundation	O. MacGregor & T. Allen	George Sappenfield	
		(c/o Velda Rose United	
		Methodist Church)	



Sample of Donor Monument

Donors, One or more acres

Joan Bacon
 Raoul & Marjie Bates
 Anne Beckett
 John Bertrand
 Delores Brandon
 Dan Brooke & Cheryl Teuton
 Douglas Brown & Kristin Wilkinson
 Patrick & Jill Buckley
 Cactus & Succulent Society of New Mexico
 Maj. Joseph & Lois Cancellare
 Central New Mexico Audubon Society
 Barry G. Clark
 Eileen Comstock
 Richard & Sandra Conway
 Cotter Family
 Nancy Daniel
 Bill & Helen Davies
 Percy Deal
 Devine & Berge Families
 Farzad & Rhonda Love Dibachi
 Joseph & Michele Diel
 Joanne & Bob Dulski
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 Gary K. Froehlich & Ann Hodges
 Don Graf & Shiela Hall
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 Jeniam Foundation
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 Paul & Kay Krehbiel
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 Warren, Mary Ann, & Molly Laskey
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 Robert Dana Phagan (1947-2007) In His Memory
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 George Ruptier
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 James & Delores Smith
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 Tyler & Marcia Tingley
 Don Tripp
 Nakita Troxel (William C. Troxel)
 Joan & Len Truesdell
 R. Craig Walker & Joan Wrobel
 Margaret & Paul White
 Jeanne Whitehouse & David Kammer
 James & Cindy Wolfe
 Phoebe Wood & Phil Norton
 Ronald & Sarah Wood
 Don & Dot Wortman
 Robert K. Wright & Sylvia Knight

Rex

In January, Katie Devine, former NM Tech student and now staffer at the National Radio Astronomy Observatory, caught the spirit, set up a personal website based on her participation in the Phoenix Rock 'n Roll marathon, and raised more than \$8,000 toward the peak's purchase. The Albuquerque Journal's Tania Soussan featured Katie's effort and the mountain's breathtaking beauty in a photo essay in mid-January. The drive exceeded its goal by the end of April.

A key appeal of the campaign was to those who could contribute the purchase price of one acre (\$450) or more. The 85 individuals and organizations who responded accounted for more than half the \$63,000 purchase price. As promised, these donors will be acknowledged on a permanent monument. (See following story.)

But the real finale to the story is the outpouring of generosity from everyone who contributed to help us reach the summit. For a worthwhile cause, no gift is small. The Friends extends heart-felt thanks to all.

Victory Celebration, Monument Planned

After "planting the flag" on Chupadera's summit, organizers of the Friend's fund-drive to purchase the peak have turned their attention to planning a suitable "victory party". The celebration will take place in conjunction with installation of the monument honoring major donors to the drive. A reception will follow at the visitor center. Hardier celebrants will have an opportunity to hike to the peak.

"Acquiring the peak for the refuge is a major accomplishment," president Jon Morrison noted. "We invite all Friends and friends (lower case) to join us on this happy occasion for fun and refreshments."

The monument acknowledging those who contributed the price of one or more acres will be installed at the trailhead of the Chupadera Wilderness Trail, a short distance west of Highway 1 north of the visitor center. Names of contributors (and memorials, where appropriate) are being engraved on a bronze plaque, which will be mounted on a large boulder.

Watch the Friends website, www.friends-of-the-bosque.org for the confirmed date and details of the "victory party".

Conservation Through Hunting and Fishing

By Tim Mitchusson

NM Game & Fish State Waterfowl Coordinator

Have you ever thought what Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge would look like if it weren't for those folks participating in hunting and fishing activities? These activities' have played an important role on how the refuge first came into existence, the habitats that benefit wildlife, and how the refuge is managed today.

Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge was one of the first national refuge purchased using Federal Waterfowl Stamp (Duck Stamp) funds. A federal Duck Stamp is required for all waterfowl hunters 16 years of age and older, and those funds are mandated for conservation. If it weren't for these hunter-supported funds, then Bosque del Apache may not have been purchased to benefit the cranes, waterfowl, and many other species seen there each year.

As this world becomes more urbanized there are fewer hunters in the field every year, and those that still hunt and fish are finding fewer places to pursue these activities. So why should a birder or photographer on Bosque be concerned with this?

Just 3-4 generations ago most of this country's population lived in rural areas. Hunting and fishing was a way of life. Many families pursued wildlife as recreation and supplemented their menu with game and fish. These folks understood the relationship between wildlife and the habitats needed to support that wildlife. They also recognized the factors that were causing declines in wildlife populations and took actions to increase wildlife, establishing the conservation ethic.

State and federal wildlife agencies were established. Hunting seasons with harvest limit laws were enacted, and license fees were assessed to support these agencies. Refuges were purchased to protect important habitats and the wildlife associated with those key areas. Conservation organizations such as Ducks Unlimited and the National Wild Turkey Federation supported specific wildlife concerns. It was primarily hunters and fishermen taking the lead in agencies and organizations who supported these conservation initiatives. It was also hunters and fishermen that provided the vast majority of the funding to support habitat protection, acquisition, and wildlife transplant programs. These activities brought back wildlife numbers to what we see today because hunters recognized that these conservation activities would allow them to see more wildlife while pursuing their passion. And while these activities' objectives primarily have been to benefit game and fish species, there are whole guilds of nongame species benefiting from these conservation initiatives.

Wildlife conservation is still dealing with declining wildlife habitat and there continue to be species in

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decline due to degraded or altered habitats. Just in the Rio Grande Valley there is less habitat for waterfowl and Sandhill Cranes due to increasing urbanization. Areas supporting pheasants just 10 years ago are now someone's ranchette. What interest groups are willing to take a stand to support wildlife needs? Where will future funding come from to continue conservation activities? Who else as a group will address the destruction of prairie grass and wetlands as these lands are converted to corn for biofuel production, or try to influence Farm Bill policies that benefit conservation? Will suburbanites that think an exotic English house sparrow is wildlife see the need to spend millions of dollars to support wildlife agencies or evaluate the impacts over-abundant light geese are having on Arctic habitats? That is the conundrum for present and future conservation agencies.

Cuentos del Bosque

THE BEST OF EDWARD ABBEY

BOOK REVIEW

Edited by Edward Abbey

Good old Edward Abbey, always grouchy, always loving the outdoors even while complaining about our mistreatment of our world. The Best of Edward Abbey contains many essays and many excerpts, chosen by himself.

From *The Brave Cowboy* and *Desert Solitaire* come the familiar complaints about tourists and hikers who don't revere the wilderness. But there are some good plain stories, too. "The Moon-Eyed Horse" from *Desert Solitaire* tells an enchanting story of a horse, not wild, just "independent," who has lived alone in a little canyon for years. The narrator wants him, finds him, wants to take him home, but the horse has his way as usual. Although the narrator tries every possible trick and lure, he has to give up and leave the horse to his lonely life.

Also from *Desert Solitaire* is "Havasu," which tells of Abbey's climbing around in the Grand Canyon till he gets almost caught where he cannot climb out. It might remind readers of Colin Fletcher's *The Man Who Walked Through Time*.

From *The Journey Home* in "The Great American Desert," he outrageously talks about "Natural Bridges National Moneymint," "Zion National Parkinglot," and "The Land of Many Abuses."

Three pieces concern river-running: "Down There in the Rocks" bemoans the demise of Glen Canyon. Now many writers agree that the dam will merely turn into a waterfall. There is even a proposal to drain Lake Powell, which has hidden many petroglyphs in side canyons. "Down the River with Henry Thoreau" will delight a reader who may enjoy numerous relevant quotations from the author of *Walden*.

"A river is superior to a lake in its liberating influence," wrote Thoreau; "With its rapid current it is a slightly fluttering wing. River towns are winged towns." When people complained about his exaggeration, he replied, "You must speak loud to those who are hard of hearing." Quoting Thoreau's most famous statement, that the "mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation," **Continued on page 9**

Abbey says that today Thoreau would probably think it's unquiet. Another favorite: "A man is rich in proportion to the number of things which he can afford to let alone."

Abbey is not claiming that he agrees with everything Thoreau said, or that we should, but Abbey enjoys using Thoreau as a "suburban coyote," teasing us as the coyotes tease city dogs, tempting them to go wild, but failing because the city dogs do not want to give up their comforts. "Town dwellers have always found him exasperating."

In "Floating" Abbey is boating down the Rio Dolores, endangering many lives because he has trouble paying attention to rocks in his route. He implies that he had no business being in charge of the boat. He expresses his usual disapproval of visitors:

"Maybe we should everyone stay home for a season, give our little Western wilderness some relief from Vibram soles, rubber boats, hang gliders, deer rifles and fly rods." But he remains optimistic after all: even though the government persists in building dams, "There will always be one more river. The journey goes on forever on our little living ship of stone and soil and water and vapor, this delicate planet circling round the sun which humankind call Earth." As Thoreau advised, "Nothing can rightly compel a simple and brave man to a vulgar sadness." His sister said that he cheered her up when he was dying, that no one could be sad in his presence.

The volume ends with a few poems and a few journal entries, giving the reader a wonderfully complete profile of Abbey with such varied matter. An admiring foreword by Doug Peacock says, "The man was an American classic. The collection bears the authentic stamp of his own personal, thorny, and considerable generosity," for which we may all be grateful.

Barbara DuBois

"All day...Siftin' sand"

By John Bertrand

There's a line in a traditional Calypso song MaryAnn that goes: "All day, all night, MaryAnn, Down by the seashore, siftin' sand." There's no seashore at Bosque, but there's plenty of sand, so you can't blame Nicole Koeltzow if she feels somewhat connected to the song.

For three months this spring, Nicole's job at Bosque was essentially that...sifting sand (and other soil types) for organic food matter that Sandhill Cranes might find nutritious. Nicole's labors were just one component of a three-year study of habitat along the Greater Sandhill Crane flyway from Idaho-Montana, through Colorado's San Luis Valley and Bosque del Apache NWR, and terminating in Mexico's Chihuahua-



Nicole Koeltzow at work "siftin' sand"

region wetlands. The study is being carried out through South Dakota State University, with funding from multiple sources, including Friends of the Bosque del Apache.

In her time at Bosque, Nicole processed samples of soil and above-ground vegetative material collected from transects randomly selected at the Bosque del Apache and Monte Vista refuges by computer. At Bosque, the transects represented five habitat types: alfalfa, corn, wetland, saltgrass (*Distichlis spicata*) and alkalai sacaton (*Sporobolus airoides*). Transects were further categorized as areas in which cranes were observed feeding and ones in which cranes did not forage.

Nicole's work began with unprocessed samples taken from the transects stored in large plastic bags...270 of them...each with labels identifying location and time of collection. Much as workers at an archeological site, her task was to sift the bulk material through two screens...one coarse, the other fine...discarding dirt and rocks and retaining organic material. Retained material was classified as of plant origin (seeds, roots, etc.) which were returned to the now-empty sample bag, or animal matter (bugs, etc.), which was placed in hard plastic containers, labeled and refrigerated.

Nicole's finished product was 1080 bags and containers (four from each of the 270 transects at Bosque and San Luis), each carefully labeled and ready for other researchers to identify, quantify and reduce to tabular data which will become part of the over-all investigation of food sources and habitat for Sandhill Cranes of the Rocky Mountain Population.

"Tedious work?" this writer asked. "Yes, but vital," Nicole responded.

Koeltzow is a graduate of Northwest Missouri State University, where she majored in wildlife ecology and conservation, with a minor in biology. She hopes to continue with graduate study in some aspect of wildlife in Australia.

DU's Taylor Tribute

Regional Engineer Jason Vickery, left, and Civil Engineering Tech Lance Efird of Ducks Unlimited's Texas-New Mexico Field Office in Richmond, TX use 4-wheelers and GPS gear to

conduct survey for water structure on Bosque's interior drain as part of a system which will bring water to the NAWCA restoration area pioneered by the late John Taylor. DU raised \$50,000 to install the structure as a memorial to Taylor, formerly Bosque chief biologist.



BIRDERS (right) led by guides Marge and Dwayne Longenbaugh (foreground) scan trees near the Visitor Center for passerines as part of the Friends observance of International Migratory Bird Day May 12 (26 species were recorded just in the Visitor Center vicinity). Activities also included a tour of the Desert Arboretum and cactus propagation demonstration led by arboretum founder Percy Deal (center, at right), and a Longenbaugh-conducted canvass by refuge tour bus of shorebirds and water birds for a capacity audience.



NM Legislators Tackle Conservation Issues

By NM State Representative Don Tripp

The 2007 legislative sessions saw a record number of bills introduced. Included in the issues were a record number of environmental concerns from water preservation to renewable energy and reduction of fossil fuel reliance. Among the bills that passed and were signed into law are: HB13 promoting water resource protection and management by expanding the zoning authority of municipalities and counties to explicitly authorize them to regulate water conservation. HB188: facilitating the transmission of renewable energy, helping to overcome one of the major limiting factors in clean energy production in New Mexico. HB218/SB489: promoting alternative vehicle fuels by requiring at least a 5% biodiesel component in diesel fuel by 2012. HB1145 and SB607 work in tandem with HB218 and SB489 by using tax incentives to encourage early investment in biodiesel fuels - before the 5% mandate begins in 2012. HB318 authorizes the Environmental Improvement Board to require use of the best available technologies to control mercury emissions from power plants. HB330/SB886: ensuring that the funds in the Strategic Water Reserve can only be used for water rights, or for infrastructure specifically required for the delivery of water to the location of need. HB430 provides a tax credit to manufacturers of up to 5% of the costs of equipment for the manufacture of clean energy products. HB443 and SB461 ensures that farmers who improve their irrigation or agricultural practices to conserve water do not forfeit their water rights. HB445 and SB486 encourages irrigation and conservancy districts to allow some of their property to be used for parks and trails, by relieving liability concerns in certain instances. HB534 and SB543 promote the construction of resource-efficient, sustainable buildings, by providing tax credits that scale up depending on their degree of sustainability.

After many years of negotiation the Surface Owners Protection Act (HB827 and SB960) provides property owners

with some basic rights when oil and gas companies own the mineral rights below the surface of their land, and they help protect landowners from irresponsible oil and gas operators. HB990 promotes conservation by increasing the tax credit that can be claimed for donating land for protection of open space, agricultural lands or natural habitats. On the Senate side: SB418 increases the existing renewable energy standard so that utilities must include 15% renewables in their portfolio by 2015, and 20% by 2020. SB463 promotes small-scale renewable energy production by expanding the Renewable Energy Production Tax Credit to increase the incentive for solar production and to include smaller facilities. SB994 provides tax credits and enhanced cost recovery for concentrating solar or advanced coal-fired power plants that meet stringent air quality standards.

Bills Vetoed: SB220 would have eliminated the sur-tax on coal, which would provide a de facto \$6.9 million subsidy to a thriving resource extraction industry. **Bills Defeated:** HB178 and SB431 would have provided an \$85 million tax credit to the Desert Rock Coal Plant on the Navajo Nation. If built, the plant would offset all the gains made by New Mexico under the proposed clean energy agenda - dramatically increasing mercury and greenhouse gas emissions. (Died in the House) HB1080 would have allowed local governments to acquire water rights that they wouldn't put to beneficial use for up to 100 years. This would have resulted in a dramatic increase in market pressure and speculation in water rights - jeopardizing senior water rights holders. (Died in the House) SB991 was the oil and gas industry's response to HB827 and SB960, which seek to protect property owners from the damaging impacts of irresponsible oil and gas operators significantly restricting property owners' rights and the liability of oil and gas companies for damages to property. (Died in the Senate.) This is a short recap of some of the conservation legislation addressed in the 2007 New Mexico legislative session.



Retriever Hunt Test

Owner-handler Sonya Hutchason gives hand signal to Labrador Retriever 'Flyer,' during Masters-level water competition in Albuquerque Retriever Club's 2007 Spring Hunt Test May 5-6 at Bosque del Apache, in which more than 100 Retrievers competed. Bosque has hosted the Albuquerque club's American

Kennel Club-sanctioned Spring Hunt Test for more than 23 years.

Good Fences Make Good Neighbors

By Aaron Drew, Deputy Refuge Manager

During 2007, the refuge was allocated \$279,634.00 for rehabilitation of approximately 20 miles of fence line along its western boundary. The project was awarded to a local contractor, Jactell Construction, Inc. out of Las Cruces, who is currently nearing completion of the project. This involved replacing old fence posts, running new wire, and installation of new gates along the entire west side of the refuge. Since most of the fence line borders the Chupadera Wilderness, special care and consideration were taken in construction and repair activities, and in coordinating access with neighboring landowners; in one section, even delivering fencing supplies via helicopter. Once completed, the fence will be mutually beneficial to both the refuge and its neighboring landowners.

Like many of our western states, New Mexico still falls subject to "open range" laws, which are currently recognized in 13 other states. These laws generally date back to the 1800's and are still in effect today. States and counties which recognize these laws have a "fence-out" policy, meaning landowners are responsible for fencing their property if they wish to keep free-ranging livestock off their lands.

A majority of the area currently being fenced also falls under other legislation: the Wilderness Act of 1964. Under this Act, the refuge is responsible for preserving the integrity of the Chupadera Wilderness Area in natural and unimpaired condition. The act states by definition that "it is a place where vehicles will not be allowed, where no permanent camps or structures can be made, where wildlife and its habitat would be kept in as primitive a condition as possible". Although under "minimum requirements" the refuge may have been able to accomplish the work within its own boundaries (while creating a minimal impact), it was decided to seek the cooperation with adjoining landowners to facilitate transport of fencing materials across their property. The refuge went the extra mile to work with neighbors and create minimal impact to the Wilderness Area.

Chupadera is just one three Wilderness Areas on Bosque del Apache NWR, which were designated on January 3, 1975. The other two Wilderness Areas, Indian Well and Little San Pasqual, also fall within similar management guidelines ... to "protect and manage so as to preserve a natural condition and which generally appear to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable, provide outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation, and contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value".

So, indeed, good fences do make good neighbors ... and in so many far reaching ways.

Africanized Bees Are Here

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Africanized honey bees have been identified recently on a remote part of the refuge. While single bees out collecting pollen or water are not a threat, the Africanized bees can be extremely aggressive when defending their colony. Steps are being taken to remove any hives or colonies found on the refuge. Visitors observing aggressive bee behavior or a swarm or colony should leave the area immediately. If you have questions or concerns, contact the visitor center.

Africanized honey bees imported to the Western Hemisphere in a Brazilian experiment in 1956 escaped from captivity and have been expanding their range.

Comment Period Still Open for Comprehensive Conservation Plan

Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge is accepting scoping comments through July 15, 2007 as we prepare our Comprehensive Conservation Plan. Scoping is the first step in a multi-year planning process and helps us identify issues and concerns raised by the public.

Friends members should have received information on the planning process in the mail or you can access the Planning Update electronically at www.FriendsoftheBosque.org/PlanningUpdateSpring2007.pdf or www.fws.gov/southwest/refuges/newmex/bosque/planningupdate1.pdf

Written comments can be sent by mail to: Refuge Manager Tom Melanson, Bosque del Apache NWR, PO Box 1246, Socorro, NM 87801; by email to: tom_melanson@fws.gov, or by Fax to: (505) 835-0314.

Or to: Regional Planner Carol Torrez, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Refuge Planning, P.O. Box 1306, Albuquerque, NM 87103-1306; email: carol_torrez@fws.gov Fax: 505) 248-6874.

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Check to receive Newsletter electronically

Membership Level

- Individual \$20 Family \$25 Student \$15 Senior \$15
 Special Friend \$60-99 Best Friend \$100-499
 Friend Indeed \$500-999 Lifetime \$1000+

Interests

- Help with Friends activities Help with the Festival
 Serve on a Friends Committee.

Please mail with your check to: Friends of the Bosque del Apache
P.O. Box 340, San Antonio, NM 87832.

Information on Refuge Issues Available

From time to time, we receive bulletins with information about issues affecting the Refuge and the National Wildlife Refuge System. If you would like to receive copies to keep abreast or take appropriate action, send a request with your email address to friends@sdc.org to be added to our distribution list. Addresses will be kept confidential.

Bulletin: The full schedule of events for the 2007 Festival of the Cranes is now posted on the website: www.friendsofthebosque.org/crane

Speak Up!

Government decisions determine the fate of the Bosque del Apache. You can help by letting these key decision makers know how you feel about the Refuge and other natural resource issues:

President George W. Bush, The White House,
Washington DC (202) 456-1111
President@WhiteHouse.gov

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Regional Director,
500 Gold Avenue SW, Albuquerque NM 87102
(505-346-2545)

Hon. Dirk Kempthorne, Secretary of the Interior,
18th & C Streets NW, Rm. 6151, Washington DC
20240 (202) 208-7351

N.M. Senators

Hon. Jeff Bingaman U.S. Senate Washington DC 20510
(202) 224-5521 (505) 766-3636 senator_bingaman@bingaman.senate.gov

Hon. Pete Domenici U.S. Senate, Washington DC
20510 (202) 224-6621 (505) 766-3481
senator_domenici@domenici.senate.gov

N.M. Representatives

Hon. Steve Pearce House of Representatives Washington
DC 20515 (202) 225-2365 pearce.house.gov/

Hon. Tom Udall House of Representatives Washington
DC 20515 (202) 225-6190 tomudall.house.gov/

Hon. Heather Wilson House of Representatives
Washington DC 20515 (202) 225-6316 wilson.house.gov/