



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

State of our State (Issues)

REP NM has been busy to say the least. Tweeti Blancett, Oscar Simpson and Scott MacCurdy all attended the April, Otero Mesa Public Forum and Outing in Alamogordo, NM. Two-hundred local citizens attended the meeting and virtually all of them expressed support for preserving the Salt Basin aquifer and Otero Mesa.

On May 22nd, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) released a draft EIS (Environmental Impact Statement) which strongly supports the Desert Rock Power Plant and public hearings will be held for citizens to speak out about the planned Desert Rock Power Plant in the Four Corners area. Dates and locations included below.

On July 12, Governor Bill Richardson today announced he will distribute a total of \$3,514,000 to 17 projects throughout the state designed to promote land, wildlife and clean energy. The funds derive from the Land, Wildlife and Clean Energy Act which passed the legislature this past spring.

On July 17th, REP Member and National and NM Board Member, Tweeti Blancett, presented her graphic story of how the ravages of oil & gas exploration and production have impacted her ranch in the San Juan County Basin. The event, Save the Galisteo Basin, was held at the El Dorado Community Center.

The chapter is currently gearing up for campaigns involving the Ute Mountain Wilderness Area and modernization of the 1872 Mining Law. Both pieces of legislation will provide for protection of critical wildlife habitat and habitat restoration. More to follow on both issues in the Fall Newsletter!

Announcements

- **Desert Rock Public Hearing** – Thursday July 19th in Albuquerque 1 - 4 PM, Indian Pueblo Cultural Center
- **Desert Rock Public Hearing** – Friday July 20th in Santa Fe 1 - 4 PM, Larrazolo Auditorium
- **Valle Vidal** celebration Saturday, July 21. Youth & Adult Fishing Clinics, Fly-Casting Clinic, Birding, Aquatic Insects, and Other Fun Events in the Valle Vidal. All ages welcome. Bring the whole family! We look forward to seeing you there.
- **REP NM Social Outing in August** – Details to follow.

- **2007 Solar Fiesta** - Sept. 14-15, 2007. REP will have a booth at the event, so mark your calendars, plan to help if you can and stop by and say hello.
- **REP's Republican Environmental Leadership Conference (National Meeting)** – October 5-6, 2007 in San Antonio, Texas.
- **Otero Mesa Outing** – Still in the planning stages, but we are looking at September.

National Policy Paper

[Water Quality](#) – This link is to REP's national policy paper on Water Quality. The Governor has proclaimed this the year of the water. Our congressional delegation is currently working on studies of several aquifers in NM. Enjoy!

NM Issue Brief : Otero Mesa

Otero Mesa is just an hour's drive from El Paso and perhaps 90 minutes from Las Cruces or Alamogordo. More than 1.2 million acres of Chihuahuan Desert grassland, Otero Mesa extends eastward from the Hueco Mountains to the Guadalupe Mountains and north from the Texas border into New Mexico.

A critical source of groundwater, the Salt Basin Aquifer is located beneath New Mexico's Otero Mesa and extends south into El Paso and Hudspeth Counties in Texas. Even though the Southwest U.S. is expected to become even hotter and drier from global climate change according to a recently released Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report, the Salt Basin Aquifer continues to be under threat by proposed oil and gas development in federal Bureau of Land Management Lands in Otero Mesa.

Under the BLM's plan for oil and gas development in the Otero Mesa region 141 exploratory wells resulting in 84 producing wells could be drilled. While the BLM has provided stipulations for No Surface Disturbance or Controlled Surface Use for a portion of this area, groundwater will still be at risk for contamination by carcinogenic petrochemicals and salt water from drilling.

Solution: A 3 year joint federal and state study of the Salt Basin Aquifer is needed to determine its quantity, quality, and its vulnerability to contamination. A federal moratorium on oil and gas leasing and development on federal Bureau of Land Management lands is needed to ensure that we adequately assess this water resource and determine how it should be managed, developed and protected.

Update: On May 22nd, Senator Pete Domenici sent a letter to Jim Hughes, Acting Director of the BLM asking for a 3 Year moratorium on Oil & Gas drilling and development in Otero Mesa. Senators Jeff Bingaman along with Congressman Tom Udall also sent letters to Interior Secretary Dick Kempthorne requesting a 3 year moratorium.

More Info: www.oteromesa.org

Environmental Web Resource

[REP Action Center](#) - Welcome to [REP Action Center](#), where you can make a big difference in [just 5 minutes](#). That's all it will take to learn the issues and send a letter to Legislators.

[Member Profile](#) -- *Bill Wiley*

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 Bill Wiley, who has served on our NM Chapter Executive Committee since 2004.

Bill Wiley moved to NM in 1965 to go to UNM & except for 3 years service with the Army in Vietnam & in D.C., has called NM home. He has daughter and son-in-law that reside in Virginia and an old Labrador, Harley, whom keeps him company here in Albuquerque. Bill is a financial consultant with Wells Fargo and helps professional, retiring, and high net worth clients to increase their net worth with an eye towards capital preservation and the minimization of taxes. Aside for the REP NM Board, he servers on boards with the NM Zoological Society, Maxwell Museum, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, New Heart, Chamber Orchestra and the Association of Retarded Citizens. In his free time he enjoys the outdoors, skiing, hiking, bridge playing, gardening and competes in the occasionally triathlon.

Bill joined REP in 2003 and has been an incredible asset for our group. He believes that as a 'REAL' republican, the environment comes first. Bill has actively campaigned for the Valle Vidal, including two lobbying trips to D.C. to discuss the Valle Vidal and energy independence with our republican leaders. Currently, he is working to restore the Mexican Grey Wolves to NM, reduce salt cedar in the Bosque, and promote clean companies to come to NM. In addition, Bill is always first to volunteer for outings and tabling events. REP NM is fortunate to have his energy and experience.