



# The Wild News

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## Wild Friends: Vote for your 2008 legislation

Now is the time for Wild Friends to choose their next legislative project. Here are this year's action items. Use the ballot on this page to vote for the one you would like to work on. After the winning topic is announced, you'll research it and help write legislation on it. The 2008 New Mexico legislative session will be Jan. 15 to Feb. 14.

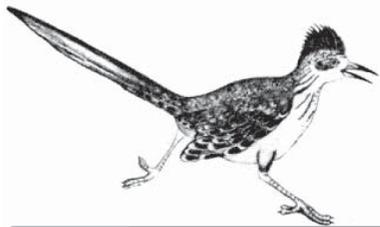
**Choice A: Critter litter:** Trash (in garbage containers) and litter (everywhere -- river banks, roadsides, campgrounds) are a danger to wildlife. Small mammals and birds attracted to litter along the highways get hit by cars. Fish and aquatic birds suffer when boaters dump trash in the rivers and lakes. Bears that make a habit of visiting

garbage cans get trapped and have to be removed. New Mexico Department of Game and Fish spent thousands of dollars this summer to clean up trash that campers and picnickers left behind. Trash and litter are problems that can be stopped if people can be persuaded to make better choices.

**Choice B: Money for Wildlife:** A main cause of species loss is the reduction and destruction of their habitat from urban development, more and busier roads and highways, and the destruction of streambank areas. Loss of habitat has caused a drastic reduction in songbirds such as the pinyon jay, the Western meadowlark, and mountain chickadee. Mammals such as deer, bobcats, bears and mountain lions are

getting killed trying to cross roads that go through their territories. Funding for projects to protect wildlife and their ecosystems is badly needed.

**Choice C: Recycling:** The biggest environmental challenge we face today is global warming. Rising temperatures from global warming will likely change the makeup of ecosystems, harming fish and wildlife, birds and butterflies alike. Recycling will reduce greenhouse gases that cause global warming. Getting such items as plastic bottles, paper, cans, computers, and phone books out of the landfills is something people must do to help save the planet. Recycling these materials and turning them into useful products will save energy, money and wildlife.



1. Choose the topic that you like best.
2. Cast your ballot.
3. Wait for ballot winner.
4. Research the topic.
5. Work on legislation.

Wild Friends staff will provide materials and visit your classroom if you wish.

## Wild Friends Ballot

### Vote your choice for 2008 Legislation

**Deadline September 24!**

- Choice A: Critter Litter
- Choice B: Money for Wildlife
- Choice C: Recycling

**Students:** After voting, fold and give your ballot to your teacher. Your teacher will tally the votes and report the results to the Wild Friends office (phone 277-5089, fax 277-5483, or e-mail [cbyers@unm.edu](mailto:cbyers@unm.edu)).

**THANKS** to the Dorr Foundation, the Wild Friends have science-based teacher kits for Wild Friends teachers to broaden the classroom experience. *The Wild Side of Ecology* is now being distributed. Watch for your copy soon.



## The Wild Side of Ecology

**Wildlife Education Activities  
and Resource Materials  
for New Mexico Educators, Grades 4-12**

**Wild Friends Program  
Center for Wildlife Law  
University of New Mexico**



Students from Rio Rancho ES on the way to the Rio Grande Nature Center are wearing Wild Friends t-shirts. PNM has funded the t-shirts since before these boys were born.

## PNM offers grants to “Build a Better Classroom”

**T**he PNM Fund, a division of the PNM Resources Foundation, is again offering Classroom Innovation Grants for full-time pre-K through 12<sup>th</sup> grade teachers in New Mexico. Awards range from \$500 to \$3,000. PNM gave out approximately 100 of these grants last year and almost 600 since 1990. In 2006, one of the winners was a teacher from Laguna-Acoma HS whose students used gray water and solar power to make a greenhouse. The students hope to manage a small flower-growing

business. One of the recipients this year is Alameda Middle School in Santa Fe with a project called *Calentamiento Global y Energia Renovable: Resolviendo problemas en el siglo 21*. Global Warming and Renewable Energy: Resolving Problems in the 21st Century. The online application for next year’s grants will be available on Oct. 5, 2007. There are lots of topics that would be naturals for Wild Friends, so don’t be shy. Check out the website at [www.pnm.com/innovation](http://www.pnm.com/innovation).

U.S. Congressman Tom Udall and Wild Friends from Horizon Academy West with teacher Cheryl Haynes. Not pictured are teacher Nick LaRue and his Wild Friends group. They enjoyed fly casting for trout and birding. Rep. Udall wrote the 2005 Valle Vidal Protection Act to save the beautiful valley in northern New Mexico for future generations. Wild Friends plan to be back for the 2nd Annual Valle Vidal Youth and Appreciation Day.



## Updates on WF legislation

- **2007:** “Wild Friends are batting pretty well,” said Reese Fullerton of Energy, Minerals & Natural Resources. This state agency created a pamphlet to inform the public on Energy Star products, one of the ideas in the Wild Friends global warming memorial. Several other ideas in the memorial are showing up in state law — open space, green building construction, solar panels, biofuel and renewable energy. Wild Friends were right on the mark when they chose global warming as their legislative topic for 2007.

- **2006:** Inspired by Wild Friends and other wildlife protection groups, the national Humane Society is backing a bill in the U.S. Congress to outlaw “cyberhunting.” The Humane Society’s slogan is: “Canned hunts ought to be banned hunts.” Thanks to Wild Friends legislative action, New Mexico became the first Rocky Mountain state to outlaw shooting fenced-in wild animals with computerized rifles. But more than half our 50 states allow cyberhunting. The Humane Society urges citizens to ask members of Congress to support a law called The Sportsmanship in Hunting Act. *(Thanks to Jack Pickering for this update.)*

- **2003:** The WF 2003 memorial asked the state to act to reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions. Hundreds of people learned about overpasses, underpasses and fencing. Inspired by this memorial, a group called the Tijeras Canyon Safe Passage Coalition was formed to push for wildlife crossings on Interstate-40. Now, I-40 through Tijeras Canyon has two kinds of wildlife-proof fencing, escape ramps, electric mats, and a variety of wildlife passages. Motorists are alerted by flashing lights after cameras click on wildlife and emit radio signals to activate the lights. The project is being described as “a milestone,” “extensive and ingenious” and “cutting-edge.” It is possibly the first project in the nation to combine so many elements. People all over the country are watching.



### Coming up: Get out there and enjoy ...

September 29: The 14th annual “**National Public Lands Day**” is a chance to do some outdoor work to clear trash, build trails, and plant trees. This day is the nation’s largest hands-on volunteer effort to improve public lands. NM State Parks is planning cleanups at Santa Rosa Lake and Elephant Butte Lake.. Check out what’s going in New Mexico at <http://www.publiclandsday.org/involved/newmexico.cfm> and at <http://www.emnrd.state.nm.us>.

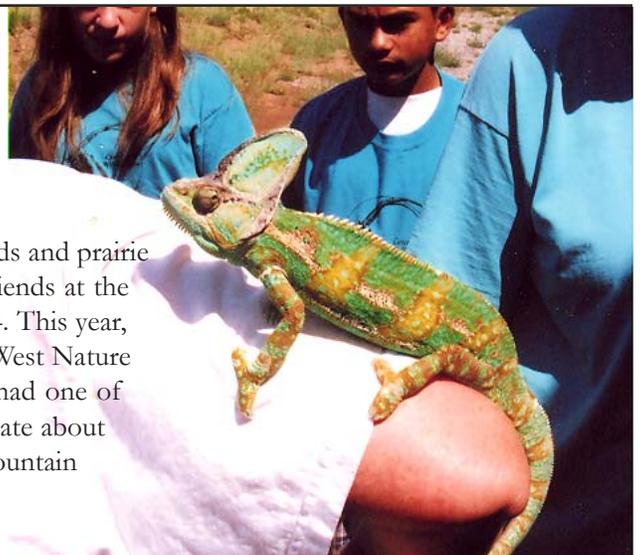
September 19: At the **State Fair**, the New Mexico Department of Game & Fish is hosting **Aquatic Education Day** with hands-on activities for everyone.

November 14-18: The 20th annual “**Festival of the Cranes**” at Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge celebrates the annual return of the cranes from northern climes. There will be exhibits, demonstrations, educational activities, live animals, tours, and wildlife viewing. See the schedule at [www.friendsofthebosque.org/crane/](http://www.friendsofthebosque.org/crane/).



### Bear Fair more than fair bears!

The reptiles pictured here, plus birds and prairie dogs, were a big draw for Wild Friends at the 2007 Bear Fair on Saturday, July 14. This year, the Bear Fair was held at Wildlife West Nature Park in Edgewood. Wild Friends had one of many booths with exhibits to educate about wildlife, especially bears. Sandia Mountain BearWatch co-sponsored the fair.



## Background on the Roundhouse

**H**ere are some things about the legislature in Santa Fe that every Wild Friend should know.

We participate in our New Mexico state government by electing (voting for) people to represent us, or we run for office to get elected ourselves so that we can represent everyone. The government has three branches: the Legislative (the Legislature), the Executive (the Governor), and the Judicial (the Courts). We elect Senators and Representatives to serve in our Legislature and make decisions about state laws and how to spend our tax dollars.

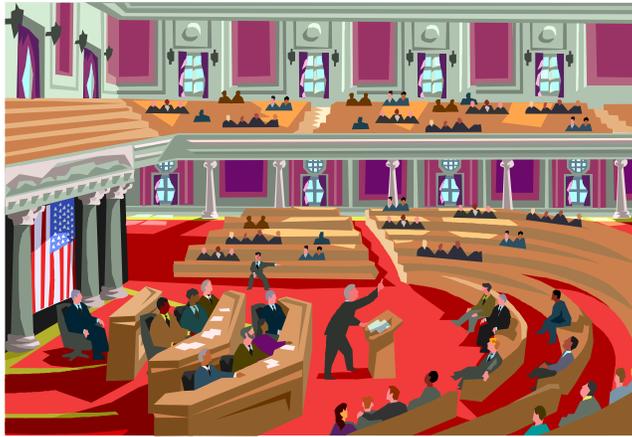
Citizens have a voice. You can suggest new laws or changes to current laws. The Wild Friends do this by writing a bill or a memorial to help wildlife. You can also call, write, fax and talk in person with legislators to ask them to vote for legislation that is important to you.

Legislators run for office in the communities they live in. You are a constituent of a legislator when you live in his or her district. The legislator has been elected to serve you.

The legislators meet every year in the State Capitol — the Roundhouse. The New Mexico State Legislature has 112 members: 70 Representatives and 42 Senators. Representatives are elected every two years and must be at least 21 years old. Senators run for office every four years and they must be at least 25 years old.

The House of Representatives meets in a huge room on one side, and the Senate meets in a huge room on the other side. These rooms are known as the House and Senate chambers. In odd numbered years, the session lasts 60 days. In even numbered years, such as 2008, it lasts 30 days.

Part of the Legislature's work takes place in the chambers with all the Senators and Representatives. The other part is done in committees where small groups of legislators gather information. They invite citizens to testify (talk) about why they think a certain bill or memorial should be passed or not passed. Every year, some of the



Wild Friends testify about their legislation.

A bill proposes a new law, or changes an existing law. For example, Wild Friends wrote the bill making the Sandia hairstreak the New Mexico State Butterfly. A memorial is a call to action from the legislature. One year, the Wild Friends wrote a memorial to ask state government to act to reduce wildlife-vehicle accidents on our highways. That memorial led the way for safer wildlife crossings on Interstate 40 east of Albuquerque.

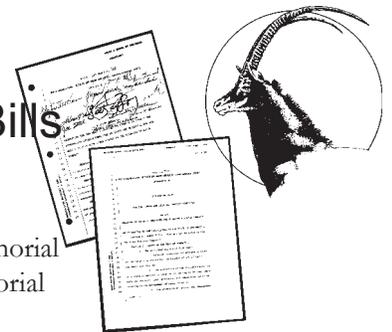
During a session, a legislator takes charge of a memorial or bill and takes it on its journey to passage. This person is called the sponsor.

Wild Friends have presented 16 memorials and bills over the years. Most of them were passed. Win or lose, Wild Friends always get respect for their hard work. And Wild Friends are always ready to come back the next time.

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### Wild Friends Memorials and Bills 1992-2007

- 1992: Endangered Species Memorial
- 1995: Common Ground Memorial
- 1996: Anti-Poaching Memorial
- 1997: Anti-Poaching Bill
- 1998: State Whooping Crane Day Memorial
- 1999: Anti-Cruelty to Wildlife Memorial
- 2000: Wildlife Violator Compact Memorial
- 2001: Wildlife Violator Compact Bill
- 2002: Prairie Dog Memorial
- 2003: State Butterfly Memorial
- 2004: Reduce Wildlife-Vehicle Collisions Memorial
- 2005: Penalties for Wasting Wildlife Memorial
- 2006: Prohibit Computer-Assisted Remote Hunting Bill
- 2007: Global Warming Memorial



**WE WELCOME** new groups of Wild Friends. Call 505/277-5089, or email [cbyers@unm.edu](mailto:cbyers@unm.edu) if you are interested. Take a look at the **Wild Friends home page** at <http://wildfriends.unm.edu>.

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