



Santa Fe
WATERSHED
ASSOCIATION

1413 SECOND ST. #3
SANTA FE, NM 87505



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How to love this world?

As long as there is beauty, there is something to defend. —BILL DEBUYS

I recently attended a senate hearing on “The effects of climate change in the intermountain west.” The Chair of the Natural Resources Committee, New Mexico’s own (outgoing) Senator Bingaman heard from six carefully chosen witnesses to learn, firsthand, what’s happening to our climate, our landscapes, and our ecosystems. His closing remark says it all: “We’ve heard some very sobering statements today. I’d like to end this very informative session on a positive note, but I just don’t know how to do that. All I can do is thank the witnesses for their work and thank all of you all for coming.”

Sobering words, indeed.

At the Santa Fe Watershed Association, we’ve been talking a lot about this topic too. How does a small organization like ours address the often bleak and persistently overwhelming evidence arising around climate change? One way is to continue supporting efforts to thin forests. According to Research Ecologist Dr. Craig Allen, one of the most important things we can do is help build resilient forests. After a century of fire-suppression policy at the US Forest Service, our forests are in terrible condition. The overgrown, crowded trees competing for resources amongst themselves on restricted amounts of ground are like too many cows on a feedlot. They’re prone to disease, they take up too much water, and are catastrophic fire magnets, as we’ve seen continuously for the past two summers.



Thinned trees in the Santa Fe Watershed. June 2012

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How to love this world? continued from the cover

We are grateful that several years ago, a group of locals had the foresight to recognize that a lot of our surface water security depends upon the health of the surrounding forest. Thanks to Senator Pete Domenici, the Santa Fe Watershed received a good chunk of federal funding to thin the overgrown forest, freeing up water storage, strengthening remaining trees, and helping to prevent catastrophic fires, the likes of which we are now labeling "the new normal." A thinned forest is also more resilient to insect infestations, a condition which according to Dr. Nate McDowell, Staff Scientist with the Earth and Environmental Sciences Division at LANL, is responsible for six times as much forest stand kill than forest fire throughout the Rocky mountain West.

Needless to say, the successful partnership between the City of Santa Fe, the US Forest Service, The Nature Conservancy, and the Santa Fe Watershed Association is yielding a degree of safety that other watersheds do not yet have. Sadly, due to the continuous decline of funds available for this kind of treatments throughout the west, most forests will remain vulnerable to the massive insect kills, catastrophic fires and ensuing mud slides, and thus, surface water insecurity.



Volunteers building bio-retention structures for storm-water run off

Another way to address this issue is to help everyone learn how to reduce their carbon footprint. The SFWA recently graduated our first class of Climate Masters. After the state dropped this popular program, Education Director Eileen Everett solicited funding and received support from NM EPSCoR

and the City of Santa Fe to carry on this valuable program. Following ten weeks of learning about decreasing their carbon footprint from a series of experts on topics such as renewable energy, consumption and waste, and permaculture, and with a special emphasis on water and forest health, each student is committed to providing 30 hours of volunteer climate outreach to the community. Many creative and wonderful ideas that go beyond changing out the light bulbs are afoot! Stay tuned for our big announcement about the grand Climate Masters group project that is currently in development.

Third, there is much that can be done locally using restoration techniques to help our natural environs. For example, Aaron Kaufman with Southwest Urban Hydrology and the SFWA secured a grant from Wells Fargo to build three bio-retention basins off the parking lot of the La Farge Library on Llano St. These structures slow the velocity of storm-water coming off the hard surface, retain it in a

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Dear Friends of the Santa Fe Watershed,

As a resident of Barrio la Cañada, I often walk the river trail that winds through my neighborhood. This summer, my neighbors and I watched as several powerful monsoons sent torrents of water down the river. While these flash floods are always impressive, they also highlight the need to improve our stormwater management—so that the water that rushes quickly down the river could instead percolate slowly into the ground, recharging the aquifer, nurturing trees, and keeping the river flowing steadily for more of the year.



Fortunately, the Santa Fe Watershed Association is hard at work making this happen, collaborating with other local organizations to launch a Stormwater Alliance, which this May held its first workshop to teach Santa Feans how to make the most of our rainstorms.



The Stormwater Alliance is one of many new and growing initiatives that build on the momentum of this milestone year. Declared “Love Your River Year” by Mayor Coss, 2012 has seen the passage of a Living River Ordinance by the City Council, making Santa Fe the first city in the state to dedicate annual flows to our river. In April, SFWA completed a major restoration project on The Nature Conservancy’s Santa Fe Canyon Preserve (see page 4), which returned the river to its original channel for the first time in 108 years. And SFWA continues to reach more children and community members than ever with its watershed and climate education programs.



Kristina G. Fisher, Secretary, SFWA Board of Directors

We couldn’t do any of it without your support, so I hope you’ll join our growing community and become a part of the movement to create a more sustainable Santa Fe Watershed.



basin lined with vegetation that helps to detoxify pollutants, and encourages water to slowly sink and seep into the nearby arroyo. This erosion control method can be employed across the watershed as a way to slow, sink, and spread the large volumes of stormwater we have coming off of our impervious surfaces, while also helping to reduce heat-island effects of the urban paved landscape, clean contaminated water, and slowly infiltrate into the earth. Green infrastructure building techniques like these are price-efficient means of building resilient ecosystems within our watershed.

While the climate change scenarios and overwhelming complexity of the times could render us paralyzed, we challenge everyone to step forth with hope and responsiveness, no matter the scale, to help our ailing planet. As the cliché goes, if we put men on the moon and dropped a rover on Mars, can’t we beat the fossil fuel industry and save our planet? Maybe not, but I’d rather go down trying and we at the Santa Fe Watershed look forward to working with you to do the same.



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**Felicity Broennan,
Executive Director**

A River Runs Through It

April 4 was a day to celebrate. A friend of mine and I packed cheese and crackers, a bottle of champagne, some grapes, and a couple of glasses and headed up to the bench that overlooks the Old Stone Dam. Water raced over the dam making it hard for us to hear each other. We popped the cork, overflowed our glasses with bubbly, and toasted the Santa Fe River, flowing once again through its channel of yore. A glorious, and refreshing site!

108 years ago, after the great flood of 1904 filled in the first dam on the river, someone decided it would be a good idea to divert the river into a bypass channel where humans would have more control over the flow.

However, the site has experienced a decade's worth of change, including new ownership. The Nature Conservancy has turned the site into a wildlife preserve that includes a primary wetland area. Not enough water was getting to that wetlands. So in 2009, SFWA and TNC produced a plan to return the river to the original channel. The proposal was funded by the New Mexico Environment Department's River Ecosystem Restoration Program. After several years and dozens of meetings, plan re-designs, and permitting issues, Steve Carson of Rangeland Hands broke ground.



Water flowing through the historic new channel



Three short weeks later this quarter mile stretch of river was ready for water. When the City made its first release this year from the reservoir, the water made its way gracefully through its new course. Accompanied by whoops and cheers of the several people there to witness this precious moment, the river splashed over the rocks of Old Stone Dam and wound its way into the pond, filling it for the migrating birds. Like a fine wine, this project certainly aged over a period of time. Fortunately, through great perseverance by a dedicated group of engineers, planners, and organizational team work, the vital wetland area of the Santa Fe Canyon Preserve will continue flourishing. Our deep thanks to Neil Williams of Watershed West, Bob Findling of The Nature Conservancy, Steve and Nansy Carson of Rangeland Hands, R.B. Zaxus of the City of Santa Fe, and Karen Menetrey of the New Mexico Environment Department for their dedicated resolve to see the project through to completion. See more photos on our website under Restoration, including a movie of the first water over the edge of the falls at the Old Stone Dam.

The Santa Fe Living River!

On a historic February 29th, 2012, six out of six voting Santa Fe City Councilors took the valiant leap to pass the Target Flow for a Living River Ordinance, and its adjunctive ordinance for administrative procedures. After hearing testimony from 25 people, including SFWA's Education Director Eileen Everett and Executive Director Felicity Broennan, several councilors made impassioned statements about the importance of the river and its role in our community. After the vote, the full-house exploded with cheers and the air filled with blue hearts, symbols of love and support for our river to have water for its own sake!

The ordinance dedicates 1,000 acre feet of reservoir water to be bypassed into the river per year in wet and normal years. (An acre foot of water is equal to approx. 360,000 gallons of water). In dry and drought years, the amount of water will be scaled back proportionally according to a formula worked out by a dedicated group of stakeholders from the community. Also formulated was the schedule for releases according to ecological and cultural values and legal parameters.

The passing of the ordinance comes after 18 years and many fits and starts. There was an extraordinary cast of characters that played important roles through the decades. Culminating in an agreement that a river needs water too, we applaud the City Council for its foresight and acknowledge the hundreds of community members that contributed to helping the Santa Fe River be a few steps closer to A Living River.



Moments of Magic

Eileen Everett

After an especially long day in July, I took a step back to evaluate this whole environmental education situation. We were in the midst of a three week river camp program with partners from the Santa Fe Girls School, Desert Academy, Agua Fria Elementary, and Aspen Community School. Santa Fe River Adventures Camp was a new venture for all of us that paired middle school students with upper elementary school students to explore the Santa Fe River. Each day, we set off for a different reach of the Santa Fe River. From the upper watershed to the urban reach to La Cienega, campers were introduced to the different ecosystems and the human needs that depend upon our river.

This particular day involved lots of teaching challenges. It was hot. And by hot, I mean dripping with sweat, constantly drinking and still feeling dehydrated, and lots of kids with cranky attitudes HOT. This day required a lot of management with both the younger and older kids. It was one of those days of reckoning that make me ask myself: Am I really making a difference?

As I was in the midst of this questioning, I went back to one striking moment from earlier in the day. The thought involved a nine year old boy, Juan, who had been very quiet throughout the whole camp experience. After our lunch break, we had gone into the Santa Fe River to look for frogs and crayfish and whatever else may cross our paths. My mind was focused on keeping track of everyone and trying to anticipate any potential problems that may arise. When I looked over at Juan, he was focused on a dragonfly, a large orange dragonfly called a flame skimmer. He was completely fixated on this critter. I wondered later what may have transformed within him in this moment. I would now call his experience "a moment of magic," a time outdoors where one is completely present and feels connected to nature in some kind of profound way.

If you're reading this article, you most likely already care for nature. Your appreciation for the environment probably developed and continues to evolve from many moments of magic. But was there one moment of magic that marked the beginning of your journey to care? For me, it occurred on a cloudy day in my childhood. I along with some friends had crossed over a highway (not something I would call responsible) to a woodlot. I remember picking up a log and there was a red salamander underneath. In that instant, my perspective on the world shifted. No longer was I a child of suburbia; I was now a child that could find nature and I discovered I was part of nature. This has led to a life filled with moments of magic.



Students surveying for aquatic macroinvertebrates during My Water, My Watershed program



Now I am in the role of creating opportunities for moments of magic and I have the privilege to witness them often. What a gift. Perhaps this is the best gift we can give our children; help them have their own moments of magic in nature and be aware of them.

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New Arroyo Program to Launch

Though you may not realize it (or maybe you do!), arroyos play an integral role in the health of our community. As conveyance systems for water, they are prone to erosion, down-cutting, channelization, and constriction. As recreation areas, they are beloved for their open spaces. As wildlife corridors, they are valuable habitat.

As the city and county have grown, it's been difficult to keep up with the attention needed for these veins and arteries of our watershed. The increase in impervious surfaces, inattentive house sittings along every arroyo, and the increasing strength of storm events, are all taking their toll on the arroyo systems. The Santa Fe Watershed Association, in partnership with the City of Santa Fe, has preliminarily launched our *Adopt-an-Arroyo* program to help address some of these issues. Designed much like our ten year old *Adopt-the-River* program, *A-a-A* will secure sponsors of reaches of major arroyos to support the coordination and execution of a team of stewards to patrol the arroyos for garbage, alert City staff to dangerous bank erosion situations, and increase the public's awareness about the value and care of these important lands.



We wish to acknowledge Sam's Club as the first Sponsors of a reach along Arroyo Chamisos. The Arroyo Chamisos runs for six miles throughout the City and has many areas in need of attention. Fortunately, voters passed a bond measure in March that will support arroyo remediation.

Additionally, SFWA received money from the New Mexico Environment Department to run an intensive two-day workshop on *Caring for Arroyos in your Neighborhood* to be held on September 21st & 22nd. This hands-on workshop will bring residents, professionals, city, and county personnel together to discuss, tour, examine, and practice fixing some of the



common problems afflicting our arroyos. For information and to register, please contact our office at 505-820-1696, register online at www.santafewatershed.org, or email felicity@santafewatershed.org.

With thanks to the New Mexico Environment Office of Surface Water Quality for supporting this event as part of the New Mexico Watershed Forum 2012.



As I sit here typing in the much cooler space of the office, it's easy to reminisce about the moments of magic this past spring and summer; 258 fourth and fifth graders participated in the experiential, multi-disciplinary program *My Water, My Watershed*; 106 children from the City of Santa Fe's Summer Youth Program participated in field trips into the Upper Watershed; and we completed our first ever Santa Fe River Adventures camp in July. Now we're gearing up for fall when we expect to have 575 fourth and fifth grade Public School students participate in *My Water, My Watershed* which will provide many more opportunities for moments of magic.



Eileen Everett

Welcome Dave Kite

Volunteers are an integral part of any social profit organization and ours is no different. When we get an email or phone call from an enthusiastic newcomer to the area, asking about the river, and wondering if there are any opportunities for involvement, it always makes our week. Such was the case when Dave Kite and his wonderful wife Mary contacted us 18 months ago. They very quickly became our good friends and prized volunteers with our *MyWater, My Watershed* program. They also immediately sponsored a newly available river reach through our *Adopt-the-River* program and formed an ad hoc group of folks to patrol the river.



Dave and Mary Kite at the Adopt the River 10th Anniversary Brunch

Dave retired after spending 17 years at AMGEN (formerly Applied Molecular Genetics) where he had various roles and responsibilities including sales, sales management, and leading the oncology training department. He is also certified in instructional design and adult learning principles. Dave is a registered yoga teacher who volunteered teaching mindfulness based yoga for people with cancer and worked as a hospice volunteer as well as a volunteer for the *No One Dies Alone* program (NODA). In 2011, Dave completed his requirements for the Upaya Zen Center's chaplaincy program and was ordained as a Buddhist chaplain with an emphasis in environmental chaplaincy and systems theory. Now Dave has joined our board of directors. Thank you Dave for jumping in and helping us with our marketing! We're so happy you, Mary, (and Oscar!) found us in your new home.



New Santa Fe River Sponsors

In this 10th Anniversary Year of our *Adopt-the-River* program, we are pleased to welcome Santa Fe Stone, the Michael Smith Gallery, and the United Church of Santa Fe as new Sponsors. These businesses and church represent the kind of partnership we count on to keep the river well-tended. They each recognize the value of the river and are willing to support our efforts to organize the volunteers who care for it monthly. Please help us say thanks by stopping by and recognizing their community spirit. Santa Fe Stone is at 901 W. San Mateo, Michael Smith Gallery is at 526 Canyon Road, and the United Church of Santa Fe is at 1804 Arroyo Chamiso.



Rev. Talitha Arnold
United Church of Santa Fe

A special thank you to Michael Smith for playing an integral role in the early discussions on a Living River and to the United Church volunteers who came out to clean the river in the spring.



Michael Smith
Michael Smith Gallery



Burke Denman
Santa Fe Stone

Adopt-the-River: 4,000 Tons of Success!

During a sunny winter day adjacent to the Santa Fe River, 23 individuals and organizations were honored for their support of the *Adopt-the-River* program. 82 community members gathered at the Inn & Spa of Loretto to celebrate ten years of the Santa Fe Watershed Association's *Adopt-the-River* program. In that time, 3,000 + volunteers have collected several thousand tons of garbage from the river banks.

Surrounded by over four hundred blue heart valentines to the river, created by elementary school kids, Sponsors and Steward groups received etched glass awards for their years of service. Sponsors financially support the program which coordinates volunteers (stewards) who collect and dispose of litter found in and along the banks of the Santa Fe River every month.

Speakers at the event included A. Kyce Bello reading from her essay in *Return of the River*; Dr. Jerry Jacobi, chairman of the Santa Fe River Commission and board member of SFWA; Paige Grant, founder of the SFWA; and Mayor Coss.

The event also marked the declaration of Love Your River Year 2012. Mayor Coss used the occasion to present a proclamation to the Santa Fe Watershed Association. Special honorees included Brian Drypolcher, the City's River and Watershed Coordinator; Staci Matlock, journalist for the Santa Fe New Mexican; and Mayor David Coss for his dedication to the Santa Fe River.



Top to bottom: Dr. Jerry Jacobi addresses the audience; Etched-glass award; table decoration; Mayor Coss with Felicity Broennan; Paige Grant, founding Executive Director (ED) and former ED David Groenfeldt; Board member John Utton and son; Clean-up crews on May 19.

Porfirio Chavarria & his wife

Imagine...

◆◆◆ Yourself gently swaying along a soft rippling river on a raft, gazing at the dramatic red cliffs, surrounded by New Mexico blue sky, and learning about riparian ecology, aquatic macroinvertebrates, and complexity. In the evenings we'll dine on gourmet food and be led through wine tasting exercises, write a little poetry, and gaze at the stars. If you're the type of person who would enjoy the company of physicist/naturalist/linguist Murray Gell-Mann, restoration ecologist Dr. Pete Stacey, entomologist Dr. Jerry Jacobi (aka Bug Guy), and renowned wine-expert Michael Gelb, then let us know! We'd like to make this trip a reality. If we generate enough participation, the three-day trip will be offered in 2013 as a fundraiser for SFWA. Expert raft guides, gourmet food and wine, and a host of scientists extolling the ways and virtues of our natural New Mexico world. This is a truly once in a life-time chance to experience a piece of New Mexico river as no one ever has or ever will. Cost depends upon the number of participants (and kind of wine we select!) Contact Felicity if you're interested: felicity@santafewatershed.org or 505-820-1696.



© Seth Roffman



Thank You! Our Loyal Watershed Community

Del Charro
Inn & Spa at Lorretto
La Fonda Hotel
La Montanita Co-op
Los Alamos National Bank
McCune Family Charitable Foundation
Michael Smith Gallery
New Mexico Bank and Trust
Outside Magazine
Rangeland Hands
Reynolds Insurance
Rotary Club of Santa Fe

Sam's Club
Santa Fe Community Foundation
Santa Fe Garden Club
Santa Fe Natural Tobacco Company
Santa Fe Stone
The Angelica Foundation
The Feed Bin
The Santa Fe New Mexican
The William H. and Mattie Wattis Harris Foundation
Turtle Mountain
United Church of Santa Fe
Zaplin-Lampert Gallery

Jeffrey Adams
Cary Arden
Nancy Avedisian
Saroj Baxter
Lisa Bemis
Lee Berry
Deb Binderman
Bette Booth
Graham Bowkett
Michelle Brown
Elva Busch
Steve Carson
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Michael LeRoy Smith
Jeffrey Sussmann
John W. Utton
Liliana Viner
Susan Weaver
Madeleine Wells
Natalie Wells
Cynthia West
Paul & Jane Wilken
Robert & Ann Willcutt
Anne Wilson
Hank Yeiser
Giacomo Zafarano
Mark and Patricia Zolnick

UPCOMING EVENTS

HIKES

SEPTEMBER 22, OCTOBER 17 AND NOVEMBER 8, 2012

There's still time to put your name on a waiting list for one of our remaining Upper Watershed Hikes (September 22 and October 17) or Van Trip (November 8).

WORKSHOP

SEPTEMBER 21-22

Arroyo Workshop, Genoveva Chavez Center, Santa Fe. Breakfast snacks and lunch provided. Optional Happy Hour on Friday at Museum Hill!

2ND ANNUAL RECYCLED ART CONTEST FOR KIDS

SEPTEMBER 22

La Montañita Coop parking lot, 9 am - 1:30 pm



A young artist from 2011 Recycled Art Contest.

Valerie Rangel, Ch'osh Lichii Designs



SEND A VALENTINE TO THE RIVER

Though it's not exactly Valentine's season, SFWA is preparing for Valentine's Day 2013. Earlier this year we put out a call to Make a Blue Heart Valentine for the Santa Fe River. The response was overwhelming! Suddenly, our office became a haven of hearts as over 400 valentines poured in from six local elementary schools and several professional artists. In 2013, we hope to produce an exhibit of these works in a local gallery, extend the invitation, and auction off the works. Don't miss the river of Blue Hearts! For more information email Eileen@santafewatershed.org or call 505-820-1696.

SANTA FE WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

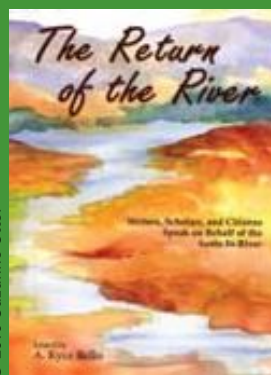
Keeping you smart, hydrated, and shaded!



Klean Kanteen®
Water bottle – \$20



Baseball Cap – \$15



© 2010 Suzanne Otter

The Return of the River – \$25

Edited by A. Kyce Bello

If you haven't already, buy this book and read the diverse stories all of which were inspired by the Santa Fe River. The collection features poignant, funny, interesting, and adventurous tales from a broad spectrum of writers, all devoted to our beloved, beleaguered, and most precious Santa Fe River.

*To order, please call the SFWA office,
505-820-1696*



Santa Fe
WATERSHED

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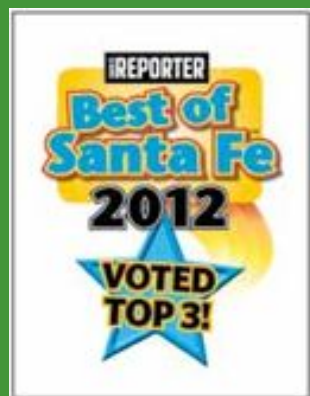


The SFWA takes environmentally responsible business practices seriously. We have chosen to work with a certified Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) printer. This means that both the print company and the paper used were rigorously reviewed and controlled to ensure that the paper came from eco-responsible sources, which helps limit the impact this project will have on the environment.



SFWA'S 2ND BENEFIT CONCERT AT THE OPERA

We are proud to announce that Lyle Lovett & his Large Band will bring their spectacular musical feast to the Santa Fe Opera for a benefit concert on August 31st @ 7:30 p.m. Providing unrestricted funding to the Santa Fe Watershed Association's education, restoration and advocacy programs, this evening promises to delight the audience with world-class talent. We love producing these concerts, so buy your tickets early to support a greener, healthier, water-wiser community! Call 505-986-5900 for best ticket options. See you there!



SILVER MEDAL IN SFR'S BEST OF!

THANK YOU to all who voted for the Santa Fe Watershed Association as Best Environmental Organization in the Santa Fe Reporter's annual Best Of contest! We are enjoying our Second Place victory and think it's pretty cool to come in ahead of the much larger, sometimes national organizations who have more reach than we do. Awesome!