



BURROWING OWL

20-9/02 OK

Central New Mexico Audubon Society

June - July 1990

WELCOME!

The Central New Mexico Audubon Society meets at 7:30 pm, on the third Thursday of each month, at St. Timothy's Lutheran Church, Copper and Jefferson NE. Nonmembers are welcome at all meetings, fieldtrips and special events.

FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE

By Laura Jenkins

For out-of-town fieldtrips, please call Laura Jenkins (293-7527) for an update on any change of plans.

PIEDRA LISA SPRING TRAIL, SANDIAS, WEST SIDE

--Sunday, June 10th, 6:30 am

This is the Birds and Breakfast trip. Bring coffee and a doughnut to eat on the trail. We hope to have a leader who lives in the area, knows the canyon, and knows birds. Home before lunch.

Meet to carpool at the northeast corner of Montgomery and Juan Tabo, in the parking lot of the closed store near Sunwest Bank. Or, wait at turnoff from Tramway to Juan Tabo Picnic Ground and La Luz Trail at 6:40 am.

SOMEWHERE IN THE BOSQUE

--Saturday, July 21st, 7:00 am

We have covered much of the river from Cochiti Lake to Bosque del Apache. On this trip we will look not only for birds, but at the habitat, and at how we can help preserve it. A short trip in or near the city. Meet at Lomas and Yale, or call nearer the date.

June begins a new year for our Audubon chapter. I will continue as Field Trip Chair. I do need more input from you. My expertise is planning and organizing, not bird identification. Please feel free to call at any time (293-7527).



UPCOMING PROGRAMS

SEARCH AND RESCUE IN NEW MEXICO

--Thursday, June 21st

Search and rescue, and outdoor orientation and safety, will be the subject of a presentation by Bill Vargas of the New Mexico Department of Public Safety. All of us who hike, climb, camp, and explore the outdoors will appreciate this interesting program of up-to-date information. The whole family should enjoy this meeting.

DISCOVERING TEXAS PARKS

--Thursday, July 19th

Eddie and Butch Johnson, some of our favorite speakers, will entertain us with a new program, especially designed for those who might be planning family trips to Texas. The Johnsons have explored and photographed a wide variety of parks, some of them not well known, featuring wildlife, history, even trains. There should be something here that you will want to include in your next trip, and something to interest each member of the family.



CONSERVATION NOTES

By Lew Helm

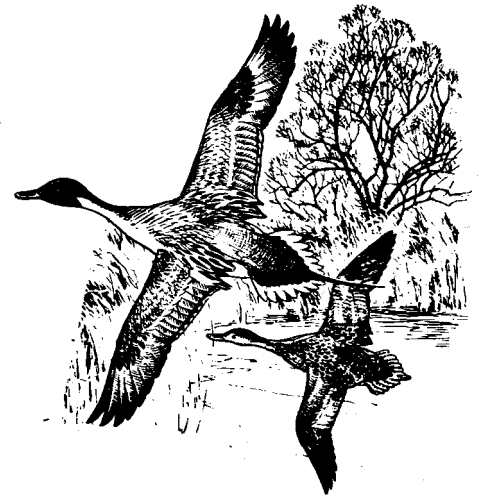
Fence Lake Coal Leasing Proposal

The Salt River Project (SRP) which holds large tracts of state-leased and privately-owned coal lands in New Mexico has applied for a federal coal lease on 6,840 acres of the public domain in Catron and Cibola counties near Fence Lake in New Mexico. Coal would be surface-mined to feed SRP's existing Coronado Generating Station located near St. Johns, Arizona, approximately 43 miles west of the mining site. The mining site is a short distance north of Quemado, NM.

The federal lands are administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) which has produced a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). BLM proposes as a preferred alternative an expanded lease area of 8,780 acres to provide for maximum economic recovery of coal resources. Certain conditions would be placed on the lease to provide for protection of highly sensitive biological and cultural resources. Conditions would provide for excluding 200 acres covering golden eagle nest sites and the New Cox Ranch Pueblo archeological site.

According to BLM, effects of the project would be minor due in large part to a reclamation plan which would require restoration of the land surface. Wildlife in the area includes a number of resident and migratory species, but apparently no threatened or endangered plants are found in the proposed lease area.

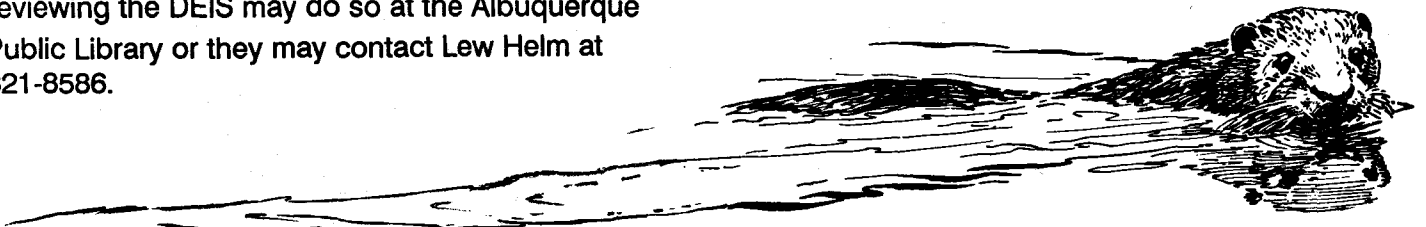
Obviously, the proposed action would entail a major change in the lease area and in transportation routes to the generating station. To learn more about the proposed action, interested people are invited to attend public hearings; the Albuquerque hearing will take place at 7:00 pm on June 7th at the Holiday Inn-Pyramid at 5151 San Francisco Road NE. Persons interested in reviewing the DEIS may do so at the Albuquerque Public Library or they may contact Lew Helm at 821-8586.



Managing New Mexico's Water

Steve Reynolds, New Mexico's State Engineer for 35 years, has passed on. He was a giant among men in the water development field and worked diligently to assure that as much water as possible be retained in the state so that it could be diverted and put to consumptive use. This water policy has served well the interests of agriculture, municipalities, and industry. What has been missing is that fish, wildlife and recreational values have not been recognized.

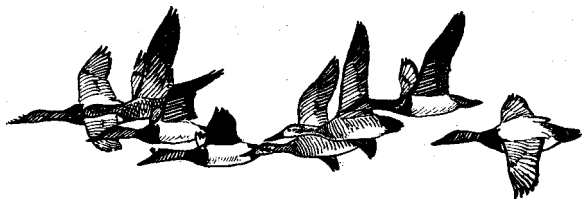
Steve Reynolds was instrumental in every major New Mexico dam and water project but did not see the day when the last free-flowing stream in the state, the Gila River, was dammed and diverted. With the passing of the water development stage, it is time to recognize that great benefits can accrue from a water management policy which would give legal status to instream surface flows for fish, wildlife and recreation. We must work hard to convince the new state engineer and our elected representatives that equating "wasted" water with non-consumed and non-diverted water is no longer environmentally acceptable. Rather, the time has come to change our laws and thinking; New Mexico needs strong incentives to conserve water and to maintain instream-flow adequate for wildlife.



Wetlands No-Net-Loss Policy Going by the Boards?

Last December the Army Corps of Engineers and the Environmental Protection Agency signed a Memorandum of Agreement to confirm the no-net-loss policy when reviewing permit applications to dredge and fill wetlands. This policy requires that efforts be made to avoid adverse effects of development on wetlands and to mitigate for loss of wetlands by creating wetlands elsewhere. President Bush during campaign rhetoric spelled out the basis for the policy, and it has been our hope that all was well.

Now comes word that development interests have lobbied successfully for a loophole in federal regulations that will allow development of wetlands in Alaska and elsewhere without mitigating any loss. On February 6 the White House altered the MOA to waive mitigation requirements in areas where "there is a high proportion of land which is wetland." It seems to us that such thinking could be applied in a very unfair manner in situations far-removed from Alaska. We need to support strongly Audubon's policy which is to stop and reverse the alarming rate at which this nation's wetlands are being lost.



SOME CHANGES IN THE ABA CHECKLIST OF NORTH AMERICAN BIRDS By Dale Zimmerman, The Ravens Newsletter

Those readers who do not subscribe to Birding or American Birds may be unaware of several significant changes in the official North American bird list. None of the species added have been reported from New Mexico, but some are Mexican birds recorded in Texas or California: Muscovy Duck (Cairina moschata), Mottled Owl (Ciccaba virgata), and Xantus's Hummingbird (Hylocharis xantusii). The others are Eurasian, pelagic, or South American. Most are only accidental or casual strays, but of considerable significance is the Shiny Cowbird (Molothrus bonariensis) which is spectacularly invading Florida.

Additionally, some taxonomic changes directly affect certain southwestern birds. Among these are:

- (1) Division of the Western Flycatcher into two species: CORDILLERAN FLYCATCHER, Empidonax occidentalis (our Rocky Mountain breeders) and PACIFIC-SLOPE FLYCATCHER (E. difficilis) (breeding from Alaska to Baja California, migrating into Arizona).
- (2) Similar splitting of the Black-tailed Gnatcatcher into CALIFORNIA GNATCATCHER, Polioptila californica (coastal southern California into Mexico), and BLACK-TAILED GNATCATCHER, P. melanura (our SW desert birds).
- (3) Splitting of the familiar Brown Towhee into two species: CALIFORNIA TOWHEE, Pipilo crissalis (of Oregon, California, Baja California) and CANYON TOWHEE, P. fuscus (our bird, from Texas to Arizona and south into Mexico, now reverting to its earlier English name. Few of our readers will remember that the bird we have called Brown Towhee for several decades was originally known as Canyon Towhee):
- (4) Separating our AMERICAN PIPIT, Anthus rubescens, from the WATER PIPIT, A. spinoletta; the latter name now applies only to a Eurasian species, not our US birds. Older birds will remember "American Pipit" as an earlier name for ours.

Other name changes affecting New Mexico birds include Yellow-crowned Night Heron again becoming Nyctanassa violacea (removed from the genus Nycticorax), and "Common Barn Owl" reverting to plain Barn Owl. Also, the Yellow-green Vireo of extreme southeast Texas and Mexico is again considered specifically distinct from the Red-eyed Vireo.



FUTURE UNCERTAIN FOR NEW MEXICO WHOOPERS

By Carlyn Jervis, Sangre de Cristo Audubon Society

For almost 15 years now biologists have been trying to establish a second wild, breeding flock of whooping cranes. The original Canadian whooping crane flock (wintering at Aransas National Wildlife Refuge) now numbers 145, recovering from only 16 birds in 1941. In 1975 biologists started transferring surplus eggs from the Canadian whoopers to the nests of sandhill cranes at Grays Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Idaho.

The Idaho sandhill cranes raised the young whoopers and showed them the way to migrate to New Mexico where thousands of sandhills and a few whoopers can be seen each winter in and around Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge. Mortality has been high among the whoopers, but by the winter of 1984-1985, their numbers reached 33 and optimism ran high for the success of the experimental flock. Unfortunately, even after reaching adulthood, the whoopers have shown little or no interest in returning to Grays Lake to nest. They have produced no eggs or chicks, the number of adult birds has now dwindled to 13, and the optimism of the mid-eighties has evaporated. Drought conditions at Grays Lake have resulted in no new birds being added to the Idaho/New Mexico flock for two years. In fact, last spring wildlife biologists did not even transfer whooper eggs from Canada to Idaho because they knew high predation and poor food conditions would result in very poor chick survival under dry conditions.

It is not clear whether more eggs will be transferred in the future, but biologists will give the adult birds two more nesting seasons to show if breeding can take place. After the spring of 1991, a decision will be made whether to discontinue the Grays Lake experimental flock, and if so, what to do with the remaining birds. The future of the Grays Lake/New Mexico whoopers may be in doubt, but biologists have other ideas for establishing a second flock. One possibly is to create a non-migratory flock of whooping cranes along the Kissimmee River north of Orlando, Florida. A stationary flock presumably would suffer lower mortality (the Grays Lake whoopers suffered 60% losses during migration)

and have increased chances to find appropriate mates and start breeding.

Total whooping cranes in the world now number 213. Wild birds include 145 migrating between the Texas gulf coast and Canada and 13 in the Idaho/New Mexico flock. Captive birds include 32 at Patuxent Wildlife Research Center at Laurel, MD, 22 at the International Crane Foundation at Baraboo, WI, and 1 at a zoo in San Antonio, TX.



THE 5-R'S OF WASTE MANAGEMENT

Celebrating Earth Day is not over even though the twentieth anniversary has passed. Many environmental ills seem beyond the average person's control; however, here are a few easy ecologically sound choices anyone can make--and make an immediate difference in our community.

Reduce the amount of waste produced by buying economy-sized or bulk-packaged items and foods when possible. Avoid all disposable products.

Re-Use as much as possible. If you can't use it, find someone who can.

Recycle all possible items, beginning with selecting products packaged in recyclable containers; glass, paper and aluminum are the three most easily recycled types of packaging. Select boxes with gray interiors (recycled paperboard) or marked "made from recycled paper." Producing one ton of aluminum from virgin materials takes 8766 lbs. of bauxite, 1020 lbs petroleum coke, 966 lbs soda ash, 327 lbs pitch, 238 lbs lime, and 197 million BTU's of energy. Recycling saves 95-95% of the energy used and 95% of the air and water pollution created by virgin aluminum production!

Reject over-packaged products, squeezable containers, non-recyclable containers, products harmful to the environment, plastic bags (unless you reuse them), styrofoam cups and plates and aerosol containers.

React by writing to manufacturers to complain about over-packaging, environmentally harmful products and products requiring frequent replacement (semi-disposable). Also let your elected local officials and representatives know you are concerned about environmentally sound policies—the government represents only those members of our society who take the time to communicate with them.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SANDIA MOUNTAIN DISCOVERY DAYS --July 28-29th

CNMAS would like to provide some bird walks and keep an information active on both days. If you would like to help with the planning or participate in this activity to introduce Audubon to new people, contact Lew Helm, Conservation Chairperson, or Tami Bulow, President.

NEW MEXICO AUDUBON CONFERENCE --October 12-14, Hummingbird Springs

The annual statewide meeting of the New Mexico Audubon Council will begin on Friday, October 12, at Hummingbird Springs. Local Saturday morning fieldtrips will be followed by a business meeting and presentations addressing some of the conservation issues Audubon supports in New Mexico. The Western Foundation for Raptor Conservation will present the Saturday evening program. On Sunday morning this organization will host a field trip to the Manzano Mountain Hawk Watch site; other shorter field trips are being planned in Albuquerque. More details in the next issue.

BURROWING OWL SUMMER SCHEDULE

This issue as well as the August-September issue may be late reaching you because of my prior travel arrangements; I regret any inconveniences this may cause you.

CNMAS DIRECTORY

PRESIDENT

Tami Bulow, 8126 Northridge NE, 87109; 298-9116

VICE PRESIDENT & PROGRAM CHAIRPERSON

RECORDING SECRETARY

Beth Hurst; 243-7549 (home), 243-6688 (work)

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY

TREASURER

Murray Honeycutt, 2901 Dakota NE, 87110; 881-0452

DIRECTORS

Jean Dilley, 13 Mill Road NW, 87120; 897-0854

Nettie Ireland; 275-3584

Georgiana Costley, 825 Dakota SE, 87106; 255-7107

MEMBERSHIP CHAIRPERSON

Evelyn Simpson; 275-1601

CONSERVATION CHAIRPERSON

Lew Helm, 8213 Cherry Hills NE, 87111; 821-8586

EDUCATION CHAIRPERSON

Marge Carrick, 808 Dakota SE, 87108; 266-0191

FIELD TRIP CHAIRPERSON

Laura Jenkins, 12505 Manitoba NE, Apt D, 87111; 293-7527

RESEARCH CHAIR/FIELD SIGHTINGS COMPILER

Bruce Halstead, 1825 Zena Loma Cy NE, 87112; 299-9397

FIELD SIGHTINGS/RARE BIRD ALERT

Mary Lou Arthur, 728 Monroe NE, 87110; 256-7359

HOSPITALITY CHAIRPERSON

GREETINGS CHAIRPERSON

Georgiana Costley, 825 Dakota SE, 87108; 255-7107

LIBRARIAN

Verne Huser; 892-7880

NEW MEXICO AUDUBON COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE

Darwin Miller

EDITOR, BURROWING OWL

Claudia Crawford, 433 Maple NE, 87106; 242-7081 (h) 277-1714 (w)

CIRCULATION, BURROWING OWL

Betty Balduc, 5400 Montgomery NE, Apt 103-B, 87109; 883-1428



NEW MEXICO AUDUBON COUNCIL DIRECTORY

President

Steve West, PO Box 2489, Carlsbad, 88220; 885-1153

Vice President

Donna Broudy, 510 Laguna Blvd SW, 87104; 242-7108

Treasurer

Lew Helm, 8213 Cherry Hills NE, 87111; 821-8586

Secretary

Pat Snider, 2435 C 45th St, Los Alamos, 87544; 662-3530

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

Membership Application

Please enroll me as a member of the National Audubon Society and of my local chapter, Central New Mexico Audubon Society. Please send Audubon magazine, Burrowing Owl newsletter, and my membership card to the address below.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Gift Membership

Please enter a one-year gift membership in the National Audubon Society and send a gift announcement card.

To: NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

From: NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Gift Card to read * from _____
(Use extra sheet for additional gifts)

Membership category preferred:

- Introductory Membership (first year only)/\$20
- Individual/\$30 Sr. Citizen-Individual/\$21
- Family/\$38 Sr. Citizen-Family/\$23
- Student/\$18
- My check for \$ _____ is enclosed.
- Bill me, please.

7XCH

Local Chapter
Central New Mexico Audubon Society
 Q51

7XCH

Please make checks payable to National Audubon Society and send with this application form for membership or renewal to:

Audubon Society
 Chapter Membership Data Center
 PO Box 51001
 Boulder, CO 80322-1001

Contact Evelyn Simpson, 275-1601, to report errors or changes in name, address.

Who to Contact:

The President	Honorable Pete V. Domenici
The White House	Honorable Jeff Bingaman
Washington, DC 20500	United States Senate
	Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Steve Schiff
 Honorable Joe Skeen
 Honorable Bill Richardson
 House of Representatives
 Washington, DC 20515

US Fish and Wildlife Service
 500 Gold Avenue, SW
 Albuquerque, NM 87102

Mr. Michael Spear, Regional Director
 Mr. Gary Halverson, Endangered Species Coordinator
 Mr. James Lewis, Whooping Crane Coordinator

New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
 Villagra Building
 Santa Fe, NM 87503
 Mr. William Montoya, Director
 Dr. Wain Evans, Assistant Director
 Dr. John Hubbard, Endangered Species

State Game Commission
 Mr. Gerald Maestas, Chairman
 Unit 1, Box 15, La Puebla Road
 Espanola, NM 87532
 Mr. J. W. Jones
 8800 Susan Drive, SE
 Albuquerque, NM 87123

Randall Davey Audubon Center
 Mr. David Henderson
 PO Box 9314
 Santa Fe, NM 87504
 [505] 983-4609

CENTRAL NEW MEXICO AUDUBON SOCIETY
 Post Office Box 30002
 Albuquerque, New Mexico 87190-0002

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