



The Wild News

Wild Friends

Website: <http://wildfriends.unm.edu>

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Summit Attracts Hundreds

More than 450 students and 50 teachers and parents made the third Wildlife Summit the biggest and best summit yet. They came from all over, including out-of-state. In addition to the "regulars," Wild Friends from California, Florida, Hawaii, and Missouri traveled to the summit. Center for Wildlife Law founder Ruth Musgrave flew in from Washington and teamed up with international wildlife conservationist John Stokes, just back from Brazil, to be the summit's Masters of Ceremony.

The summit took place in Albuquerque in mid-November. Albuquerque students from Carlos Rey, Longfellow, and Mountain View, and a home-school group from Jemez Springs, comprised the 150 elementary school students. Two hundred middle school students were from Alameda MS (Santa Fe), Edgewood MS, and Scarracino MS (Socorro). Albuquerque Country Day School, Garfield, Harrison, Jefferson and Polk made up the Albuquerque middle school delegations. Socorro HS, and Bosque Prep, Highland HS, and Rio Grande HS from Albuquerque sent 75 students to the summit. Twenty Wild Friends dancers represented a number of elementary, middle, and home schools.

A standing ovation awaited former Speaker of the House Raymond Sanchez when he presented the framed Wild Friends memorial to a



Maxwell the Bald Eagle stunned everyone with his piercing eye contact and six-foot wing spread. His handler Jim Finley has his hand(s) full.

delegation of three students. Little did he know that he was about to receive an award, too. Sanchez was surprised and delighted when the three students thrust a huge teddy bear wearing a Wild Friends T-shirt into the arms of our stalwart supporter.

It was a long-awaited, peak moment when, after two years of collecting signatures, Wild Friends were able to present their whooping crane petitions with more than 5,000 signatures. Sari Gudwin from Alameda MS presented the 3-inch-thick stack of petitions to Agnes Oczon, Director of Communications for Sen. Pete Domenici, who couldn't be present to

receive them in person. The petition asked for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's support for efforts to reestablish a whooping crane flock in the Rocky Mountain flyway. Four Polk MS students presented Ms. Oczon with a Wild Friends T-shirt, and Carlos Rey ES gave her a special handmade whooping-crane pin. Norman Farquhar led the line of Longfellow ES students in presenting their original whooping crane posters to Oczon for Sen. Domenici. Summit goers will remember from the April 1998 summit when, in the play "Operation Save the Cranes," Norman was Kent Clegg, the rancher/biologist who made history when he led five whooping cranes behind his ultralight aircraft from his ranch in Idaho to New Mexico's Bosque del Apache. Kent Clegg himself was there to see the play, and returned again this year to see the presentation of the petitions. "If the whooping crane becomes extinct," said Norman in his presentation, "it will be all of our loss." After the presentation, the audience had a chance to bring up their concerns to Ms. Oczon about other wildlife issues. Many students stepped up to the microphone to ask questions.

The reverse media conference also

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**We've got a bill!
See story on pg 4.**

provided an opportunity for students and teachers to ask questions and make comments about the media's coverage of wildlife issues, such as endangered species and Rio Grande restoration. KOB-TV's anchorman Tom Joles was back for another summit to answer questions, along with three newspaper reporters, Tania Soussan of the *Albuquerque Journal*, Lowry McAllen of the *Albuquerque Tribune*, and Ben Moffett of the *Socorro El Defensor Chieftan*. Modera-



Jefferson MS student asks a question at the news conference. Senior mentor Jack Pickering moderates. Jack, who has been with Wild Friends since 1991, turns 85 in April.

tors Tom Rutherford and Jack Pickering helped keep things moving and made sure that every student wanting to ask a question got a chance. Rutherford is a long-time Wild Friends supporter and mentor, as well as a Bernalillo County Commissioner.

The audience was full of VIPs, made more visible by the introductions of School of Law Dean Robert Desiderio.

Live animals were "stars" of the morning and thrilled the audience with their natural talents. Maxwell the Bald Eagle jousting with his handler Jim Finley of Espanola's

Wildlife Center, while Dr. Kathleen Ramsey told the audience about eagles. Next up was Carolyn Newell of Exotics of the Rainforest whose two scarlet macaws were a blaze of color in the UNM Continuing Education auditorium. Carolyn brought an incredible array of animals, including a rare hyacinth macaw, a tarantula, scorpions, and snakes.

A five-month old mountain lion named Moonshadow toured the aisles, purred, rolled, and sniffed the students, thoroughly investigating his surroundings. He's the brother of Phantom who was the cat's meow at the 1998 summit.

It wouldn't be a summit without the Wild Friends Dancers. This year, they capped the morning with a "glittering" rendition of the plight of endangered fish, the silvery minnow and the Gila trout, dancing to Schubert's inspiring "Trout Quintet."

After lunch with VIPs, the students attended workshops around the summit theme of "Wildlife and Water." A workshop for high school students



Moonshadow was the Summit "mystery guest." He was brought by Roger Alink from Wildlife West in Edgewood.



A Wild Friend enjoys a slippery friend. At an afternoon workshop, students got to handle the animals.

managers and wildlife conservationists. Wild Friends mentor Mayor Baca talked about the urban point of view and N.M. Rep. Don Tripp (R-Socorro) spoke for the agricultural community. U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's Michael Gabaldon said, "I believe the river can be shared by these many competing interests." Wildlife advocates were U.S. Fish & Wildlife's Joy Nicholopoulos, Tim

Aydelott of the NM Museum of Natural History, and Steve Harris of



A Mexican spotted owl, clinging to Marguerite Hendrie from Hawks Aloft, Inc., spots students during the workshop about sharing forest streams.

students tackled the "slippery" issue of "How Can City Folk, Farmers, Fish and Fowl Share Our Rivers?" The students got to ask questions and share opinions with river

Rio Grande Restoration. Other workshops addressed sharing forest streams, beavers' impacts on the river, and how desert animals adapt to low-water habitats. One workshop was related to the Wild Friends' 2001 legislative project (see pg. 3). N.M. Game & Fish's Dan Brooks and U.S. Fish & Wildlife's Lucinda Shroder talked about poachers, showing poaching artifacts such as a polar bear fur, snake skins, and elk teeth. N.M. Sen. Dede Feldman (D-Albuquerque) and APS Board of Education's Dolores Herrera role-played with students on how to meet with legislators.

See you at the next summit!

Wild Friends Work on Anti-Poaching Law

By Carolyn Johnson, Institute of Public Law

[Editor's note: Carolyn Johnson, Wild Friends reporter, went to the hearings and files this report.]

It's a sea of blue shirts and a crisp, fall day at the UNM Sports Complex. Wild Friends are getting ready to speak to the New Mexico Legislature's Courts and Criminal Justice Committee about passing a very important law. Wild Friends have been studying this law since last year. It's called the Wildlife Violator Compact.

There are 11 students representing four Albuquerque schools, who are there to participate in the democratic process. They've done lots of research and are nervously looking over their notes, and looking at the legislators at the front of the room. Their teachers are there, as is staff from the Center for Wildlife Law and representatives from the N.M. Game & Fish Department.

The Wildlife Violator Compact (WVC) is an agreement (or "compact") among states to keep track of and punish poachers—people who violate the State's wildlife laws. When one state revokes someone's hunting or fishing license, other states who sign the agreement will know about it, and can refuse to give that person a license, too.

Lawbreakers who mend their ways can, some day, get their license back. But in the meantime, the WVC provides a united front against poaching. Thus far, 13 states have signed the agreement; and the students are there to talk to the committee about the reasons for New Mexico to join as well.

Why is this important? Many good reasons, according to Wild Friends, who have definitely done their homework.

Evan Moore, a sophomore from Highland High School, tells the committee that where there are poachers, there are often drug dealers, according to information from the



Rep. Mimi Stewart (D-Alb) congratulates a Rio Grande HS student who testified at the hearing. Rep. Stewart will sponsor the Wild Friends' bill in the 2001 session.

New Mexico Game and Fish Department. In the 1980s, Game and Fish noticed that people arrested for drug crimes in Rio Arriba County often had hundreds of poached animals in their possession. Crystal Carmichael from Albuquerque High agrees. "We'll be kicking out poachers from New Mexico," she suggests.

A student from Rio Grande High, Edgar Luna, points out that there is money to be made from poaching animals and selling them to be stuffed or have their body parts used. "Bears are poached for their claws and gallbladders," he says. Highland High student Danielle Gerhardt adds that "even though we can synthesize the chemical substance in gallbladders and there is no need."

Laura Finley from Jefferson Middle School warns the committee, "If we don't pass the Wildlife Violator Compact, soon there will be an abundance of poachers in our state." This theme was echoed by many of the students, afraid that New Mexico could become a haven for lawbreakers kicked out of their own states for hunting and fishing violations.

"Wildlife laws are vital to ecological resources of each state," says Rio Grande High student Leila Salim, "and New Mexico will no longer be a place for poachers to run to."

Tino Amparan from Highland High School noted some interesting math. "The country's 17 million hunters outnumber wildlife conservation officers 9,000 to one." His point was well taken by the committee: We need all the help we can get.

The legislators ask the Game and Fish officers

questions: How much will it cost to join the compact? How does it actually work when someone whose license has been suspended in one state tries to apply for a license in another?

The legislators want to make sure that if New Mexico joins the compact, New Mexico's laws will remain in effect (they will) and New Mexicans will not have to follow the different laws of other states (we won't).

The members of the committee thank the Wild Friends for coming to talk about the issue. Representatives David Pederson and Mimi Stewart recognize some of the student "old timers." Rep. Stewart says some have

HEARINGS—continued on next page

been involved with Wild Friends as long as she has—six years!

Senator McSorley thanks them for their presentations. “You give us the kind of information that helps us make intelligent decisions,” he says, “and you have an effect on legislators.” Rep. Miera tells them, “You have us thinking.” Rep. Pederson reminds everyone, “This is the way government is supposed to work. Every citizen gets to tell the government what they think.”

Rep. Pederson closes the meeting by speaking directly to the Wild Friends. “I expect to see some of you sitting over here in the legislature some day,” he says, “making changes.” Then legislators come over and shake hands with the students, and have their pictures taken, which seems to please everyone.



All 11 students testified. They are Tino Amparan, Crystal Carmichael, Amanda Evans, Laura Fenley, Danielle Gerhaert, Lydia Gutierrez, Amber Johnson, Edgar Luna, Evan Moore, Fernando Ramirez, and Leila Salim. The teachers at the hearings were Rolene Barnett, Gail Borkenhagen, and John Wright. House Representatives Jose R. Abeyta, Rick Miera, Mimi Stewart, and Sen. Cisco McSorley are also pictured.

A Wild Friend goes to Game Commission meeting

The Wild Friends also made their presence known at the New Mexico Game Commission. When the Game and Fish Department asked the Commission to support making the Wildlife Violator Compact a law in New Mexico, Wild Friend Danielle Gephardt of Highland HS was there to speak in favor of the idea, too. The Commission agreed to include the Compact as one of the laws it would like to see passed in the upcoming legislative session.

At this same Game Commission meeting, the Commission appointed Larry Bell as the new director of the Game and Fish Department. Not only are congratulations in order, but the Wild Friends look forward to working with Mr. Bell in the legislative session.

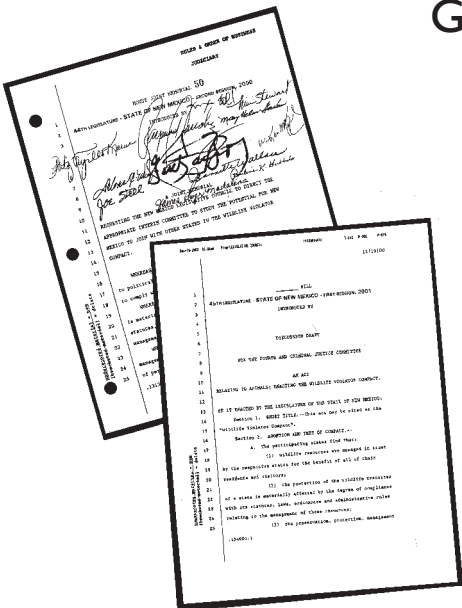
Get ready for Santa Fe!

This year, we have a bill.

At the final hearing of the Courts and Criminal Justice Committee, the Wild Friends request for a bill requiring New Mexico to join the Wildlife Violator Compact bill was approved.

The day after the Wildlife Summit, the Courts and Criminal Justice Committee decided which bills the committee would sponsor. The Wild Friends request was one of 30 that they approved. The language of the bill is the actual legal language adopted by all the member states. The committee put bill drafter Tony Ortiz of the Legislative Counsel Service in charge of getting the text and creating the formal bill for debate in the Legislature. Rep. Mimi Stewart, a great Wild Friends supporter, will sponsor the bill.

Dates of the session are Jan. 16 through March 17.





Stephanie Sanchez (2nd from left) and Patty Green (right) with WF leaders Carolyn Byers and Ruth Musgrave. A special treat was the surprise appearance of two Wild Friends alumni, now college students at UNM. Sanchez and Green were among the original Wild Friends from Polk MS, and were instrumental in getting WF started at Rio Grande HS where the program is still thriving. They want to start a UNM chapter of Wild Friends.



The Out-of-Towners. Teachers 2nd from left: Miki Maeshiro from Hawaii, Dr. Patricia O'Bannon from Florida, Lyn Bayer from Missouri, and Cheryl Haynes from California via Africa. The students (front) are from Menlo Park, CA, and St. Louis, MO. The New Mexicans: Wild Friends director Carolyn Byers (kneeling, left) and Assistant State Land Commissioner Olivia Ximenes (far left).

Hearty thanks...

to the 450 Wild Friends students, teachers, parents, and ...

Alink, Roger	Mayor Jim Baca
Angulo, Jannette	McAllen, Lowry
Bayer, Lyn	Meyer, Jan
Brooks, Dan	Moffett, Ben
Brown, Scott	Musgrave, Ruth
Bud, Eugene M.	Myers, Bob
Bureau of Reclamation	Nathanson, Paul
Byers, Gordon	Newell, Carolyn and Sparky
Clegg, Kent	Newton, Kent
Clemens, Joni	Nicholopoulos, Joy
Davenport, Stephen	NM State Legislature
de Garmo, Jennifer	NM Rep. Don Tripp
Deer Creek Foundation	NM Sen. Dede Feldman
Desidero, Robert	Norman, Mary F.
Dickinson, Kathleen	Noyes, Dan
Farris, David	O'Bannon, Patricia
Fife, Judy and Evan	Oczon, Agnes C.
Flynn-O'Brien, Judy	Oterrero, Paul
Frame Game Art Gallery	Persson, Per-Anders
Frischman, Ramona	Pickering, Jack
Fritz, Kitty Clarke	PNM Foundation
Gabaldon, Michael	Polechla, Paul J., Jr.
Garcia, Victoria	Powell, Ray
George, Susan	Ramsey, Kathleen
Goodloe, Sid	Robinson, Sherry
Grange, Dottie	Rodriguez, Yolanda
Grassano, Lorraine	Rosner, Joan and Hy
Grassel, Kathy	Rothanbarger, Bill
Harris, Steve and Elena	Rutherford, Tom, BC Comm.
Haynes, Cheryl	Saint, Lorin
Hendrie, Marguerite	Sanchez, Raymond G.
Herrera, Delores	Sapunar-Jursich, Jessica
Hibbard, Deb	Scott, Jessica
Huey, William S.	Shroder, Lucinda
Hummel, Ondrea	Simmons, Septhanie
Johnson, Carolyn	Smith, Lawrence S.
Joles, Tom	Soussan, Tania
Klemcke, Heather	Stokes, Kainoa
KOAT-TV	Stokes, John
Kowalski, Nolan	UNM Law School
Lewis, James	Wild Friends Teachers
Lloyd, Jim	Wild Friends Dancers
Lupton, Lorraine	and their parents
Maeshiro, Miki	Wolf, Sherry
Maestas, Annette	Ximenes, Olivia

...and to everyone else who contributed their time, expertise, and energy to make the Wildlife Summit an incredible experience for all of us.



Wild Friends receives award

The Wild Friends Program was the recipient of the 2000 Milagro Youth Award. The first annual awards program is sponsored by Animal Protection of New Mexico. The awards committee was "particularly impressed by the the Wild Friends advocacy efforts at the New Mexico legislature, *Wild News* newsletter, Whooping Crane Day, and wildlife summits."

The awards are being established as an annual event to recognize individuals and organizations (animals, too) for humane actions on behalf of animals. APNM is a 21-year-old statewide non-profit organization that advocates for systemic changes to assure the humane treatment of all animals.

Teacher Rolene Barnett and student Amber Johnson from Jefferson MS, mentor Jack Pickering, and program director Carolyn Byers accepted the award at a special dinner and ceremony in Santa Fe on Nov. 18.



Former Speaker of the House Raymond G. Sanchez gets a surprise from the Wild Friends.

Rattlesnake Museum to be featured on TV

The American International Rattlesnake Museum is slated for a segment on CNBC on National Geographic Explorer on January 21. Tune in to see Wild Friends supporter Bob Myers and his gila monsters, rattlesnakes, tarantulas and other creepy crawlers. Those of you who attended his Summit

workshop in November will especially want to see it (maybe tape it!). Better yet, visit the museum before you watch the TV show!



"Gila Glitter"



Glistening "Gila trout" dancers summon off-stage "silvery minnows" to bring attention to the plight of endangered fish in our New Mexico waterways. Lorin Saint directs the Wild Friends Dancers.

WE WELCOME new groups of Wild Friends from all over the state. Call 505/277-5089, or email cbyers@unm.edu if you are interested. Take a look at the **Wild Friends home page** at <http://wildfriends.unm.edu>. Newsletter Staff: Carolyn Byers, Judy Flynn-O'Brien, Ruth Musgrave, Kathy Grassel

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