



New Mexico Chapter President's E-Newsletter – Fall 2007

State of our State (Issues)

It has been a few weeks since the National Conference in San Antonio and we have hardly had time to breathe. We left to San Antonio in relative calm, only to return to absolute political chaos. There is a black hole in our state, otherwise known as the vacant Domenici seat. Domenici retiring has led to all three House seats likely being vacated as Pearce and Wilson will go head to head for the GOP Senate primary and Udall and Chavez for the Democrats. NM REP will be ever eye-ful for opportunities to forge relationships with GOP candidates and restore our conservation heritage within our local party.

The NM Chapter is currently working a number of national issues; 1872 Mining Law (*Passed the House), Energy Policy, and the NLCS) with the help of our D.C. lobbyist, David Jenkins. David has been essential to coordinating the efforts of our local chapter as we solicit support from our congressional delegation.

In addition to the national issues and candidates, the NM Chapter has been active working issues closer to home.

- REP NM signed on in support of the purchase of almost 200 acres of wildlife habitat and open space along the Rio Grande bosque in Valencia County that will be protected from future development with the approval of an \$800,000 purchase by the New Mexico Game Commission. The Commission approved the purchase of the 192-acre Rio Abajo property at its meeting Sept. 28 in Tucumcari. The money is part of a \$5 million Land Conservation appropriation by the 2005 New Mexico Legislature for conservation actions that will benefit wildlife and promote retention of open spaces
- REP NM signed on to a letter directed at the New Mexico Energy, Minerals And Natural Resources Department to oppose the use of pits and unlined pits in Oil Drilling. The use of pits, and especially un-lined pits, can lead to contamination of both soils and water, which is potentially harmful to the public, as well as to plant and animal species.

- Chapter President Scott MacCurdy and Arizona State Coordinator Tina Beattie have formed a REP Regional group that includes 8 other chapter presidents and state coordinators. Scott and Tina are developing a campaign that will deal with coal fired power plants and the need to move toward alternative energy sources.

- REP NM will also be working on Otero Mesa, the Travel Land Mgt. Rule (ORV's), Galisteo Basin and we have formed a committee that will work to assist the NM Dept. of Game and Fish on their Wildlife Conservation Strategy.

Announcements

- **Forest Service Public Input Meetings regarding the Mexican Wolf** – [Click Here for Dates](#)
- **REP NM Chapter Holiday Gathering** – Dec. 7th, 2007 Invitation to follow.
- **REP NM Annual Meeting** – Slated for Jan. 12, 2008 Invitation and details to follow.

National Policy Paper

[Market Based Environmental Policies](#) – This link is to REP's national policy paper on a conservative approach to solving environmental problems.

NM Issue Brief : Re-Introduction of the Mexican Gray Wolf

Missing from the landscape for more than 30 years, the howl of the Mexican gray wolf (*Canis lupus baileyi*), can once again be heard in the mountains of the southwestern United States. The Mexican wolf, like many species protected by the Endangered Species Act, is getting a second chance to play its role in nature through an ambitious recovery program led by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service).

The Mexican wolf once roamed throughout vast portions of Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, and Mexico. But, as human settlement intensified across the Southwest in the early 1900s, wolves increasingly came into conflict with livestock operations and other human activities. Private, state, and federal extermination campaigns were waged against the wolf until, by the 1970's, the Mexican wolf had been all but eliminated from the United States and Mexico.

The Forest Service established a recovery team in 1979 to assist the agency in mapping out a recovery strategy for the Mexican wolf. The Service approved the Mexican Gray Wolf Recovery Plan in 1982. The plan recommended maintenance of the captive breeding program and re-establishment of a viable self-sustaining population of at least 100 wolves in the wild within the Mexican wolf's historic range. Due to the perilous status of the Mexican wolf at the time, and uncertainty if captive-reared wolves could successfully be returned to the wild, the recovery plan stated that delisting may never be possible. The plan, therefore, did not provide a definitive recovery goal (criteria to down-list or de-list the Mexican wolf from the list of threatened and endangered species) for the Mexican wolf, but instead provided an interim objective to focus and stimulate reintroduction and recovery efforts.

Solution: Not yet determined. The NM REP Executive Committee has chosen to increase our efforts regarding the wolves. REP is in unique opportunity to mediate between the wolf supporters and the ranchers. Each group has viable concerns and we will work hard with all parties to find a workable solution. This program can be successful and the wolves can roam once again.

Update: Current projections put the wolf population at 55. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) is taking a second look at how it manages lobos. This process could change the Mexican wolf's current listing status under the Endangered Species Act and current wolf removal policies. Public meetings have been scheduled to

solicit ideas. [Click Here](#) to view the dates. I know it is the holidays, but we would appreciate you attending one of these meetings to voice your support for the wolves and the ranchers working together on this issue.

More Info: <http://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/mexicanwolf/>

Environmental Web Resource

SustainableNewMexico.org - Welcome to [SustainableNewMexico](http://SustainableNewMexico.org), a web site that is a guide to resources for every aspect of sustainable or green living in NM. You can find everything you need from organic groceries to green builders to tax incentives to green events to eco-resorts. The site was developed and is maintained by Scott & Heather MacCurdy.

Member Profile – Dr. John Bartlit

Our chapter is full of incredible members who have led fascinating lives. Each newsletter we will profile a different member. Today, we will get to know Dr. John Bartlit, who has been a REP Member since 2004.

Dr. Bartlit holds a Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering from Purdue University, a Master of Science in Engineering from Princeton and a Doctorate of Chemical Engineering from Yale University. He worked as a research engineer and technical manager at Los Alamos National Laboratory from 1962-1993 and as a communication advisor from 1997-2005. Dr. Bartlit is the current chairman of NM Citizens for Clean Air & Water, a position he has held since 1972, and was appointed New Mexico Mining Commissioner from 1997-2002.

Dr. Bartlit has been a strong advocate on Clean Air & Water Issues, authoring a regular column in the Los Alamos Monitor. A number of his writings have been published in the past 3 decades in national publications and he was given awards for his environmental work by the Rocky Mountain Center on Environment and the American Lung Association of NM. We are so honored to have Dr. Bartlit as a member of REP.

I have included below an article he wrote, entitled 'The Day I became an Environmentalist'. Enjoy!

Story explains how not to communicate by Dr. John Bartlit

Regular readers of this column often see our perky bird focus on issues of attitude and communication. The concern can be traced to one day in my past. That story--I call it, "The Day I Became an Environmentalist"--is a textbook on how not to communicate with the public.

The day that changed me was a bright and chilly day back in February 1969. When the day began, my thinking was that of most chemical engineers: I thought industry made things most of us want. In the process, a little pollution happens, but industry will do what is doable to keep it down, so we don't need a bunch of people in the streets to complain about it.

By the time that night had folded, I would think otherwise.

At my wife's urging, I drove down to a hearing at the New Mexico Legislature. The subject was the smoke from the Four Corners Power Plant and what to do about it.

For several years, Los Alamosan Joe Devaney had been showing his aerial photos of the smoke from the big coal-burning plant near Farmington and complaining about it. He wrote letters, talked to groups and agencies, and flew public officials in his plane to see the plant and its huge trail of smoke. At last, he aroused enough complainers that the Legislature held a hearing.

There, Joe showed his photos and made his case. Officials of the utility gave their side of the issue. They said, yes, they realized there was some smoke from the plant. But they had plans to do better and they would do the best they could to reduce the smoke.

The company business chiefs described the plans. I heard about their new idea to use ultrasonics, alas, with poor results. I heard about the 97 percent efficient controls for smoke (ash) they then would put in. I knew nothing about any of this and said nothing at the hearing.

It ended with New Mexico legislators apologizing to the out-of-state utility for the rudeness of New Mexico citizens. Such was the judgment on the offense of complaining about the smoke.

The apology rankled a bit, but what did I know. That evening, I telephoned a friend who had done his graduate research in the lab next to mine. I knew he was working at the New York City air pollution bureau.

I told my friend what I'd heard from the utility officials about 97 percent being the "best" and asked him if that were the straight story. Jake replied, "My goodness no. We've done much better than that for years." He told me engineering books to read and control equipment manufacturers to call.

I didn't even know there was such a thing as pollution control manufacturers, and I surely would never learn it from the utility spokesmen. I read the books--mainly H. J. White's classic in the field, "Industrial Electrostatic Precipitation." The six-year-old book had a whole chapter on the special problems of handling low-sulfur coal, and gave three or four ways to solve them. At the Legislature, I heard how low-sulfur coal made it harder to control the ash, but I heard nothing about the known solutions.

I called the two or three big manufacturers Jake had named and repeated the story from the hearing. I asked if this was the straight scoop. The replies from the control engineers typically began with a puzzled silence, then something like, "Well ... why would anyone say anything like that?"

It soon became clear there was a sea of engineering information that bore directly on this large public problem--knowledge that would remain undiscussed unless someone else told it. That day I became an environmental activist.

A fair case can be argued in public for and against any question of pollution. The same cannot be said for misleading people. In the weak light it sheds, half-true counts the same as untrue. The utility's missing facts became our best weapon in the struggle for public credibility. As usual in the end, the victory was won by the weight of opinion.