

## Come to Support a Free-Flowing Gila River

Hearing in Santa Fe this Thursday!



The Gila River is New Mexico's last free-flowing river. Originating in America's first wilderness, the Gila is rich in biological diversity and cultural history. In 2004, Congress passed the Arizona Water Settlements Act (AWSA) that authorized diversion of the Gila River if New Mexico agreed to buy water from Arizona to replace what we take out of the river. A Gila River diversion project is unnecessary, expensive and will harm the Gila River.

**Senate Bill 89** aims to focus available federal dollars under the Arizona Water Settlements Act on conservation measures instead of a costly Gila River diversion. **This forward-thinking bill will be heard on Thursday, February 13, at 2:30 p.m. by the Senate Conservation Committee. Senate Bill 89** will help fund long-term sustainable ways to meet our future water demands while ensuring the economic benefits from tourism and outdoor recreation along New Mexico's last free-flowing river. [Learn more.](#)

[More news on Gila diversion](#)

[More local leaders speak out to protect the Gila River](#)

[With Gila River deadline looming, New Mexico debates its water options](#)

[Gila River diversion plan 'fatally flawed,' water expert says](#)

## Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks Rich in Biological Diversity

Entering Doña Ana County from almost any direction, it's the mountains that grab your attention: the soaring, rocky peaks of the Organs, the blunt face of the Robledos overlooking the Rio Grande and the alluring forms of the Sierra de las Uvas and the West Potrillos on the horizon. Given how they dominate our vistas, it seems fitting that the proposed monument is anchored by these mountain ranges...Sixty of the bird species documented in the Organs are considered species of conservation concern... [Read more in our Spring 2014 newsletter.](#)

- [DONATE NOW](#)
- [JOIN NOW](#)
- [VOLUNTEER](#)

## New Video from OMDP Meeting Jan. 24



Didn't make it to Las Cruces? View some of the meeting highlights [here](#).



**If you haven't already, please help us thank Sally Jewell** for her visit and ask her to urge President Obama to designate the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks as New Mexico's newest national monument. [Take action now.](#)



Please take the time to also message President Obama to tell him that you want to see an Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument. The opposition is trying to rally against the proposal, so we need all your support to send a clear message to Washington. [Write President Obama.](#)



## NM Wild Urges Gov. Martinez to remove NM Game Commission leaders for participating in, organizing coyote-killing contests

The New Mexico Wilderness Alliance, along with eight other conservation organizations, is calling upon Gov. Susana Martinez to remove two individuals from their positions on the New Mexico Game Commission for participating in and organizing coyote-killing contests.

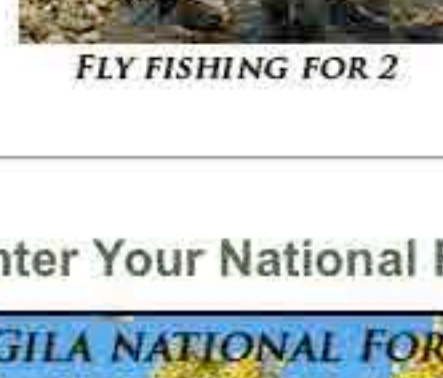
In a [letter](#) dated February 3, the groups urged the governor to remove Chairman Scott Bidegain and Commissioner Robert Espinosa: Bidegain for competing in a major coyote killing contest in Nevada last December, in which he and his partner killed eight coyotes and won \$1,300 in cash, and Espinosa for his role in organizing coyote killing contests in New Mexico while serving as executive director of the anti-predator group Sportsmen for Fish and Wildlife—NM Chapter.

Coyotes help to maintain the balance of natural ecosystems by controlling populations of prey species, including rodents that sometimes carry human diseases, such as Hantavirus and plague.

[Read more.](#)

## PREVIEW OUR ONLINE AUCTION NOW

START BIDDING MARCH 17!



FLY FISHING FOR 2



MOUNTAIN LION PENDANT



PRIVATE WINE TASTING

## Enter Your National Forest Wilderness Photos



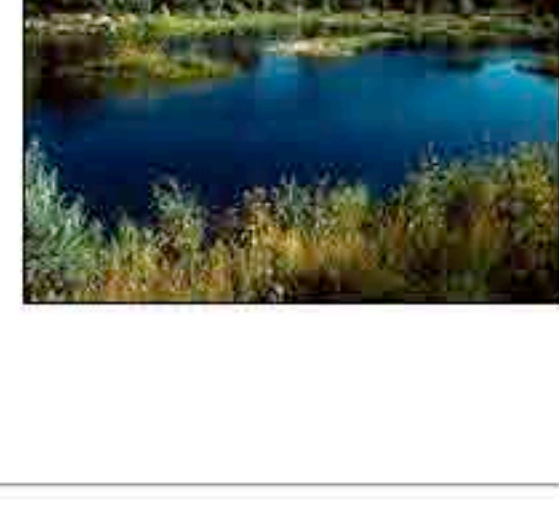
This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act. To celebrate, the National Forest Foundation wants to see your photos of **wilderness areas on national forests**. ["Like" the National Forest Foundation on Facebook](#) and submit your best New Mexico wilderness photos to win some great prizes!

## Upcoming events

### Birding and Wildlife/Plant ID on the Bosque

**NEW!**  
February 15  
Rio Grande Nature Center, Albuquerque

**Description:** This time of year the bird watching is great with a huge diversity of species and in some cases the beginning of courtship behaviors. Hike guide and biologist Max Havelka will help us work on our riparian plant ID, and discuss issues/threats to the Rio Grande Bosque. The ponds here are great for bird watching, so bring your binoculars!



**Details:** Meet at 8 a.m. at the Rio Grande Nature Center Parking lot. There is a small fee for this parking lot (\$3).

[Sign up.](#)

### Concert in Las Cruces

Fundraiser to benefit Friends of the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks

February 15 from 8 p.m.-midnight  
Rio Grande Theatre in Las Cruces

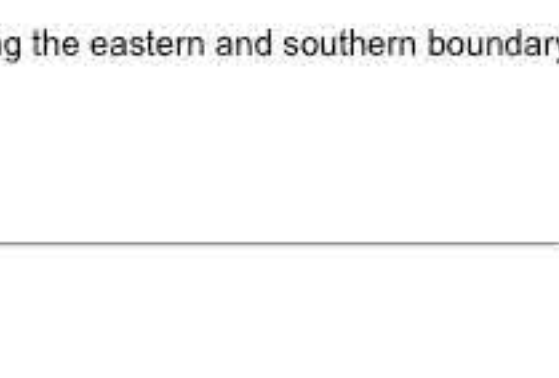
Featuring the Handsome Family, Boris McCutcheon, Wildewood

Valentine's Day is not the only day for love this year, as lovers of New Mexico's wild and open places will gather the day after Valentine's for a Night to Celebrate New Mexico at the Rio Grande Theatre in downtown Las Cruces. The show was organized by local DJs of the Seeds and Stems show featured on KRUX 91.5 and will help raise funds and awareness for the local non-profit group Friends of the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks and features bands from around New Mexico. [Learn more here.](#)

### Blue Range Wilderness: Boundary Signage & Road Closures

February 21-23

**DESCRIPTION:** Often dubbed New Mexico's forgotten wilderness, the Blue Range Wilderness is nestled on the border with Arizona, and the Gila Wilderness is just a stone's throw away to the east. Located in the heart of the Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area, the region is the only place left in the United States where the endangered Mexican gray wolf is actively being reintroduced into the wild. Working with the Gila National Forest, we will overhaul signage along the wilderness boundary, as well as construct barriers to prevent illegal ATV intrusion into the wilderness. We will basecamp at Kelly Campground and work along the eastern and southern boundary of the wilderness.

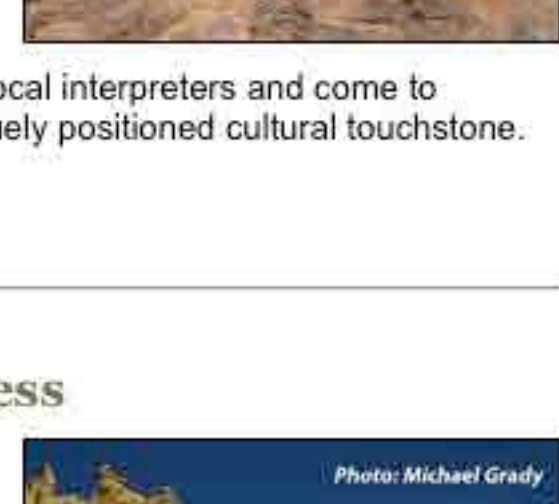


[Learn more and sign up here.](#)

### Providence Cone Human History Tour

February 22  
Las Cruces Area

**DESCRIPTION:** Providence Cone rises more than 300 feet from the surrounding Chihuahuan Desert scrubland. Long a beacon for native peoples who traveled near and far, the cultural importance of Providence Cone is only now becoming known. After late summer monsoons, area flowers explode and a wide variety of wildlife use the area, including our scaled friends who lend it another name, "Rattlesnake Rock." On our February tour we will explore a mesmerizing human history through the expert eyes of local interpreters and come to understand why Providence Cone is a very apt name for this uniquely positioned cultural touchstone.



[Sign up.](#)

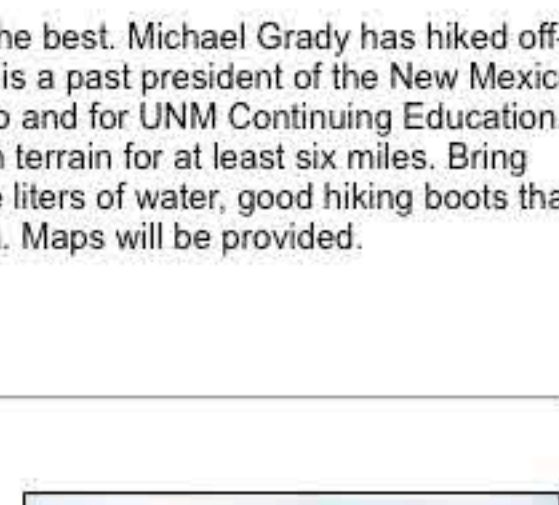
### Map and Compass 2014: Ojito Wilderness

Only 4 spots left!

March 20 and 22  
Ojito Wilderness and NM Wild Albuquerque office

**Classroom Session:** 7-9 p.m., Thursday, March 20  
New Mexico Wilderness Alliance Albuquerque Office

**Field Session:** 6-8 mile cross country hike in the Ojito Wilderness 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday, March 22. Carpool from NM Wild Albuquerque office, round trip 100 miles.



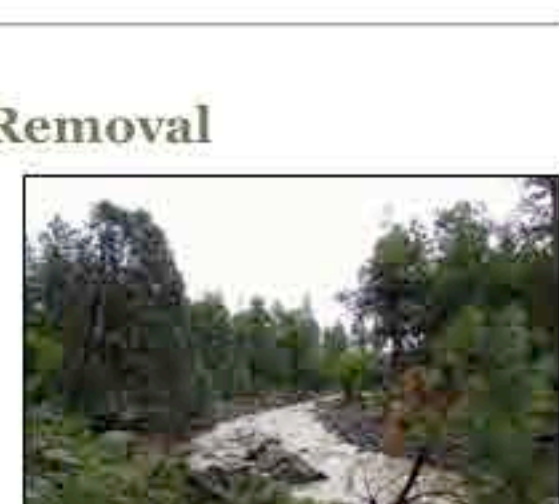
**DESCRIPTION:** Learn map and compass navigation from one of the best. Michael Grady has hiked off-trail in New Mexico, using only map and compass, since 1984. He is a past president of the New Mexico Mountain Club and teaches Map & Compass for the Mountain Club and for UNM Continuing Education. Participants must be able and willing to hike cross country in rough terrain for at least six miles. Bring your own food, rain gear, sunscreen, pack with a minimum of three liters of water, good hiking boots that are not new, and a base-plate compass with adjustable declination. Maps will be provided.

[Sign up.](#)

### Kilbourne Hole Rim Cleanup

Las Cruces Area  
March 29

**DESCRIPTION:** Kilbourne Hole volcanic crater is a National Natural Landmark about 25 miles southwest of Las Cruces. The crater has helped astronauts train for the Apollo Space Program and is a popular recreational area. Unfortunately, trash has accumulated around parking areas, degrading the area and dishonoring the incredible scientific, natural and historical values of this incredible gem. So, join the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance and other local organizations in helping to clean up Kilbourne Hole rim!



[Sign up.](#)

### Blue Range Wilderness Invasive Plant Removal

March 21-23  
Blue Range Wilderness

**DESCRIPTION:** Often dubbed New Mexico's forgotten wilderness, the Blue Range Wilderness is nestled on the border with Arizona, and the Gila Wilderness is just a stone's throw away to the east. Located in the heart of the Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area, the region is the only place left in the United States where the endangered Mexican gray wolf is actively being reintroduced into the wild. Working with the Gila National Forest, we will conduct citizen-based surveys and the removal of invasive, noxious weeds that have begun to encroach on the Blue Range Wilderness. We will basecamp at Pueblo Park and spend our days hiking in the canyons of the Blue Range, as well as Aspen Mountain.



[Sign up.](#)

Please visit our website at [www.nmwild.org](http://www.nmwild.org)  
[Donate to NM Wild.](#)

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