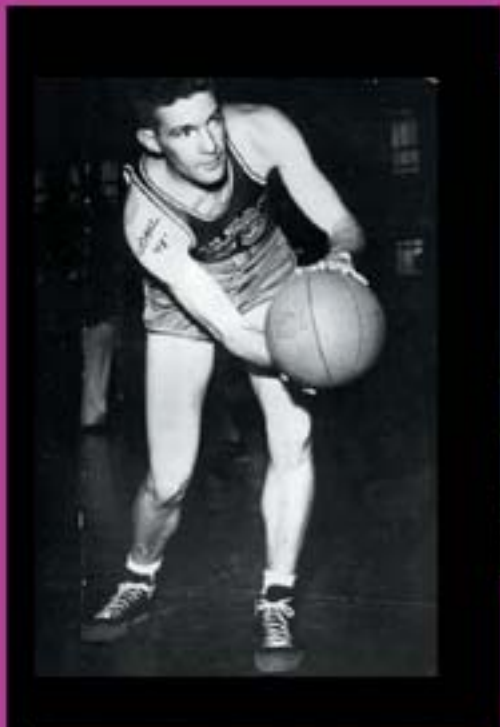


# Restoring Connections



Newsletter of the Sky Island Alliance

Vol. 7 Issue 3 Fall 2004



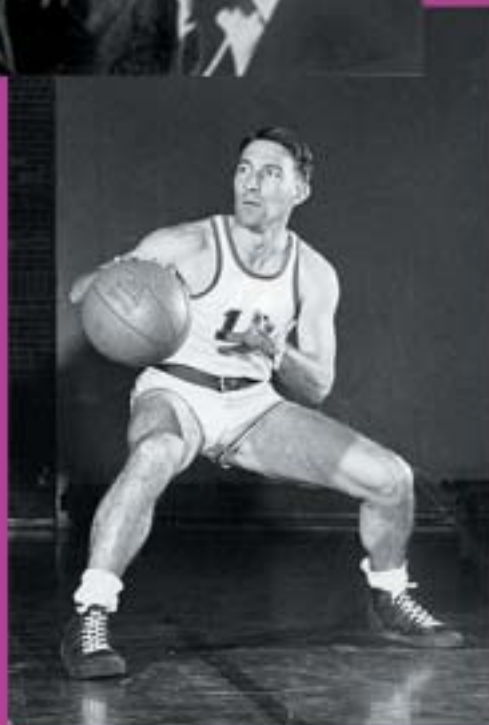
## What do *you* have in common with *us*?

*Find out inside!*

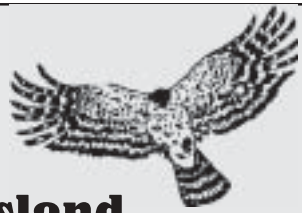
feature stories: Celebrating 40  
years of the Wilderness Act

plus...

- ❖ It's not the end of the world-  
really.
- ❖ Laughing waters of Aravaipa
- ❖ One jaguar, two jaguars,  
three jaguars, four!
- ❖ Dinner with Robert  
Redford?
- ❖ What you missed at the  
Sky Island conference
- ❖ A Highlands Fling
- ❖ Sky Island Alliance  
outings & events



Clockwise from top: Morris K. Udall, Bobbie Holaday, Clinton P. Anderson, Stewart Udall, Aldo Leopold, and Apaches (L to R) Yanozha, Chappo, Fun, and Geronimo. See inside cover to find out more about these Sky Island heroes.



# Sky Island Alliance

**Protecting  
Our Mountain Islands  
& Desert Seas**

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Sky Island Alliance is a non-profit membership organization dedicated to restoring and protecting the unique diversity of the Sky Islands of Southeastern Arizona, Southwestern New Mexico, and Northern Mexico.

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# So... who are these people on our cover, who are we, and what do you have in common with us?

**T**o celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Wilderness Act, we would like to honor some of the people responsible for our fabulous Arizona-New Mexico wilderness legacy. Here they are!

Aldo Leopold once said, "I would not want to be young without wild places to be young in." We at Sky Island Alliance feel the same, and work to pass on the blessing of wild places and healthy landscapes to future generations of people and wildlife alike. If you agree with us on this, read on and see what other common ground we have. If you're a member, you're already helping make this a reality. If not, consider joining us. After all, now it's our turn to leave a land legacy we can be remembered for.

### Our regional heroes of Wilderness:

**Morris K. Udall (Mo)** was one of Arizona's longest-serving and most beloved representatives. Born in 1922 in St. Johns, Arizona, to Mormon family with six children, Mo came south to play basketball at the University of Arizona (where he also graduated from law school). Arizonans elected Mo to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1961. Udall was chairman of the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs (now Committee on Resources) from 1977-1991. Chief among his accomplishments was the Alaska Lands Act of 1980, which doubled the size of the national park system and tripled the size of the national wilderness system. In Arizona, Mo championed both the 1984 and 1990 Wilderness Bills. Mo, who died 12 December 1998, is remembered for his integrity, humor, and perseverance.

**Stewart Udall** was born two years before his brother Mo. Stewart attended Eastern Arizona College in Safford, then law school at the University of Arizona (where he also played basketball). He was elected as a Democrat to Congress in 1955. Stewart served as Secretary of Interior under Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson (1961- 1969), where he oversaw the first wide-spread expansion of Wilderness Areas on Department of Interior Lands. Stewart has been a champion of Wilderness ever since, and gave the keynote speech at the gala anniversary dinner in DC this year (see pages four and five).

**Clinton P. Anderson**, a much-loved Representative and Senator from New Mexico, was born in South Dakota in 1895. New Mexicans elected him to Congress three times starting in 1941. In 1945 he resigned to become Secretary of Agriculture under President Harry S. Truman. New Mexicans later elected Clinton as a Democrat to the United States Senate, where he served from 1949 to 1973. Senator Anderson was a champion of Wilderness in New Mexico and played a critical role in the passage of the 1964 Wilderness Act. Anderson credited his support for wilderness to long discussions with Aldo Leopold. Anderson retired to Albuquerque where he passed away in 1975.

**Aldo Leopold** was born in Iowa in 1887, and received a Master of Forestry from Yale University in 1909. He served in the U.S. Forest Service 19 years, 15 of them in New Mexico and Arizona. In 1924, Leopold helped make the Gila Wilderness the world's first designated Wilderness area. The Gila's administrative designation became a model for the Wilderness Act 40 years later. Aldo is perhaps best known as author of *A Sand County Almanac* (1949). This volume of nature sketches and philosophical essays is one of the world's most profound and personal expressions of connection to land and responsibility to live well with it. Leopold was also an internationally respected scientist who built ecological foundations for two Twentieth Century professions—forestry and wildlife ecology, which he taught until his death in 1948.

**Geronimo** was born in 1829 near the headwaters of the Gila River. For much of his life he and other Chiricahua Apaches resisted both Mexican and American attempts to settle *Apacheria*, the region we now know as the Sky Islands. Geronimo and the last of the Chiricahua finally surrendered on September 6, 1886. Geronimo never again saw his beloved Arizona and died a prisoner of war, in 1909 in Oklahoma. The efforts of Chiricahua Apaches (the

last Native People to be forced onto a reservation) delayed industrial development in this region until the end of the nineteenth century. Many of our existing wilderness and roadless areas that we now fight to defend are places the Apaches also fought to protect from settlement. Perhaps we now benefit from having only a little over a century of development to deal with and in some cases undo, rather than the 150 years that much of the West has endured.

**Bobbie Holaday** is a model of blending citizenship and stewardship to save the *wild* in Arizona's wilderness. As a Sierra Club member, she hiked and marveled at the scenic wonder of Arizona. "It occurred to me I was enjoying all of these areas and not giving anything back," recalls Holaday. Bobbie was instrumental in the designation of Hellsgate Wilderness (1984) and Eagletail Mountain Wilderness (1990). Most important, she developed a model of cooperation with rural residents that has facilitated designation of many other areas. Though pleased with the accomplishments in the wilderness bills, Holaday thought, "We're missing the very essence of wilderness—the wolf." Holaday's past eleven-year goal has been reintroducing the Mexican Gray wolf. At 81, Holaday is still walking and writing. "The fire is still there," she says. "I always try to keep focused on any goal I'm trying to achieve. It makes me feel good to know that I will be leaving a heritage—something far more valuable than monetary treasures—these wilderness areas and having wolves in our forests."

Let this be an example to us all!

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Balance. Photo by Bob Van Deven.

## Many Thanks to Our Contributors!

Ellie Kurtz, *good friend of the Tumacacori Highlands*, and resident of Amado, AZ; Bill Hoy, long-time historian of the Sky Island region, now retired to Bowie, AZ, after many years as a ranger and interpreter at the Fort Bowie National Historic Site; Billie Hughes, stellar SIA tracking volunteer and denizen of Nutrioso, AZ; Senator John McCain (via the Congressional Record); Doug Scott, policy director for Campaign for America's Wilderness; Bob Van Deven, our favorite Tucson on-demand writer who is as good with a camera as with a pen; Arizona Republic editorial board, and, of course, the SIA staff.

## Seeking SIA newsletter submissions:

Send us your poetry, your words of wisdom, your art! We want to keep this newsletter filled with inspirational, informative material, and we'd like your help! Do you write poetry? Draw, sketch, paint, or photograph? Like to address regional conservation issues? Review books or websites? Anything that relates to the Sky Islands region is fair game! The deadline for our next newsletter is March 15, 2005. Material submitted after that date may be saved for subsequent issues. Please email submissions to newsletter@skyislandalliance.org, or mail them to Sky Island Alliance attn: Gita, P.O. Box 41165, Tucson, AZ 85717. Resolution of digital images should be at least 300 dpi if possible, but we can work with some lower-resolution images. **Like our restaurant reviews? You know there are other great eats out there. Give your favorite small-town restaurant a boost by writing it up and letting us promote it!**

## It's not the end of the World — Really

**“Get beyond battles, within and without – move forward; we all want many of the same things.” ~ Abraham Lincoln**

While thinking about this column, I figured the election would be one topic I'd try to ignore. Fat chance. Everywhere I go people are either crowing or gnashing their teeth. There are several other bits of Lincoln's wisdom I will pass onto these groups. To the tooth-gnashers, he says *“am I not destroying my enemies when I make friends of them?”* To the gloaters, *“nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power.”* I myself am ready to move on, to get back to the work at hand. Now, for the first time in seven years, I read the Sports section first when I pick up the paper each morning.

In all seriousness, the results of the recent election will mean additional challenges for those of us who value conservation and public process. It does not mean, as some seem to believe, that we are doomed.

Long ago, Sky Island Alliance chose a strategy that is not dependent on who prevails in elections to be successful. Our conservation blueprint focuses on involving Sky Island citizens in active hands-on conservation. As Mr. Lincoln once said, *“Public sentiment is everything. With public sentiment, nothing can fail; without it nothing can succeed.”* Our brand of conservation has resulted in 400 plus volunteers, and more than 35,000 volunteer hours since President Bush first took office.

With the Tumacacori Highlands Wilderness campaign alone, we have gained support from thousands of individuals and more than 200 businesses and organizations, including many in Santa Cruz County. We have support from churches, hunters and anglers, hikers, photographers, birdwatchers, scientists, Republicans, Democrats, and Independents. This grassroots support led to endorsements from Governor Napolitano, as well as the Tucson Citizen, Nogales International, Green Valley News, and the Arizona Republic. In short, this gives a compelling example of how to work with diverse people and interests, to advance conservation.

### Long ago, Sky Island Alliance chose a strategy that is not dependent on who prevails in elections to be successful. Our conservation blueprint focuses on involving Sky Island citizens in active hands-on conservation.

During the next four years Sky Island Alliance will:

- see three legislative initiatives that we have worked on extensively, move through Congress and be signed by the President;
- be the driving force ensuring that new Land and Resource Management Plans, which cover 12 million acres of public lands in our region, including the Coronado and Gila National Forests, be ecologically based
- continue to close and restore roads on BLM and National Forest lands;
- more than double the current 72 “citizen scientists,” who monitor wildlife transects for us in critical wildlife linkages;
- work with private landowners to protect and restore connections in wildlife linkages that bridge protected public lands;
- work with private landowners and state/federal agencies to restore riparian areas and reintroduce imperiled species.

Here at Sky Island Alliance, we will never lose sight of the importance of bringing people together and working with

communities to advance the “values” of clean air and water, protection of landscapes and habitat, and wildlife protection.

That said, don't get the impression that these gains will be easy. After all, our current president suffers from an ideological bent that leads him to make such statements as, “We need an energy bill that encourages consumption.” Many things will be more difficult and we will be forced to

rural population? Will our roadless areas continue to be managed as primitive, non-motorized areas, or will they become sacrifice areas for motorized recreation? Will road density standards be retained, or will they be relaxed or abolished to allow for more recreational development? The upcoming planning process will answer these and many other questions.

I believe that we are at one of those crucial points in history where decisions made will result in permanent trends in a particular direction. If we can ensure conservation based management plans now, as these new plans are created, in 20 years the management emphasis will be conservation. If these upcoming plans emphasize roads and motorized recreation, that will be our future.

We will be sending you more details on this important issue and will be asking for your help. Last year, our members responded to our year-end plea by contributing \$20,000 to the Tumacacori Wilderness campaign. Earlier this year a special request raised \$7,000 to help control erosion in Janos, Chihuahua, home to North America's largest prairie dog town. The additional work that resulted from these gifts has been tremendous. This year we are hoping to raise \$40,000 so that we may fund the expenses of adding a full-time staffer whose sole focus will be on these planning processes. Please view this as an investment in the conservation of our Southwest Borderlands. Thanks so much for your past support and for continuing to be a part of this winning ticket,

David Hodges, *Executive Director*

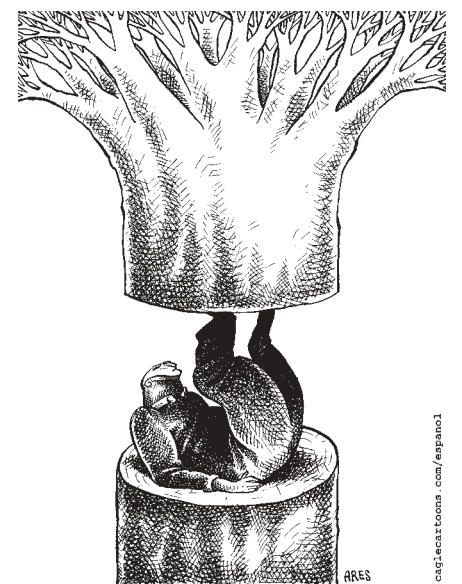
spend time defending past conservation successes. Despite these challenges, we will be successful because we work hard and we work smart. Mostly though, it's because we have great partners like you, standing with us, effecting positive change. Together, we are up to the task.

\*\*\*\*\*

I wanted to give everyone a heads-up that you will soon be receiving a request for help. The first of these will be an organizational survey. To better serve the conservation community, we want to know what you think of our work, our materials, and our approach to conservation. This is an electronic survey and will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. We value your input and with all surveys, more respondents mean better data. We hope you will help.

The other matter involves the 12 million acres of Public Lands mentioned above, which will be affected by the upcoming Land and Resource Management Plans. Some of the most critical areas affected by these plans include the Coronado and Gila National Forests, and Aravaipa Canyon (see back page). This process will determine how these lands are managed for the next 20 – 25 years, with much that to be gained, or lost.

Will these landscapes retain their greatest value as wildlife habitat, watersheds, and places of solace where we escape our busy, crazy world from time-to-time? Or, will they become primarily a recreational playground for a burgeoning urban and



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### Governor Napolitano endorses Tumacacori Wilderness

On November 19, Governor Janet Napolitano announced her wholehearted support for the Tumacacori Wilderness proposal that so many of you have worked to make a reality.

Gov. Napolitano credited her support for the proposal in large part to the campaign's collaborative spirit and many local advocates. In her letter to Congressman Raul Grijalva, Napolitano wrote, “This proposal has been developed through the hard work of many local organizations, business, and citizens in cooperation with Congressman Raul Grijalva. The long-term planning evident in this type of legislation is an important part of protecting the natural treasures of southern Arizona. I proudly support the Tumacacori Highlands Wilderness Proposal.”

“Future generations of Arizonans and Americans will be grateful Governor Napolitano had the foresight to support this common-sense wilderness proposal,” said Birdie Stabel, a Tubac resident, retired real estate executive and spokesperson for the Friends of the Tumacacori Highlands.

Every day your hard work brings the Tumacacori Highlands a little closer to Wilderness protection!

### TEP Powerline Update

Tucson Electric Power continues their efforts to build an \$85 million dollar powerline through the heart of the Tumacacori Highlands proposed Wilderness. Fortunately, citizens and agencies are not rolling over for the money-hungry corporation. For a detailed update, see page 13.

## On the record:

### McCain Immortalizes Wilderness Speech in Annals of Congress

Senator John McCain, Congressional Record September 29, 2004

**M**r. President, throughout our country's history there have been many debates in the Congress over the use, conservation, and protection of our natural resources. These debates have resulted in landmark policies, such as the Louisiana Purchase, the Homestead Act, and the establishment of the world's first national park, Yellowstone, in 1872.



Natural resource and environmental issues are inherently complex and often controversial, for they involve tradeoffs in which many diverse interests have a stake. There is one interest that cannot speak for itself and relies upon the vision of others; the interest of future generations. Teddy Roosevelt said it best, it seems to me, in his 1916 book, *A Book-Lover's Holidays in the Open*, where he castigates those "short-sighted men who in their greed and selfishness will, if permitted, rob our country of half its charm by their reckless extermination of all useful and beautiful wild things". He goes on to say, "Our duty to the whole, including the unborn generations, bids us restrain an unprincipled present-day minority from wasting the

heritage of these unborn generations. The movement for the conservation of wildlife and the larger movement for the conservation of

### As we celebrate the protection of existing and additional wilderness areas under this historic law, we follow our most noble and nonpartisan traditions of national resource conservation.

all our natural resources are essentially democratic in spirit, purpose, and method."

Mr. President, it is in this spirit of our moral obligation to the future—to those who, in Teddy Roosevelt's memorable phrase, are "within the womb of time"—that I wish to salute the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Wilderness Act of 1964. I am pleased to lend my support to this bipartisan resolution honoring the milestone legislation preserving our nation's rare and spectacular wild places.

Arizona has the good fortune to have numerous preserved wilderness areas, thanks to this law. In fact, more than 4,500,000 acres have been preserved in 90 wilderness areas. These range from the Cabeza Prieta Wilderness of more than 800,000 acres, to the 2,040 acre Baboquivari Peak Wilderness, an extraordinary area designated in 1990. From our desert expanses to the heights of 12,643-foot Humphrey's Peak, the highest point in Arizona, protected within the Kachina Peaks Wilderness, Arizona is not only one of America's fastest-growing states, but also a state in which we preserve and treasure our wilderness heritage.

In 1936, the great forester and wilderness champion, Bob Marshall, spoke of the luxury—a privilege—we Americans have. He commented that Americans can enjoy "a twofold civilization—the mechanized, comfortable, easy civilization of twentieth-century modernity, and the peaceful timelessness of the wilderness where vast forests germinate and flourish and die and rot and grow again without any relationship to the ambitions and interferences of man."

Mr. President, in spite of the environmental challenges that face our country and the world today, I am very grateful for the vision of past leaders that enacted this law to ensure that those who inhabit our nation many generations into the future will be able to experience wilderness in their lives, as we do today. As we celebrate the protection of existing and additional wilderness areas under this historic law, we follow our most noble and nonpartisan traditions of national resource conservation.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to place in the record the following statement of Stewart Udall, one of our nation's conservation leaders and the Secretary of the Interior in the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations, presented at an event on September 19, 2004, commemorating the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Wilderness Act.

[The full text of Udall's speech is available at [www.tumacacoriwild.org](http://www.tumacacoriwild.org)]

## A Proven Democratic Tool:

### The Wilderness Act at 40

by Doug Scott, Campaign for America's Wilderness

**A**s Arizonans work for protection of well-loved wilderness landscapes like the Tumacacori Highlands, you have a strong, proven tool—the Wilderness Act of 1964. Recently, Americans celebrated the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this law, one of the landmarks in world conservation history.

Before there was a Wilderness Act, the fate of a few small areas the U.S. Forest Service had identified was tenuous at best, for the administrative protection they could provide could readily be altered or abolished by the stroke of a pen. With the Wilderness Act, wild federal lands are protected with the full strength of statutory law.

For this far stronger form of legal protection of our wilderness, we owe gratitude to so many. To Aldo Leopold, Bob Marshall, and other pioneers in this work, wilderness was not some luxury but a fundamental human need, yet the American wilderness was, as Marshall put it in 1937, "vanishing with appalling rapidity." Their goal was nothing less than to preserve wilderness areas with "a presumption of perpetuity." *These preservation advocates came to discover that relying on administrative orders and good intentions could not give that guarantee of permanence. They concluded by mid-century that wilderness preservation could be secured only by statutory law—by act of Congress.*

Congress took eight years to hammer out the Wilderness Act. At a key stage of its development Montana Senator James Murray was both lead sponsor of the legislation and chairman of the committee working on it. Introducing a new version of the bill in 1960, he told the Senate that with his careful refinements to meet legitimate concerns "we can be confident that the only serious opponents of the wilderness bill are those who will object to any preservation of wilderness that they think might interfere, even at some uncertain future time, with their own interests in exploiting such preserves for profit."

To preserve wilderness from development ambitions "at some uncertain future time," the Wilderness Act applies the full power of statutory law. Wilderness boundary lines are set by Congress and once set, only Congress may then alter them.

This is a people's law. The building of our system of protected wilderness, the National Wilderness Preservation System, does not follow some pre-ordained master plan; it is built by a sequence of decisions by our elected officials, whose job it is to respond to the needs and desires of their constituents. You and your neighbors—ordinary citizens—may take your wilderness proposals to your elected representatives.

That so much American wilderness—and so much in Arizona—has been preserved under this law is reason to celebrate! And more will be.

The wilderness preservation

movement is larger today than ever before, nationally and in Arizona.

More dedicated volunteers and staff like those of the Sky Island Alliance and the Arizona Wilderness Coalition are engaged in this work in every state.

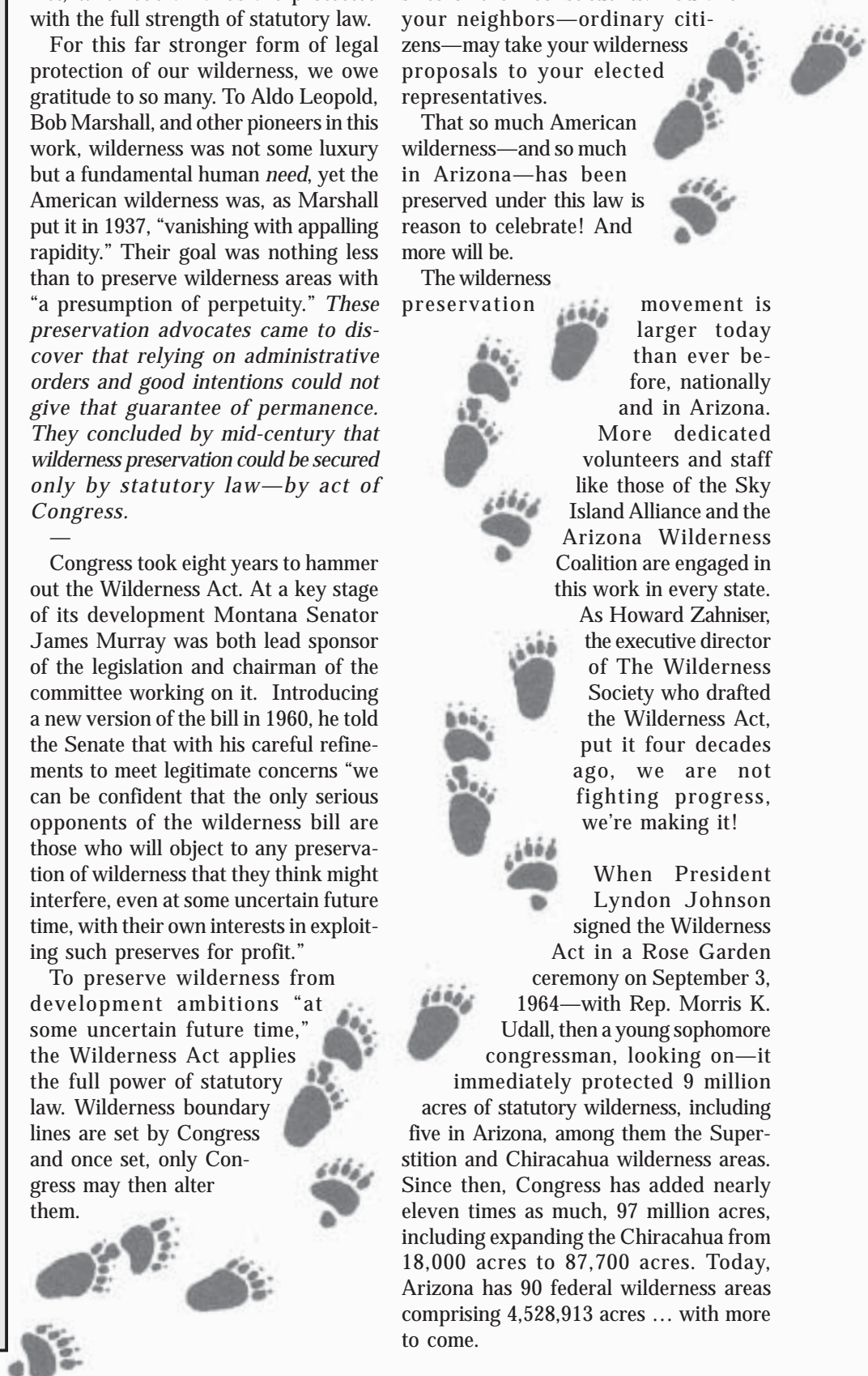
As Howard Zahniser, the executive director of The Wilderness Society who drafted the Wilderness Act, put it four decades ago, we are not fighting progress, we're making it!

When President Lyndon Johnson signed the Wilderness

Act in a Rose Garden ceremony on September 3, 1964—with Rep. Morris K.

Udall, then a young sophomore congressman, looking on—it

immediately protected 9 million acres of statutory wilderness, including five in Arizona, among them the Superstition and Chiracahua wilderness areas. Since then, Congress has added nearly eleven times as much, 97 million acres, including expanding the Chiracahua from 18,000 acres to 87,700 acres. Today, Arizona has 90 federal wilderness areas comprising 4,528,913 acres ... with more to come.



## Dinner with Robert Redford? Sure!

Local advocates celebrate past, promote future of Wilderness

by Ellie Kurtz, Friends of the Tumacacori Highlands

One of the most inspiring evenings I have had the good fortune to be part of took place in Washington, D.C. at the National Press Club on October 19. It was a formal celebration dinner of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Wilderness Act. Birdie Stabel and I attended as participants in the movement to have the Tumacacori Highlands in the Coronado National Forest designated as wilderness.

I have to say that when SIA's Matt Scroch asked me to go as a representative I at first demurred, thinking that someone younger than I might be somehow more appropriate. But as my forty-something daughter said, "Mom, they need to know in Washington that old people support wilderness, too!" So with that left-handed compliment, I agreed to attend. It turned out that I was not the only old fogey. Great Old Broads for Wilderness were there in force. The outpouring of enthusiasm for the value of wilderness and the dedication of those who have spent more than forty years working to have portions of our country designated as wilderness were truly soul-inspiring.

On Sunday afternoon after we arrived in DC, wilderness advocates from all over the country gathered to celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Wilderness Act. The night's festivities included a presentation by Doug Hulme, Professor of Environmental Studies at Prescott College. For his talk, he assumed the persona of John Muir: dress, Scottish brogue, mannerisms, and all. It was a truly remarkable performance and gave me new insights into this dedicated environmentalist and his legacy. If you have the opportunity to see Hulme bring Muir back to life, don't miss it.

Robert Redford, another dedicated environmentalist, gave the evening's opening speech. (I must admit that Matt finally convinced me to go with the hook that I could have dinner with Robert Redford—along with five hundred other people!) Redford's talk was great, but the highlight of the evening was former Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall who, now blind, needed no notes because he has such a wealth of anecdotes and facts at his disposal. (Senator John McCain has since entered Stewart Udall's moving and humorous remarks into the Federal Register.) Congressman John Dingell, an early supporter of the Wilderness Act from the Detroit area, and West Virginia's Senator Robert Byrd, "the conscience of the Senate" for 30 years, were also in attendance. Appreciation went out to many wilderness activists not in attendance, including Dave Foreman who, because of a back injury, could not be there. There were many others who had already passed on but were

fondly remembered for their dedication.

Our hotel was located in Chinatown—or China Block, as the locals call it. We had a wonderful time sampling the food and were even lucky enough to view a small Chinese festival. The beautiful Chinese arch spanning the street was our landmark for the Metro.

Monday morning started out with visits to the various members of the Arizona congressional delegation, then senators and representatives from other states. This same schedule continued on Tuesday. The weather was perfect. I had come armored with rain gear, umbrella, and a warm poncho and didn't need any of them! However, I now know what pounding the pavement means: Even though I wore comfortable shoes, after the first day my feet ached so badly that each day thereafter I taped my feet like an athlete; I sure missed my hiking boots! But the pain was worth it. We were warmly received by most delegations and came away with the impression that our representatives understand the importance of the Tumacacori Wilderness proposal.

A feeling of joy permeated Washington, for Tuesday marked the grand opening of the breathtaking Museum of the American Indian on the Mall. Between appointments we were able to see the opening parade. I had no idea so many tribes still exist in the continental U.S.! Tribal representatives from Latin America and the Hawaiian Islands also came. It was such fun talking with them and sharing in their delight and pride in finally achieving this long overdue recognition of their cultures.

We left Washington a little reluctantly on Wednesday, wishing we could visit just one more landmark, but also feeling that we had been part of a once-in-a-lifetime

**... as my forty-something daughter said, "Mom, they need to know in Washington that old people support wilderness, too!"**

experience both celebrating the history and promoting the future of Wilderness.

landscape well loved by tens of thousands of Arizonans. Organizing that latent public support and helping each person raise his or her voice effectively on behalf of this proposal is the key to success.

What is the story behind this impressive progress in wilderness preservation? Above all else, the key is that the Wilderness Act is a *people's law*. As former Senators Dale Bumpers, an Arkansas Democrat, and Dan Evans, a Washington state Republican, both champions of wilderness designations in their own states, have written "protecting wilderness areas is not some top-down federal decision. It is the most "lowercase-d" democratic land allocation process we've invented. Potential wilderness areas are identified by on-the-ground agency staff and local people who know the land best, and then the decision ... is made by our elected representatives in Congress...."

Wilderness laws have been the good works of deep-dyed conservative Republicans and Teddy Roosevelt progressive Republicans, of "Blue Dog" Democrats and liberal Democrats, and of independents. Since President Lyndon B. Johnson signed it into law, he and every president has contributed by signing fur-

**"Protecting wilderness areas is not some top-down federal decision. It is the most "lowercase-d" democratic land allocation process we've invented."**

ther legislation designating additions to the wilderness system. In the current political metaphor, wilderness has been protected in both "blue states" and "red states." As this newsletter went to press, the U.S. Senate had passed a 106,000-acre wilderness in Washington state, and the House a total of 778,000 acres of new wilderness areas in New Mexico and Nevada—each bill enjoying strong bipartisan support.

That so many areas across America have gained wilderness protection is, most of all, testament to the dedication of local people who have organized and persevered for years, building the *local* support that alone ultimately fuels congressional action. You can – no, you *will* – protect more of Arizona's wild legacy. And you, too, have a secret weapon. Take the Tumacacori Highlands Wilderness proposal. It is a wild

The human impulse to protect some of our once all-wilderness planet, to leave some places where nature may unfold in its own way, is all about our obligation to generations to come. Beyond all other good reasons, we save wilderness because it would be morally inexcusable not to be wildly generous with future generations.

And consider this, though it may be hard to imagine: should our generation overdo it, preserving "too much" wilderness, say in Arizona, those who come after will smile on us for our good grace in leaving the choice to them. They may always correct our "error," should they wish.

But here is what I think: *however much wilderness we in our own time choose to preserve by law, future generations will be more likely to judge that we protected too little than that we protected too much.*

In the final analysis, protecting wilderness is an act of humility, a profound choice by our society to restrain our society's impulses to drill and to

gouge, to saw and to chop, and to ride motors and wheels to the ends of the earth on every conceivable path. We do this work, you and I, not because we are just one particularly success type of recreation users, but to let wilderness live on into the lives of our grandchildren's grandchildren. And we do it for the grandchildren of the jaguars, too, in magnificent southern Arizona wildlands like the Tumacacori Highlands.

Doug Scott, who lives in Seattle, is policy director of the Campaign for America's Wilderness, which is working with the Sky Island Alliance and Arizona Wilderness Coalition and others to preserve additional Arizona wilderness areas. This article is adapted from Doug's new book, *THE ENDURING WILDERNESS: PROTECTING OUR NATURAL HERITAGE THROUGH THE WILDERNESS ACT* (Fulcrum, August 2004), which covers the history of the Wilderness Act and the politics of how it has been implemented.

## Our Place in History: Arizona's Wilderness Legacy

by Matt Skroch, SIA Field Programs Director

Twenty years ago, the 1984 Arizona Wilderness Bill was passed into law by Congress, thanks largely in part to the revered late Congressman Morris K. Udall. This popular law, supported by all of Arizona's congressional delegation, ensured that many roadless and de facto wilderness areas would remain forever in their primitive, natural state. In 1990 under Representative Udall's leadership once more, Congress passed the Arizona Desert Wilderness Act – designating 1.1 million acres of BLM lands for the use and enjoyment by hikers, hunters, backpackers, horseback riders, and a rising number of other outdoor enthusiasts, such as the booming bird-watching community. Along with providing for the long-term interests of those who enjoy the trail rather than the road, these wilderness bills also ensured that Arizona's wildlife heritage would find refuge in the increasingly rare roadless areas of our cherished public lands.

Mo Udall, along with Representative Kolbe and Senator McCain, recognized their responsibility to provide for future generations the same outstanding opportunities they enjoyed then. Places such as Chiricahua, Dos Cabezas, Four Peaks, and Mount Wrightson stand testament to their commitment. These places continue to dazzle thousands of visitors each year with their far-reaching vistas, intact for-

ests, and deep canyons—marred today by none of the bulldozed paths that have grown like weeds across the rest of our landscapes. This legacy of wilderness left by our far-sighted leaders will provide for the public interest in perpetuity, leaving a lasting impression for future generations to contemplate and enjoy. But their—and our—work is not yet done.

In the realm of natural resources,

America's National Parks and Wilderness Areas are perhaps the most unique and forward-thinking legacies that our nation endows to future generations. Few other places enjoy the long-term assurance of being managed first for their natural characteristics, native wildlife, cultural resources, and primitive recreation opportunities.

Aldo Leopold, writing in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century remarked that “The richest values of wilderness lie not in the days of Daniel Boone, nor even in the present, but rather in the future.” That sentiment was reflected again some decades later by the President of the United States. Lyndon Johnson, as he signed into law the bipartisan benchmark of land conservation, the 1964 Wilderness Act, remarked “If future generations are to remember us with gratitude rather than contempt, we must leave them more than the miracles of technology. We must leave them a glimpse of the world as it was in the beginning, not just after we got through with it.”

This idea of setting some lands aside from the consumptive habits of our modern society came relatively recently, although various American Indian groups have long reserved certain special places for ceremonial use. The dedication of Yellowstone National Park in 1872 marked our first legislative effort to preserve those areas whose beauty, fragility, or natural importance outweighed the shorter-term goal of commodity production. 1924 heralded the birth announcement of our first official Wilderness Area – southwest New Mexico's expansive Gila Wilderness. At that time, though, the designation was administrative and could be revoked with the stroke of a pen. Forty years later the US Congress' passage of the 1964 Wilderness Act created a designation that would stand the test of time, one that has insulated a series of our most precious protected lands from political swings and changing managers. Since then, Congress has passed no less than 105 separate bills designating 662 Wilderness Areas in 44 states. Most of our Wilderness Areas were signed by Republican Presidents, demonstrating the long-standing bipar-

tisan support for Wilderness Areas. Arizona and New Mexico have each seen eight laws designating Wilderness in their respective states over the last forty years.

**This legacy of wilderness left by our far-sighted leaders will provide for the public interest in perpetuity, leaving a lasting impression for future generations to contemplate and enjoy. But their—and our—work is not yet done.**

### Differences between Then and Today

The majority of Arizona's Wilderness was designated in 1984 and 1990, our most recent pieces of legislation. Besides overwhelming public support, two main factors propelled those two laws through Congress. First, Arizona's mining and logging lobbies (quite powerful at the time) supported the bills. Second, Congressman Morris (Mo) Udall was the chair of the House Resources Committee that considered potential Wilderness bills. Udall played a major role in shuttling these bills through Congress. Why did the industries support Wilderness? Millions of acres were temporarily off-limits to mining or logging while they were being considered for Wilderness designation. When such lands were specifically left out of a particular Wilderness bill, most of them were “released,” i.e. officially opened back up for possible commercial exploitation. [Interestingly, very few areas not designated and then released from Wilderness consideration have produced any notable timber or mineral resources.] Because of Rep. Udall's commitment to seeing the process through, the all-volunteer Arizona Wilderness Coalition focused its efforts on making sure that as many appropriate areas as possible were included in these bills.

Powerful extractive industries may have coolly supported Wilderness designation for their own self-interest then, but the same is not true today. Nonetheless, perhaps never before has Wilderness been as popular or politically appropriate. Arizona and New Mexico have changed dramatically since 1990, and even more since 1984. The two states have added some 2.2 million additional people just since 1990, a whopping 44% increase. Urban centers continue to grow many times faster than the national average,

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Tubac Worldwide Travel, Virginia Hall Studio, Whimsical Designs, Wolf Den Gallery.

Tucson: Book Stop Inc., Green Fire Books, Martin's Restaurant.



while rural towns are becoming bedroom communities for commuters and ex-urban development. The industries of old – ranching, mining, and agriculture have largely given way to home construction, tourism and service-related businesses. As cities flood outward across the desert, new transplants and natives alike take alarming notice of our growth. With this growth comes an explosion in outdoor recreation, appreciation for our natural heritage, and focus on preserving our quality of life – people don't move here for the traffic jams and skyscrapers, they move here because Arizona is a fantastic landscape. "Open Space" was barely a term 20 years ago when creosote and saguaro forests stretched for miles at the city's edge. Now it has become residents' conservation mantra. Whether it's state, county, or federal land, an ever-increasing number of people are enjoying the Southwest's incredible recreational opportunities. For better or worse, this trend is here to stay, at least until the water disappears.

Denizens of the outdoors have not only increased in number, they've also become a strong political voice. At every jurisdictional level, the desires of hikers, bird-watchers, off-road vehicle users, and others are now central in any debate concerning the future use or management of public land. This combined with our growing knowledge of ecosystems and species habitat requirements, affect almost every single land management issue we have. Gone are the days when one industry could dictate the fate of millions of acres of lands – now it's a matter of balancing the needs of dozens of interests with the capacity of the land. Wilderness, as part of our federal agencies' multiple use mandate, is an important part of ensuring that a balance remains for the increasing variety of visitors to public lands.

#### Wilderness Today

In the 70's and 80's, our federal agencies were mandated to recommend areas for Wilderness designation. The process by which the agencies used to analyze potential wilderness took 10-15 years and was largely used for the 1980's legislation that created most of the nation's Wilderness. The issue of Wilderness was never static, nor did Congress restrict their ability to designate areas in the future based on changing trends or needs. In fact, in almost every piece of legislation, Congress intentionally leaves the future question of more Wilderness open for consideration through future planning efforts initiated at the agency level. While the Forest Service, BLM, National Park Service, and Wildlife Refuges occasionally recommend

additional areas for Wilderness, the power now actually lies with the public.

Almost every significant Wilderness bill of the 90's and new millennium has been initiated and brought forth to Congress by community organizations, individuals, businesses, and local elected officials – not the federal government, speaking to the empowerment of our democracy and the grassroots level of support for new Wilderness. This power and initiative is created by communities themselves. The process for Wilderness today involves people coming together and recognizing, on their own account, the value in protecting their natural places and in turn, providing many direct and indirect benefits to their community. It is a process that requires dialogue, honesty, openness, and compromise. With this comes a backbone so solid and so organic, that it transcends the trenches of partisanship and special interest politics. Wilderness is alive and well and moving forward not by the heavy hand of government, but by the many hands of those who recognize our commitment to the womb of time.

The Tumacacori Highlands are an exceptional example of a grassroots-led initiative to designate a remarkable place as Wilderness. For the past year the Friends of the Tumacacori Highlands, of which Sky Island Alliance is a cooperating organization, has held dozens of public meetings with Chambers of Commerce, hiking clubs, local elected officials, and many more. Through dialogue, education, and evolution, the Tumacacori Highlands stand tall as Arizona's next Wilderness Area.

Wilderness will provide a balance, a benchmark, and a lasting legacy in the Tumacacori Highlands. By continuing to work with stakeholders in coming months, the Friends of the Tumacacori Highlands look to present a solid proposal to Representative Grijalva, Senator McCain, and Representative Kolbe early next year. With public support and an open process for which to craft this proposal, we look forward to continuing the tradition of Wilderness conservation in the new millennia. After 15 years of growth since our last Wilderness designation, it's time to be responsible and preserve that which partly sustains that growth – something that will stand the test of time in such a rapidly changing world.

## A Highlands fling

### Tumacacori deserves wilderness protection

Editorial, Arizona Republic newspaper August 29, 2004.

Our rugged landscape often seems immutable and eternal. Then a favorite place changes almost overnight. Arizonans have seen it happen again and again. But centuries from now, our descendants will be able to go to the state's 90 wilderness areas and find serene spots with little sign of human impact. Places like Four Peaks, Aravaipa Canyon, Hummingbird Springs and Strawberry Crater. The tool for protecting them is the federal Wilderness Act, which turns 40 on Friday.

The legislation was a bipartisan effort, and it's allowed Arizona to give the highest level of protection to 4.5 million acres, about six percent of the state.

President Johnson's comments when he signed the act in 1964 are even more relevant today:

"If future generations are to remember us with gratitude rather than contempt, we must leave them more than the miracles of technology. We must leave them a glimpse of the world as it was in the beginning, not just after we got through with it."

We can give future generations one more reason to thank us by adding another jewel to our wilderness treasures: Tumacacori Highlands.

The proposed new wilderness area is in the Coronado National Forest, just north of the Mexican border and west of Interstate 19. It would cover 76,000 acres. The proposal also would add 8,400 acres to the adjoining Pajarita Wilderness, more than doubling its size.

The Tumacacori Highlands include three mountain ranges. Much of the area is subtropical, connected to Mexico through unbroken mountain chains and watersheds. The links give the highlands an unusual mix of species. There are bright green Mexican vine snakes, Chiricahua leopard frogs and epiphytes, the "air plants" that live on trees. Jaguars have been sighted.

Rep. Raúl Grijalva, D-Ariz., a strong supporter of the wilderness proposal, points out that prime recreation areas, including favorite places for fishing and hunting, are being damaged. The culprits include our growing population and irresponsible off-road vehicle use.

### We must act now to keep the Tumacacori Highlands unspoiled.

We must act now to keep the Tumacacori Highlands unspoiled. Mining, logging, off-road driving, mountain biking and activities using motorized or mechanized equipment are prohibited in wilderness areas.

What people *can* do is enjoy the land by hiking, riding horses, hunting, fishing and camping. Wheelchairs, motorized ones included, are allowed. Ranchers can still use their grazing leases and do maintenance on stock structures. The proposal includes ample access. The wilderness designation would exclude 20 existing roads that go partway into the area ("cherry stems") or across it. Those roads would then be open to driving. Grijalva emphasizes that routes could be added if ranchers or other users require them.

Southeastern Arizona is a magnet for birdwatchers from around the world. Protecting Tumacacori Highlands will add to the region's appeal to tourists.

The wilderness proposal is still in draft form, and proponents are still reaching out for support. Grijalva is aiming to introduce a bill sometime in the spring.

When the time comes, the entire delegation should line up firmly behind it. Far into the future, Arizonans will be saying "thank you."

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## No Lawnmower: reflections on life in and around the Big Wild

by Billie Hughes, SIA volunteer

**W**ilderness—illusive yet ubiquitous. Five miles as the proverbial crow flies from my mountain retreat lies Escudilla Peak and the Escudilla Wilderness. Often I take it for granted. From its slopes flows the sweet water that fills my well. On the mountain top stands the fire tower that alerts helicopters to drop flame retardants on fires that threaten the tiny community of Nutrioso.

Escudilla stands as a defining force behind the community. Long before the mountain gained wilderness status it was revered by locals. "Many climb its summit seeking solace, rejuvenation of soul, and a time to mingle with nature at its best. The contour of the mountain is as familiar to natives as the breakfast table; a landmark of home and pristine beauty. There is no wonder the Indians felt it was sacred and worshiped there. Many folks still do."\*

Some claim that Indians spared Nutrioso from raids endured by neighboring communities because of the spirits of the mountain. An old Indian legend tells of spirits warning Apaches not to cross the mountain to make war on neighboring peaceful tribes. Ignoring the warning, "the Great Spirit's hand reached forth and turned them to stone. He took their hearts, and after draining the blood into the lake, formed them into

buck waving his goodbye over the skyline, and looked down your sights and wonder why, you looked at Escudilla."

Old Bigfoot, the last grizzly in Arizona "crawled out of his hibernation den in the rock slides and, descending the mountain, bashed in the head of a cow. Eating his fill, he climbed back to his crags and there summered peaceably on marmots, conies, berries, and roots," wrote Leopold. "Bigfoot claimed for his own only a cow a year, and a few square miles of useless rocks, but his personality pervaded the country." Nearly 75 years ago, a government trapper took a month to rid the Escudilla of this "destructive animal in need of slaying." While the bear's demise left a void for Leopold, his words leave us with a memory of a mountain and a bear...symbols of all that is wild about us.

Congress created the 5200 acre wilderness in 1984, long after the passing of wolf and grizzly. With wilderness designation, the mountain stands not only with undeniable geographical force but holds also the right to nurture all that is wild. In terms of square miles the Escudilla Wilderness is one of the smallest. But, symbolically, Escudilla is a giant.

Before I write this I jump in my old Honda Accord. We access the mountain trailhead easily. As I weave up the dirt road I feel tensions ease and anticipation grow. I am never prepared—especially in the fall when the colors erupt. I round a corner and gasp at the orange and yellow aspen on the slope, by-products of a fierce 1953 fire. With attention diverted, the Honda fishtails just a bit on the curve, pulling me back to the task at hand.

Only glimpses of the mountain slip through the trees. I take the Terry Flat loop so I can see Escudilla in all of its glory before I start my walk. The road becomes rocky but still passable after the junction to the trail head. I keep looking out of the window hoping the sun will come from behind the clouds and illuminate the peak.

I stop repeatedly and take pictures. The mountain is glorious this time of year.

After stopping to gaze, I ponder wilderness. Back in my car I start to fasten my seatbelt but can't. The restraint seems to pull me back from the draw of the mountain. I pass the spot in the road where I photographed a Mexican wolf track last December as part of the Sky Island Tracking workshop activities. Wilderness. Some parts of wildness *do* return to the mountain.

I will not hike to the top today. It is late afternoon and I am alone. Though the old grizzly no longer roams the trails this is still a wilderness. I hear the snap of a branch and stop—alert to all sounds. Nothing. I move on more conscious how much noise I make. I soften my steps in an effort not to disrupt the stillness around me. Nothing. Another sound breaks the quiet...maybe only a squirrel dropping pine cones, or was it something else? Without the grizzly, my heart does not pound. I am not straining to see behind each tree.

I walk on hoping the sun will slip from the cloud again and turn the glimmering aspen into flaming yellow and orange. I turn back—barely up the trail but entranced by the silence and awed by the very essence of the mountain. I walk back as quietly as I can—I am the noise in the woods. The bugling of elk in the meadows below reward me. The chirp of a bird. The snap of a twig.

I study the Aspen by the trail, marked by the initials of previous hikers. At first I am offended by their ignorance, then comforted to know that others have come here. Maybe in that process of carving their initials they connected with the spirit of the mountain and will someday in a small way help to protect places like this. Now I smile to myself as I look at the marking from the bears. The claws of the bear are ever so much more elegant than the clumsy marking of the hikers—each claiming territory.

I work my way back to the road. I have walked just 1/4 mile. But the simple experience of crossing the wilderness line changes me. I hike in the national forest nearly every morning but I am not transformed as I am here. The wilderness is sacred. Wilderness is protected from the whims of political parties and the craziness of our commercial society.

I cross the wilderness line and I leave the world that is free to become ever wilder. The old grizzly will never be back; the range is too small for him no matter how trivial his needs. The native elk will never graze here again but their brothers and sisters do. Perhaps one day a pack of Mexican wolf will break the silence of the mountain with their howls. Wilderness offers hope that the forces of nature will welcome and nurture our efforts to correct the extermination and destruction perpetuated by our species.

I return to my car and drive back to the property I am so fortunate to have. But 20 acres bordering the national forest is not a wilderness. My neighbors cut their 30 acres pastures. I feel depressed as I return to a beauty framed by people's need to control.

I pull out the lawn mower and cut grass, natural grama of Leopold's essays. I tell myself this ritual reduces fire danger. The Three Forks fire seriously threatened our little community last year. But in my heart I know fire protection was only the initial impetuous for the lawnmower. Now we cut an acre with our lawn mower because we think it is neater—more orderly, more controlled. I am depressed.

Soft breezes begin their flow down the mountain as the cool air on Escudilla sinks to the lower lands, from nearly 11,000 feet at the top of the mountain to the 8,000 where my home lies. The Hulsey Bench that rises above my property line bridges these two worlds, the beginning of an orderly community and the protected evolution of a wilderness area. Tonight cold air will drift down the mountain, flow down Hulsey Creek and into the little valley where I live. Escudilla will blanket the lawn I mowed with and I will know that the call of the wilderness is far more powerful than my feeble attempt to create order. This canyon breeze fills me with hope as I drift off to sleep.

\*Quoted from *Nutrioso and her neighbors: the history of a pioneer town*, by Nina Kelley and Alice Lee, 2001.

### Top out on a ridge and you at once became a speck into an immensity. On its edge hung Escudilla.

the heart-shaped mountain that stands today as a warning to the Apache Indians."\*

Aldo Leopold learned to Think like a Mountain as he watched the "fierce green fire" dying in the eyes of a wolf on the slopes of Escudilla. For him, like many before, Escudilla dominated the landscape:

"Life in Arizona was bounded under foot of grama grass, overhead by the sky, and on the horizon by Escudilla. To the north of the mountain you rode on honey-colored plans. Look up anywhere, any time, and you saw Escudilla. To the east you rode over a confusion of wooded mesas. Each hollow seemed its own small world, soaked in sun, fragrant with juniper, and cozy with the chatter of pinon jays. But top out on a ridge and you at once became a speck into an immensity. On its edge hung Escudilla.

To the south lay the tangled canyons of Blue River, full of whitetails, wild turkeys, and wilder cattle. When you missed a saucy



A sunset storm on mesas south of Escudilla hides the peak itself. But in their mind's eye, all who live nearby see the mountain behind any cloud. Photo by G. Bodner.

### Eat on the way!

Café Beate is located in Nutrioso on Hwy 191/180 between Springerville and Alpine, AZ about 10 miles from the trailhead to Escudilla Mountain. Nutrioso boasts this restaurant, a post office and no more. You won't find even a convenience store or gas station. While quaint, cozy, or perhaps a bit red neck, might describe most restaurants in such small communities, Café Beate is far from quaint. Exquisite is a better descriptor.

Appetizers include caprese (slices of tomato and fresh mozzarella cheese served with fresh basil and olive oil) and pastechen (alight, flaky, phillo pastry filled with sauteed mushrooms, onions, and chicken in a delicate wine sauce). Entrees range from bratwurst, fleischkuechle and sauerbraten (served only on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday) to pasta vegetarian and kaesepaetzle vegetarian. If you don't save room for dessert, you might want to order German pancakes or mousse torte to go! Appetizers range from \$2.25 to \$6.50 and entrees from \$4.95 for a German burger to \$15.95 for sauerbraten.

Hours: Wednesday-Sunday, 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm. Sunday Breakfast, 7:30 am - 10:30 am. Reservations recommended (928) 339-1965.

You could venture to fine restaurants in Tucson, Phoenix—or even New York—and not walk away better satisfied. This is an exquisite restaurant in a quaint Arizona byway. Joerg and Beate moved to Nutrioso from Germany and started to build the restaurant in 2000 and have been a local treasure every since.



# New Remote Camera Photos Confirm at Least Two Jaguars in Arizona

## Groups Applaud Conservation Success, Call for Continued Vigilance

by Gita Bodner, Restoring Connections editor

The office was in a buzz. Emails flew, phones rang, photos passed from hand to hand, cigars got passed around like a birth announcement. Arizona jaguars caught on film again! Sure enough, at least one photo shows an old friend, a male jaguar who now seems to have been in the area at least off and on for three years. This handsome fellow turned his unique pattern of “rosette” spots towards motion-sensing cameras in 2001, 2003, and again just a month ago. Only he — and perhaps another jaguar or two— knows where he roamed between photo ops.

Motion and heat-sensing remote cameras in the Sky Island borderlands south of Tucson snapped four photos of jaguars in September, just a couple of weeks before the film was retrieved and developed. The photos clearly show two different males. They also show an animal whose gender-

of bright lion eyes have silently inspected you. How many jaguars had watched Jack and his wife hike? How many jaguars had he walked right past? Had he caught up to a lone wanderer, or was this animal a local resident? Where had this spectacular spotted beast come from? Were there

**These new photos present both a success and a challenge to jaguar conservation. The presence of these magnificent creatures speaks volumes to the importance of the Sky Island region. Now we have to make sure their habitat here is protected.**

diagnostic hind end remains tantalizingly off-camera. If female, it would be the first female documented in the country since 1963. The two males set off the same camera just one day apart. Arizona Game and Fish biologist Bill Van Pelt suspects the two may have been so close because they were sniffing around for each other’s territorial scent markings.

Jaguars are the largest cats in the western Hemisphere. Though they are often associated with tropical rainforests, the species’ northern range includes the Sky Island region of the United States. These elusive and shy cats were once more common in Arizona and New Mexico. Through the early and mid-1900’s, jaguars were persecuted for their pelts or perceived danger to livestock. Confirmed sightings tapered off throughout this century. Before 1996, when two males were photographed in separate locations in southeast Arizona, jaguars had not been documented in the US for a decade. The new pictures bring recent confirmed US sightings (1996 to present) up to eight, representing at least four and possibly five individuals. All eight sightings were in the Sky Islands, and all animals were photographed and left in the wild.

In 1996 when hunter Jack Childs—who thought he was chasing a mountain lion—suddenly came face to face with a jaguar, he had an epiphany that triggered a flood of questions. Jaguars are even more secretive than mountain lions. If you spend time outdoors in the rugged southwest, you have to assume that for every mountain lion you have glimpsed, dozens

more?

Jack soon began a quest to find out how many jaguars really do share our US Sky Islands, and how the cats make a living here. To catch glimpses of secretive animals in their own domains, Jack set up motion-sensing cameras in remote areas, concentrating on habitats and corridors that his knowledge of big cats and his intuition told him the jaguars might favor. Every few months he and his helpers hike in to retrieve film from each camera.

Developing this film is like opening a Christmas stocking. Each roll reveals a string of animals surprised by a flash bulb. Curious mountain lions sniff the camera lens, parades of skunks amble past waving their plume tails, and human legs leap out of range of the flash bulb. Every once in a while, the photo frame comes back filled with spots.

Had it not been for Jack’s cameras, our resident spotted friend might well have gone undetected these last three years; no one knows how long he may have been here already. Jack’s successes inspired Humboldt University researcher Emil McCain to come to Arizona to apprentice with Jack and set out his own set of remote cameras. McCain focused his lenses on the most remote parts of the Sky Island borderlands. The upsurge in photos, say researchers, may reflect having more cameras in remote areas, rather than an explosion of jaguars moving into the area.

“These new photos present both a success and a challenge to jaguar conservation,” says Matt Scroch, Sky Island Alliance

Field Programs Director. “The presence of these magnificent creatures speaks volumes to the importance of the Sky Island region. Now we have to make sure their habitat here is protected, so this flagship of rare and beautiful wildlife can again thrive in this part of its historic range.” Sky Island Alliance is working with other conservation groups, agencies, and concerned individuals to make sure that these jaguars have the best possible opportunities to thrive in the US.

When a second local rancher and lion hunter treed and photographed a jaguar in the far southeast corner of Arizona in 1996, local residents, conservation groups, and agency representatives came together to form the Jaguar Conservation Team. This “Jag Team,” led by Arizona Game and Fish Department, now works to successfully welcome this beast back without sacrificing the livelihoods of the local ranching community. SIA’s Wildlife Monitoring Coordinator Janice Przybyl and several of her volunteers are dedicated participants in this working group. The team has made great progress in bringing historic enemies together in support of the jaguar, including developing partnerships with Mexican ranchers who came to a recent Jag Team meeting to explore opportunities for further collaboration.

Several groups and countless individuals are collaborating on a variety of strategies to protect the Sky Island region’s large roadless areas. Keeping such areas remote and wild is more important for the secretive, wide-ranging jaguar that for almost any other wildlife species. The movement to designate wilderness northeast of Nogales is a prime example of these efforts. A strong coalition of businesses and organizations around southern Arizona – the Friends of the Tumacacori Highlands (FOTH) – are working with Congressman Grijalva, Congressman Kolbe, and Senator McCain to provide lasting protection for the Tumacacori Highlands by incorporating it into the National Wilderness Preservation System. FOTH and SIA’s work has also made clear the down sides of Tucson Electric Power’s proposal to slice through this area’s prime habitat with

an unnecessary and costly high-voltage powerline (see page 13).

In addition to their needs for remote strongholds, jaguars and other wide-ranging species need safe passage between habitat patches. Sky Island Alliance has brought together volunteers, wildlife researchers, the Arizona Department of Transportation, the Arizona Game and Fish Department, and other agency representatives together to identify and protect key landscape linkages (see article on page 10).

The Northern Jaguar Project (NJP), an SIA partner organization, is focused on understanding and protecting a healthy breeding population of jaguars some 135 miles south of Douglas, AZ. NJP researcher Carlos Lopez and colleagues discovered this population several years ago while surveying Northern Mexico to locate possible sources for the individuals venturing into the US. NJP has led efforts (along with the Mexican non-profit Naturalia) to purchase two huge, remote ranches that form this population’s core habitat. One of these ranches is now a formal jaguar preserve; negotiations and fundraising for the second ranch continue. Meanwhile, outreach and collaboration with nearby residents have reduced killing of jaguars in the region. [Editor’s note: Sky Island Alliance is a fiscal sponsor and partner of the Northern Jaguar Project. Donations to NJP can be made via SIA. People interested in volunteering to track jaguars in Mexico should contact [info@northernjaguarproject.org](mailto:info@northernjaguarproject.org), or [janice@skyislandalliance.org](mailto:janice@skyislandalliance.org).]

“This is tremendous news, a page in conservation history. These photos herald the return of the American Jaguar,” said Scotty Johnson, representative for Defenders of Wildlife and chairman of the Jaguar Conservation Team’s outreach committee. “Working together on responsible planning and appropriate stewardship, we can make sure they have a home to come back to.”



Diorama at the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History, showing jaguar in a thorn-scrub habitat. This individual was shot in Sonora in the mid-1900s.

photo courtesy of the US Fish and Wildlife Service

## Workshop tackles protection of Sky Island wildlife linkages

by Janice Przybyl, SIA Wildlife Monitoring Program Coordinator

Across the West, each year etches itself into the landscape with bulldozers and tire tracks. Here in the Sky Islands we still see coyotes playing on the golf course, bear tracks striding down a wash from one mountain range to another, and even jaguars padding up from Mexico. But each of us has felt that sick pain of seeing a badger, turtle, snake, or even tarantula smashed on the road, or deer hung on barbed wire. As painful as it is to witness such senseless deaths, it is far worse to recognize that for some species each individual represents one more step towards the loss of the local population through isolation, inbreeding, and habitat destruction. Most of these deaths are unintentional side effects of our transportation and growth systems. So what can we do to reduce these accidental deaths, and keep our last wildlife linkages from being broken?

In early September fifteen individuals well versed in conservation issues affecting the Sky Island landscape met to continue the collaborative process that was initiated during Arizona's Missing Linkages Workshop held earlier this Spring. During that first statewide effort, a mix of non-profit NGO's, university and agency biologists, and other entities gathered to assess landscape connectivity vital to maintaining

Plateau, the Mojave Desert, the Sonoran Desert, and the Arizona-New Mexico Mountains. For purposes of the workshop, the Apache Highlands ecoregion was divided into the Apache Highlands and the Sky Islands regions. Participants worked together to draw habitat blocks and linkages on large maps. Twenty-three linkages were identified in the Sky Island region alone.



Local experts grapple with transforming their knowledge of Sky Island wildlife into concrete strategies to help keep our lives from obliterating our feathered, furred, scaled, and shelled friends. Right to left: Lisa Haynes, UofA; Elissa Ostergaard, AZGF; Sheridan Stone, Fort Huachuca; Laurie Averill-Murray, AZGF; and Don Swann, Saguaro National Park. Photo by Janice Przybyl.

wildlife biodiversity across Arizona. Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT), and Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGF) coordinated the spring workshop with support from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Federal Highway Administration, US Forest Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Northern Arizona University, and Wildlands Project.

Participants in the statewide workshop, held at the Phoenix Zoo, separated into subgroups to identify habitat blocks and linkage zones in Arizona's five eco-regions as identified by The Nature Conservancy: the Apache Highlands, the Colorado

Plateau, the Mojave Desert, the Sonoran Desert, and the Arizona-New Mexico Mountains. However by the end of the weekend it became apparent that more work was needed to refine the map and complete the data forms accompanying each linkage. Sky Island Alliance invited the region's subgroup to reconvene in September and continue the process.

We chose a centrally located venue for the Sky Island workshop, the Appleton-Whittel Audubon Research Ranch near Elgin, Arizona. Besides being set in the heart of the Sky Island region along the Canelo Hills, the Research Ranch offers a fully equipped conference room in a beautiful setting. The event opened with an introduction

by Bruce Eilerts, Arizona Department of Transportation Natural Resources Section Manager. Eilerts explained how the work completed that day would be incorporated into a full, statewide linkage map featuring similar information for the five other ecoregions and will become part of the proceedings report from the April workshop. This resource, including an interactive map, will be available to anyone who requires information on a variety of issues concerning linkage zones including what species of concern are present, what projects are impending, what can be done to mitigate highways hazardous to wildlife crossings, or what wildlife research and monitoring is being conducted.

Don Swann from Saguaro National Park followed Eilerts and spoke about the "forgotten critters." Swann urged participants to keep in mind that landscape linkages are not just travelways for larger wildlife but also provide critical habitat for many smaller species. Swann appreciated the opportunity to rally for these "forgotten species, particularly small carnivores such as badgers, porcupines, kit foxes and skunks – interesting species that are important in the ecosystem but often go unnoticed because they are neither very large and charismatic, like mountain lions, nor considered very useful to humans, like game species."

After the presentations, the working session began. Siobhan Nordhaugen, GIS specialist from ADOT, had compiled the information garnered from the initial workshop and provided the base map of the Sky Island region. Participants rolled up their sleeves and worked together to clarify the identified linkages using overlays of land status, regional vegetation, and of course their personal expertise and experiences. Spirited discussions ensued as participants reviewed and refined the existing information and also attempted to identify threats in each linkage and characterize current conditions.

Don Swann expressed how important it is for land and wildlife managers to recognize that wildlife do not recognize borders and boundaries, and how everyone needs to work together across the landscape to help preserve them. It is also important to consider many different types of issues when planning for wildlife conservation, ranging from an area's biological uniqueness to how great the opportunity is for land acquisition.

The diverse array of participants, from ADOT, AZ Game & Fish, BLM, Fort Huachuca, Sky Island Alliance, Wildlands Project, the University of Arizona, Arizona Open Lands Trust (AOLT), and Saguaro National Park, brought different perspectives to the process. Vanessa Bechtol, Project Planner at AOLT, felt the Sky Island workshop represented an important collaborative effort between public and private sector organizations. She appreciated the timeliness of the workshop as AOLT is currently working with The Nature Conservancy to identify

**...each of us has felt that sick pain of seeing a badger, turtle, snake, or even tarantula smashed on the road...**

and protect wildlife movement corridors that cross Interstate and State highways and otherwise fragmented landscapes throughout Southeastern Arizona. AOLT hopes to continue to participate in the planning process by ensuring that private lands are included as wildlife linkages.

ADOT is in the process of compiling the notes, comments, and changes to the Sky Island map and data forms. The next step was to prioritize linkages based on attributes related to level of threats and quality of habitat. AZGF, ADOT, and Wildlands Project scheduled a half-day session on November 3 to accomplish this task. A few new faces showed up for this endeavor at Arizona Game and Fish's regional office in Tucson. Paul Beier, professor of Conservation Biology & Wildlife Ecology at Northern Arizona University, instructed the group on how to follow a matrix to evaluate each linkage according to threat, dependency on other linkages, number of threaten or endangered species, etcetera. Responses were entered immediately into a database. Everyone was committed to the task and many stayed on through the afternoon, as the process was more time-consuming than expected. Though it was difficult to acknowledge that a linkage may have a lower priority, we realized that to move conservation forward, linkages with the greatest need of immediate consideration must be identified.

Sky Island Alliance would like to thank Earth Friends for helping to fund the Conservation of Wildlife Linkages in the Sky Island Region Workshop held in September and to thank Arizona Department of Transportation, Saguaro National Park and Wildlands Project for their support of this workshop and their hard work to synchronize the statewide endeavor.



Siobhan Nordhaugen, ADOT, deciphers all the handwritten notes and scratches, then translates the information into comprehensive digitized maps. Gita Bodner, Sky Island Alliance, lends help.



# A Smashing Success:

## Conference unites managers, scientists, conservationists to celebrate Sky Islands and tackle challenges

by Gita Bodner, editor, and Acasia Berry, SIA Associate Director

**O**ur May Sky Island/Madrean Archipelago conference was a huge success. The final count included some 380 attendees from as far north as Alaska and as far south as central Mexico. They represented many nations including Canada, the US, Mexico, the Gila River Community, San Carlos Apache Tribe, and the Yavapai-Apache Nation. Some 40 universities were represented, as were over 30 public agencies including several in Mexico, 25 conservation NGO's, several museums, and even a few ranches. The conference was jointly organized by several groups (see list below), with Sky Island Alliance (SIA) taking a lead role in setting the agenda, organizing the program, and pulling the whole thing off.

"I've been to more conferences than I can count," said one participant. "This was the most active and balanced mix of agency professionals, researchers, and on-the-ground conservation activists I've seen. They were really listening to each other's concerns and ideas." Most gatherings are sponsored by just one such group, and people talk only within their narrow field. But here, even the keynote speeches reflected the cross-pollination we so urgently need. SIA's David Hodges (conference co-chair) shared the opening plenary stage with Gerry Gottfried (co-chair) from the USDA-Forest Service's Rocky Moun-

tain Research Station, Dale Turner of The Nature Conservancy (and a long-time SIA board member), illustrious writer and defender of the cultural-biological interface Gary Nabhan (now at Northern Arizona University), Leonard DeBano and Peter Ffolliott of the University of Arizona, and the Coronado National Forest's (CNF) new Forest Supervisor Jeanine Derby. For many participants, this was their first chance to meet Jeanine Derby, who came here from California's Los Padres National Forest earlier this year. Ms. Derby gave a heartfelt keynote address that showed her to be open and thoughtful, and demonstrated that she recognizes the tremendous biological and cultural values of the fine Sky Islands she now oversees. The Forest Service's "multiple use" mandate brings a manager many competing agendas. This grand gathering's focus on biological values helps solidify the sense that all other values are built upon these -- and that other uses must not be allowed to degrade the foundation that supports them.

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### Conference history:

Some of you remember the 1991 proposal to turn most of the Coronado National Forest into the "Islands in the Sky National Recreation Area." That proposal showed that the CNF managers of the time simply did not realize the biological treasure

or fragility of the land they were sitting on. (Of course, some individuals working for the agency did see our precious Sky Islands for what they are, but were not in positions to dictate agency policy.) Hundreds of concerned citizens and scientists came together and formed Sky Island Alliance as a vehicle to fight this misguided proposal. Beyond stopping the project, SIA's mission was to offer alternate management ideas, and to educate managers and others about the tremendous natural values of this area so that protecting these would become the bottom line of all other management decisions. We've made tremendous progress. Ten years ago, SIA helped organize the first coordinated public and scientific recognition of the area's unique identity and value, in the form of the original 1994 Madrean Archipelago conference. Since then, "Sky Islands" has become a household phrase that brings with it a fast-growing sense of regional identity. This first conference also helped spur additional scientific study over the next ten years, especially on fire cycles, what plants and animals live in the region and how they use their environment, how weather patterns have shifted through time and how living communities have reacted to these changes, and how a variety of management activities affect the landscape.

The second Madrean Archipelago conference in May brought updates on many of these scientific studies, as well as overviews of many management and conservation projects underway or in the works. The conference was a great opportunity for scientists to see who else was working in the region and to learn more about their study subjects, as well as to think about how their research might contribute to conservation. Land managers got to absorb a decade of science in a few days, and to brainstorm with conservationists about new approaches to old problems and new challenges on the horizon. Conservationists indulged in cutting edge science, practical conversations with land managers, and forging alliances with other conservation groups. This year's confer-

## Spirit of cooperation

The spirit of cooperation and collaboration to achieve a common goal for the Madrean Archipelago is apparent by the members of the conference organizing committee and the diverse mix of agencies and private organizations that they represent:

Gerald Gottfried, Co-chair, USDA Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Research Station; David Hodges, Co-chair, Sky Island Alliance; Dale Turner, Program Chair, The Nature Conservancy; Acasia Berry, Logistics Chair, Sky Island Alliance; Brooke Gebow, Program Editor, University of Arizona, School of Natural Resources; Alejandro Castellanos, Universidad de Sonora; Nina Chambers, Sonoran Institute; Doug Duncan, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Peter Ffolliott, University of Arizona, School of Natural Resources; Bill Halvorson, U. S. Geological Survey, Sonoran Desert Research Station; Andy Hubbard, National Park Service, Southern Desert Network; Sue Kozacek, USDA Forest Service, Coronado National Forest; Larry Laing, National Park Service, Southern Arizona Office; Dean Martens, USDA Agricultural Research Service, Southwest Watershed Research Center; Joan Scott, Arizona Game and Fish Department; Frank Toupal, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Tom Van Devender, Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum.

ence also had great participation by Mexican researchers and land managers. Their perspectives and knowledge added tremendously to the conference. We hope the next Madrean conference can happen in Mexico where half the Sky Islands live!

As great as the talks were, some of the best dialogue happened at break times, with lunch, or over a beer. The personal relationships built and strengthened here are sure to foster productive collaborations for decades to come.

### Talks:

With over 130 talks, most in concurrent sessions, each person could go to only a fraction. Among the excellent presentations I saw, a few of my personal favorite included the following:

Julio Betancourt showed how plant communities have leap-frogged to distant habitat patches when past climate changes have suddenly made conditions in these patches hospitable to them. This deep-time perspective was a great complement to Ann Lynch's beetle, fire, and brimstone talk about how climate change and fire suppression are now triggering rapid, large-scale changes across our treasured landscape.

A whole crew came up from Universidad Autonoma de Queretaro to talk about their research on bears, beavers, cougars, bobcats, and habitats in northern Mexico. What a treat to get these first-hand accounts of little-known creatures in wild, remote places!

Dave Lytle and

his students from Oregon State University showed how aquatic insects in Madrean streams shift from high elevation communities that are very similar to Rocky Mountain faunas, to mid-elevation communities unique to our Sky Island mountain ranges. Each storm season washes Rocky Mountain faunas down-slope and flushes Madrean faunas into the lowlands, but the return of calm waters reveals a miraculous recovery of each zone's pre-flood faunas. Each animal species has its own recovery strategy; giant water bugs climb out of the stream when it starts to rain and simply walk out of the way of a possible flood.

Seth Pilsk, Jeanette Casa, Chris Coder, Vincent Randall and Elizabeth Rocha-Smith talked about traditional Apache knowledge of the landscape that has been their homeland since time immemorial. They shared a very human perspective on places, plants, and management history. Don't underestimate, they remind us, the breadth of knowledge and depth of connection that comes from living with a landscape!



On a conference fieldtrip to an SIA restoration and planning area in the Dragoon Mountains, Executive Director David Hodges and Coronado National Forest cultural resource expert Pat Sproel discuss ways to preserve cultural and biological values of areas receiving increased human use.

## Road Rattlings

by Trevor Hare, SIA Conservation Biologist

In this crazy world, the one place I can be sure I'm in company of friends is in the field with my volunteers. Dedicated, loving, smart, loud or quiet, drunk or sober, all sorts of people come out and help me in the field. They all have jobs, they all work hard, but still they come. Mostly they come in droves but sometimes only in trickles. Some come almost every time, some come only once a year. I don't care I love them all. I send them on death marches and sometimes on puppy walks, sometimes I get them all up and send them out by 7am and sometimes they are visiting around camp till 10 waiting for me to get their assignments together. Do I ever hear a word of complaint? No! Some bring their musical instruments and politely ask me not to sing, others bring food and drink to share. Some eat steak and lobster, others ramen noodles..

In the last twelve months approximately 200 volunteers donated over 7000 hours of time to protecting the Sky Islands. That is over 3 years of work done in less than 12 months! Sky Island Alliance would never have been able

to accomplish so much without the 47,000 hours that volunteers like you have invested over the last 6 years. It's their work — your work — that has mapped the boundaries of almost every existing wilderness and roadless areas in the US portion of the Sky Islands. You found tire tracks illegally tearing into a wilderness



Ace volunteer Dan Brudno spices up Trevor Hare's announcements of the Sky Island Alliance 2004 Volunteer of the Year awards. Dan was one of some 200 people who gave over 7000 hours to restoring and protecting their Sky Island homeland this year.

area or ripping up a stream bed, and then came out with us to heal these wounds. You tracked bears from mountain range to mountain range, and waded waist-deep into frog-filled ponds. You've now hiked, mapped, photographed, and sweated over just about every square mile of Sky Island public lands! Thanks to people like

you, we now know more about what's happening on the ground here than most of the people paid to manage our public lands. And this puts us in a great position to make sure they're managed right.

On Saturday November 13<sup>th</sup> we feted these stalwart stewards of the Sky Islands with food and drink and music and prizes along the banks of the Rio Tanque Verde. Long-time supporter Sky Crosby provided a venue with a view right up the slopes of the Rincon Mountains. The day's beauty seemed specially designed to bless this gathering of dedicated and fun-loving humans. The party went whole hog with a locally-raised barbeque-on-the-hoof, and excellent veggie stew (the SIA staff is still eating leftover roast potatoes). By the time the last of us had stumbled to our grassy beds, a winter wind had come howling over the Catalinas and practically blew us all away!

Since my last rant the volunteers and myself have been out there whooping it up and walking it down. We have sat high on the cliffs overlooking Aravaipa Canyon wondering who the idiots were that drove their quads into the wilderness surrounding this amazing canyon. We have made monthly visits to both the Peloncillo Mountains and the San Rafael Valley. In the Peloncillos we helped local researchers search for snakes, those mysterious evolutionary wonders, and we looked for roads to close (or at least to let Mother Nature close in her own slow but complete way). In the San Rafael Valley we chased bullfrogs and gartersnakes and found too many of one and not enough of

the other. We did see native leopard frogs and native fish but not nearly enough! We spent a beautiful late June weekend high in the Pinaleno Mountains looking for roads and waiting gleefully for the inevitable afternoon storms. We continued to close a road on Las Cienegas National Conservation Area that was being used as a smuggling route. Cienega Creek was being assaulted and we dedicated ourselves to stopping it and I am proud to report our latest try (with over a 100 tons of boulders) is holding! To celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Wilderness Act, we held a party for the dogs (and their people) in the Chiricahua Mountains over Labor Day weekend. 50 fabulous people showed up to talk politics and wilderness, to eat hot green chiles, and to hike.

In the next year we will continue our work on riparian inventories, monitoring and restoration planning in the San Rafael Valley, the Peloncillo Mountains and valleys, and even in a couple of new spots. We will attempt to explore and map the roads in the Dos Cabeza Mountains, that no-mans land of political unrest. We will visit two gems of Arizona protected areas — Aravaipa Canyon and the Mescal Mountains. We will continue our road-closure program on Las Cienegas National Conservation Area and we will even spend some time looking for new areas where the roads should be closed because of redundancy and/or resource damage.

Come on out!

## Policy and Law

### Grassroots ORV Campaign Awaits Response on Forest Service Rule

The comment period is now closed on a set of rules proposed by the US Forest Service to govern the use of off-road and all-terrain vehicles on National Forests across the country.

Sky Island Alliance, in partnership with the Natural Trails and Waters Coalition, organized a coalition over 100 conservation groups in Arizona and New Mexico to combat ORV abuses by influencing the proposed rulemaking.

Our Arizona-New Mexico Coalition was very successful in generating comments, meeting with local and regional Forest officials to advocate for a stronger rule, and raising the awareness of our constituents and the general public. Nationally this campaign generated over 82,000 comments. The vast majority urge the Forest Service to strengthen the proposed rule and give more protection to our public lands. Now we must wait to see how the USFS will respond to the flood of comments. Their Final Rule, which is supposed to incorporate com-

ments received on the Proposed Rule, is due to be released early in 2005. Then the rule must be put into effect. Each forest will then be responsible for putting the rule into effect.

The increasing damages to national resources caused by the proliferation of these noisy, destructive machines have been obvious for over 30 years. In 1972 and again in 1976, Presidents Nixon and Carter signed Executive Orders (EOs) directing the USFS to get a handle on the growing problems of vehicular abuse on our National Forests. These Orders were ignored until a 1999 petition signed by more than 100 conservation organizations finally commanded the attention of the Forest Service Chief. The agency then began work on a comprehensive rule that would consolidate and improve all the bits

and pieces that govern the use of these obnoxious machines on our National Forests. It took several years to bring these new rules forward. In the end, the Forest Service glossed over the abuse and damage caused by these machines. Despite the fact that only 5% of all forest visitors use ATVs/ORVs, the agency has called for increased access and ignored the requirement of the Executive Orders to control vehicle impacts.

Obviously our hard work is just starting! The

implementation of the final rule will only benefit the landscapes and wildlife we love if we are vigilant. So stay aware, talk with your local community and forester, and be vocal!

-Trevor Hare



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## November ash

by Bill Hoy, historian, Bowie AZ

This crisp November afternoon caught me tramping in a lonely nameless canyon on the eastern flank of the Dos Cabezas Range. I sprawled onto granite slab attended by tinkling rivulets and little purple flowers. Lying there beneath a velvet ash tree I reaffirmed the hiker's maxim that a knapsack, once you've removed the binoculars, makes a good pillow.

The mental flotsam I brought up from my rural fragment of the post modern world quickly dissipated into this canyon fastness, leaving only energy for spectacular mountain beauty. A wintry overcast leaked sporadic drizzles onto the absolutely quiet mountain as daylight retreated towards dusk.

I emptied onto the slab a plastic ziplock bag of golden-tinged ash leaves that my Bisbee friend Adrienne collected last week from a canyon deep in the Cochise Stronghold's western slope. I found with her leaves the note: "I collected some ash leaves for you. Mix my leaves with your and see if something happens." I this and reverently burned them onto the slab.

What happened was I aimlessly, quietly over tumbled stony slopes I became aware of an ineffable companion striding beside me. We chose our roots together, stopping to examine wild flowers, to marvel at hobgoblins of granite-everywhere there was granite.

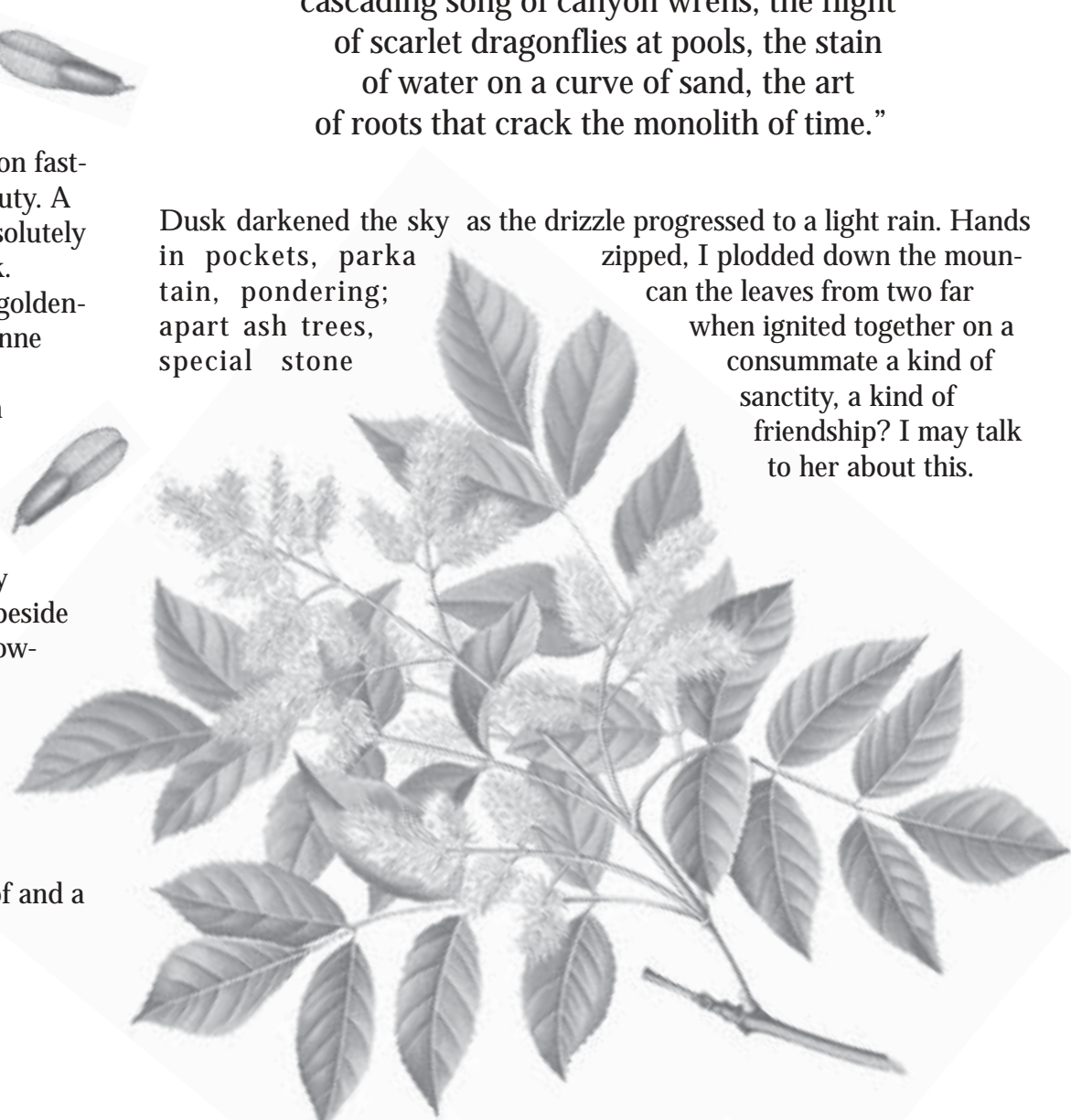
We trailed sparkling streamlet across bare rock. It soon vanished into an alcove that partially sheltered what was now a quiet pool. We peered inside-crisp, broken reflections of a could-studded sky, it's stony roof and a single human face.

Who but Edward Abbey can so eloquently rhapsodize on a canyon's living "slick rock?"

"...passageways of stillness, stone and light gold coin of cottonwoods, the spangled shade, cascading song of canyon wrens, the flight of scarlet dragonflies at pools, the stain of water on a curve of sand, the art of roots that crack the monolith of time."

Dusk darkened the sky as the drizzle progressed to a light rain. Hands in pockets, parka zipped, I plodded down the mountain, pondering; apart ash trees, special stone

can the leaves from two far when ignited together on a consummate a kind of sanctity, a kind of friendship? I may talk to her about this.



### TEP Powerline Update

Tucson Electric Power Corporation (TEP) has announced its intention to build an \$85 million dollar powerline through the heart of the Tumacacori Highlands proposed Wilderness. Fortunately, citizens and agencies are not rolling over for the money-hungry corporation. A diverse coalition of conservation, community, and business organizations came together at a Tucson press conference in June to voice their unanimous opposition to this ill-conceived powerline. Organized by Sky Island Alliance, this press conference coincided with an Arizona Corporation Commission (ACC) meeting focused on TEP's powerline proposal. On behalf of the Green Valley and Tubac Chambers of Commerce, Rio Rico Prop-

erty Citizen's Council, and other important stakeholders affected by the line, the coalition sent a letter to the ACC that outlined why this proposal is inappropriate regardless of its route and presented a cheaper and more feasible alternative. Though science, economics, and widespread public opposition continue to weigh against the proposal, TEP has not yet agreed to abandon the proposed line. In a major victory that adds to TEP's woes, the Coronado National Forest indicated at this ACC meeting that it will not approve the wilderness-splitting western route. This route, says the Forest Service, is inconsistent with the Forest Plan,

has unacceptable environmental impacts, and creates serious management problems. This decision will be official with the publication of the Final Environmental Impact Statement due in December. Since July, TEP has tried to save their sinking ship by holding meetings with political appointees at the Forest Service in Washington D.C., presumably to try to override the sound decisions made here at the Coronado NF. Though we anxiously await having this issue formally resolved, we expect that the Coronado National Forest will continue to use science, public comment, and existing regulations to ensure that the interests of southern Arizona's residents are appropriately represented. Your comment letters pointed out many TEP flaws in this project. Your encour-

agement and support also reaffirms the Coronado National Forest's decisions to protect your public lands. While citizens applauded the Forest Service's route decision, they looked to the Arizona Corporation Commission to end the five-year battle between the utility company and the public. The ACC regulates all utilities in Arizona and has the power to approve or reject whole projects as well as individual utility routes. The ACC didn't throw out the powerline proposal outright at the July meeting, but it did send the matter back to planning stages for more thorough analysis that includes a wider range of alternatives. It's not over yet. We'll keep you posted!

## Aravaipa: fate of the laughing waters Wilderness (continued from back page)

Human beings arrived about 9,500 years ago to take advantage of this abundance; ancient peoples of the Hohokam, Mogollon, and Salado cultures hunted, fished, and farmed the region but the last of these disappeared around 1450 A.D. Perhaps the most well preserved sign of their presence is the tiny cliff dwelling tucked beneath an overhang along a tributary called Turkey Creek. Barely big enough to house a typical family, the mud dwelling was probably occupied for a few months of the year when certain foods were being gathered in the area.

In the late 17<sup>th</sup> century when Father Kino visited the confluence of the San Pedro River and Aravaipa Creek he encountered both the Tohono O'odam and Sobaipuri tribes, the latter acting as a buffer between hostile Apaches and lands to the west. By the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century pressure from the Apaches would force the Sobaipuris to abandon their villages and disperse. Exactly when the Apaches settled Aravaipa is not known but they became well established in the canyon and surrounding highlands; the Spanish even referred to that particular band as the Aravaipa Apaches. The Apache Kid and Chief Eskiminzin lived there and used the canyon both as a favored hunting ground and a convenient link between the San Pedro and Sulphur Springs valleys. The tribe's persistence in this area prompted the army to build Fort Grant just beyond the west end of the canyon and in 1871 this was the site of the infamous Fort Grant massacre in which 144 Apaches, mostly women

same time knocking back invasive species like tamarisk and bluegill. Aravaipa's wild and pristine character, coupled with its history of use by indigenous peoples, argued strongly for its preservation as wilderness; thus, the region's stony isolation was supplemented by the creation of the Aravaipa Canyon Wilderness in 1984. Now, as roads spread like vines and machines overcome both distance and terrain, it is this designation—this idea—that provides the greatest measure of protection for the canyon and its inhabitants.

Like each of the 662 wilderness areas in the United States, the Aravaipa Canyon Wilderness is a direct descendant of the Wilderness Act of 1964, one of the most farsighted and widely supported pieces of legislation ever passed. The law recognizes the intrinsic value of natural systems and intact landscapes, places where "...the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain." The idea that a portion of our country should remain undeveloped appeals to both the spirit and the intellect: many of us are grateful for the solitude wilderness provides and we understand that humans cannot yet take the full measure of all living things, cannot intrude upon a place without risking the loss of some vital part. As Leopold once wrote, "The first rule of intelligent tinkering is to save all the pieces." Under the Wilderness Act each generation has a chance to decide which lands should be set aside for the benefit of future citizens. While the process is convoluted, it is also

the south rim. Prior to the creation of the wilderness the Defenders of Wildlife managed portions of the canyon, employing Edward Abbey as a refuge manager in the mid-1970's. Currently the BLM is engaged in a new planning process for Aravaipa, a periodic event that calls for a review of management goals, issues, and recommendations, both from cooperating partners like TNC and Arizona Game and Fish as well as the general public. This planning process affects not only the wilderness but a substantial portion of the surrounding land, including 7 grazing leases, several of which overlap the wilderness.

As in years past, grazing policy and motor vehicle access are two issues of concern. The Nature Conservancy holds one of the applicable grazing leases but has chosen not to run cattle on it, yet the BLM may require TNC to graze some cattle or forfeit their lease. In addition, the new management plan may allow cattle to graze portions of the canyon bottom. This practice was discontinued long ago because of an official opinion authored by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, however the opinion expires this year and the BLM may choose to open the riparian area to lease holders.

On the south rim of the canyon a rugged jeep trail marks a portion of the wilderness boundary. This road once crossed Virgus Canyon, a major tributary, but Defenders of Wildlife successfully blocked it with a number of large boulders in the 1970's. Since then no vehicle has been able to pass that point from either direction. Now the BLM is considering a plan to remove the boulders and reopen the entire length to ORV use. Ironically, the legislative report that accompanied the wilderness designation actually allowed for and recommended the permanent closure of the road, a move that would sizably expand the wilderness. A similar expansion might be accomplished by including upper Oak Grove Canyon, home to a perennial stream, and Turkey Creek Canyon, an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) where the Salado cliff dwelling is located.

The wilderness movement sprang in part

from a desire to preserve the best of our heritage but these pieces of the past are colliding with the future. As Sky Island Alliance volunteers have documented, motor vehicles are continually encroaching on wilderness areas and other roadless tracts. Many Americans think of wilderness in terms of the vanished frontier yet they want to challenge that remnant of the frontier with the machines and mindset of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The truth is that wilderness has always been a place where humans go to meet nature on her terms and it must remain so if wilderness itself is to endure. In the case of Aravaipa we already accept some limitations for the benefit of the resource—BLM permit restrictions allow no more than 50 people to enter the canyon on a given day, a policy most wilderness users support and one which will probably not be changed. Perhaps we should also accept the idea that prowling the borders of wild areas on ORV's invites abuse and that expanding a wilderness will be viewed by future generations as a much wiser move than hemming it in with more roads.

After his stint as refuge manager Abbey authored a short essay about the canyon. Like much of his work it is expressive, well-crafted, and to the point. The piece also says much about the value of the canyon as Abbey saw it some 30 years ago when the idea of an Aravaipa Wilderness was just that—an idea. It ends with the following:

"...it seems to me that the world is not nearly big enough and that any portion of its surface, left unpaved and alive, is infinitely rich in details and relationships, in wonder, beauty, mystery, comprehensible only in part. The very existence of existence is itself suggestive of the unknown—not a problem but a mystery.

We will never get to the end of it, never plumb the bottom of it, never know the whole of even so small and trivial and useless and precious a place as Aravaipa. Therein lies our redemption."

### **In the case of Aravaipa we already accept some limitations for the benefit of the resource...**

**Perhaps we should also accept the idea that prowling the borders of wild areas on ORV's invites abuse and that expanding a wilderness will be viewed by future generations as a much wiser move than hemming it in with more roads.**

and children, were killed by an angry mob of local residents. As the reservation system absorbed the scattered remnants of the band the lush bottomlands at either end of the canyon were opened to small scale ranching and farming.

Today the flora, fauna, and historical artifacts of the Aravaipa region are sheltered not only by the canyon but by a rare and fortunate convergence of factors. For starters, the place is remote. Both the east and west ends of the canyon can only be reached by long dirt roads and the tablelands on either side are fragmented by steep drainages that restrict access to four wheel drive vehicles and ATVs. In addition, the free-flowing stream is prone to flash flooding, a process that soon erases any roads or trails etched in the canyon bottom while at the

intrinsically democratic and locally driven—the power to preserve a place is derived from those who live in and around it, not from Congress or special interests. And at a time when party divisions are more apparent than ever, it's comforting to know that wilderness designation enjoys a 40 year history of bipartisan support. Yet the wilderness process does not end when lines are drawn on a map; such areas must be managed and the finer points of this practice often reveal different opinions about what wilderness is and should be.

The Aravaipa Canyon Wilderness is administered by the Bureau of Land Management and encompasses about 19,400 acres. In addition, The Nature Conservancy owns and manages 7,800 acres in scattered parcels at either end of the canyon and on

### **Take action**

If you care about Aravaipa, now is the time to get involved in the Aravaipa Ecosystem Management Plan. It will replace the 1988 Aravaipa Canyon Wilderness Management Plan, and will create new management plans for three Areas of Critical Environmental Concern. It will also include National Wild and Scenic Rivers System suitability recommendations made in 1994 for Aravaipa and Turkey creeks.

The plan will also address management issues such as grazing, access, recreation use, protection of riparian resources and water quality, continued use of prescribed fire, and enhancement of habitat for special status species.

To comment on the plan's scope or to participate in the rest of the planning process, contact Diane Drobka at the BLM Safford Field Office, (928) 348-4403 or [Diane\\_Drobka@blm.gov](mailto:Diane_Drobka@blm.gov).

# Tumacacori T-Shirts!!



"The vanishing wilderness is yet a part of our western heritage. We westerners have known the wilds during our lifetimes and we must see to it that our grandchildren are not denied the same rich experience during theirs." - Senator Frank Church

## Get your "Friends of the Tumacacori Highlands" t-shirts now!

- 100% organic cotton; **not** pre-shrunk.
- Pen-and-ink Jaguar logo on the front!
- Wilderness quotation (see above) on the back!
- Men's on a light-tan shirt, women's on a green-tea shirt.
- See pictures on our website at: [www.TumacacoriWild.org](http://www.TumacacoriWild.org)

How many? What sizes?

Men's cut		Women's cut	
Quantity	Size	Quantity	Size
_____	XL	_____	XL
_____	L	_____	L
_____	M	_____	M
_____	S		

Where would you like your shirt(s) shipped?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Send this form with payment to:  
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Sky Island Alliance  
 P.O. Box 41165  
 Tucson, AZ 85717



## Join Us!

Join or renew here or through our website: [www.skyislandalliance.org](http://www.skyislandalliance.org)

If you received this newsletter and it's time to renew your membership, please send in your check! If you are reading a friend's newsletter, consider joining us! We rely on members for our basic operations. Contributions are tax-deductible; we are a 501(c)3 organization.

Basic membership is only \$35, but if you add a little to that, here's a sampling of what your dollars can do:

- \$50 will help us survey 30 miles of roads.
- \$75 will sponsor volunteer training workshops.
- \$100 will close one mile of road.

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

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Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

\$35  \$50  \$100  Other \$\_\_\_\_\_ (any amount helps and is appreciated!)

My check is enclosed.

I'd like to pay by credit card.  Master Card  Visa  American Express

*Fill this out, or donate online. It's quick, easy, and safe!*

Amount \$\_\_\_\_\_ Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

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**Sky Island Alliance**, P.O. 41165, Tucson, AZ 85717

## Field Schedule Fall 2004 to spring 2005

### Defend Your Mother!

Get your hands dirty, your boots muddy and your soul back!

Join Sky Island Alliance in the Field - *50 Years of Conservation Since 1996*

Please contact the Sky Island Alliance office at (520) 624-7080 or [trevor@skyislandalliance.org](mailto:trevor@skyislandalliance.org) if you are interested in any of the following events.

### December 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>. Dos Cabeza Mountains Exploratory Weekend.

Connecting the vast Chiricahua Mountains to the towering Pinalenos, the Dos Cabezas are an important wildlife corridor for species daring to travel under/over I-10. Help us explore this amazing range! 2.0 hours from Tucson.

### December 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>. Riparian Inventory and Monitoring Training.

Learn the protocols of Sky Island Alliance's newest program and learn how to identify the important species of flora and fauna. Four different three-hour sessions at the University of Arizona. Contact Trevor for more info.

### January 14<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup>. Las Cienegas National Conservation Area Road Inventory.

Start your New Year with a bang! Come out and help us identify roads that are causing natural resource damage on these beautiful grasslands, cienegas and creeks. 1.5 hours from Tucson.

### January 28<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup>. Riparian Inventory and Monitoring Weekend.

San Rafael Valley. 2.0 hours from Tucson.

### February 11<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup>. Las Cienegas National Conservation Area Road Inventory.

1.5 hours from Tucson.

### February 25<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup>. Needles Eye Wilderness Exploration.

Join the Sky Island Alliance in the Mescal Mountains! Three canyon segments enter the Gila River, with 1,000-foot walls known as the Needle's Eye. A deep, entangled riparian zone covers the narrow river channel. Several small slickrock canyons bisect the area. 3.5 hours from Tucson.

### March 18<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> Riparian Inventory and Monitoring Weekend.

San Rafael Valley. 2.0 hours from Tucson.

### April 15<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup>. Aravaipa Canyon Wilderness Inventory.

Join the Sky Island Alliance in one of the most gorgeous areas of central Arizona. Birds galore! Flowing Water! Non-use grazing allotments! Need we say more? 2.5 hours from Tucson.

## What Are the Sky Islands Worth to You?

\$10 a month? \$25 a month? How about \$40???

Set up monthly **AUTOMATICALLY DEDUCTED DONATIONS** and know that your dollars are working day in and day out to protect the places you love.

Equal to: \*1 beer or latte per week \*\*1 lunch out per week; \*\*\*one dinner out per month.

Don't delay! Visit [www.skyislandalliance.org](http://www.skyislandalliance.org) for online instructions, or contact Acasia at (520) 624-7080 ext. 207. Make sure your dollars count!

## Become an SIA Program Fund Donor

**S**tories in recent newsletter issues have featured projects in our Rewilding Program: road inventory and restoration, wilderness work, wildlife monitoring, and ecosystem defense.

All the necessary road closures, tracking workshops, and wilderness advocacy gets done only with extra funding, so please consider a special donation to one of the following funds:

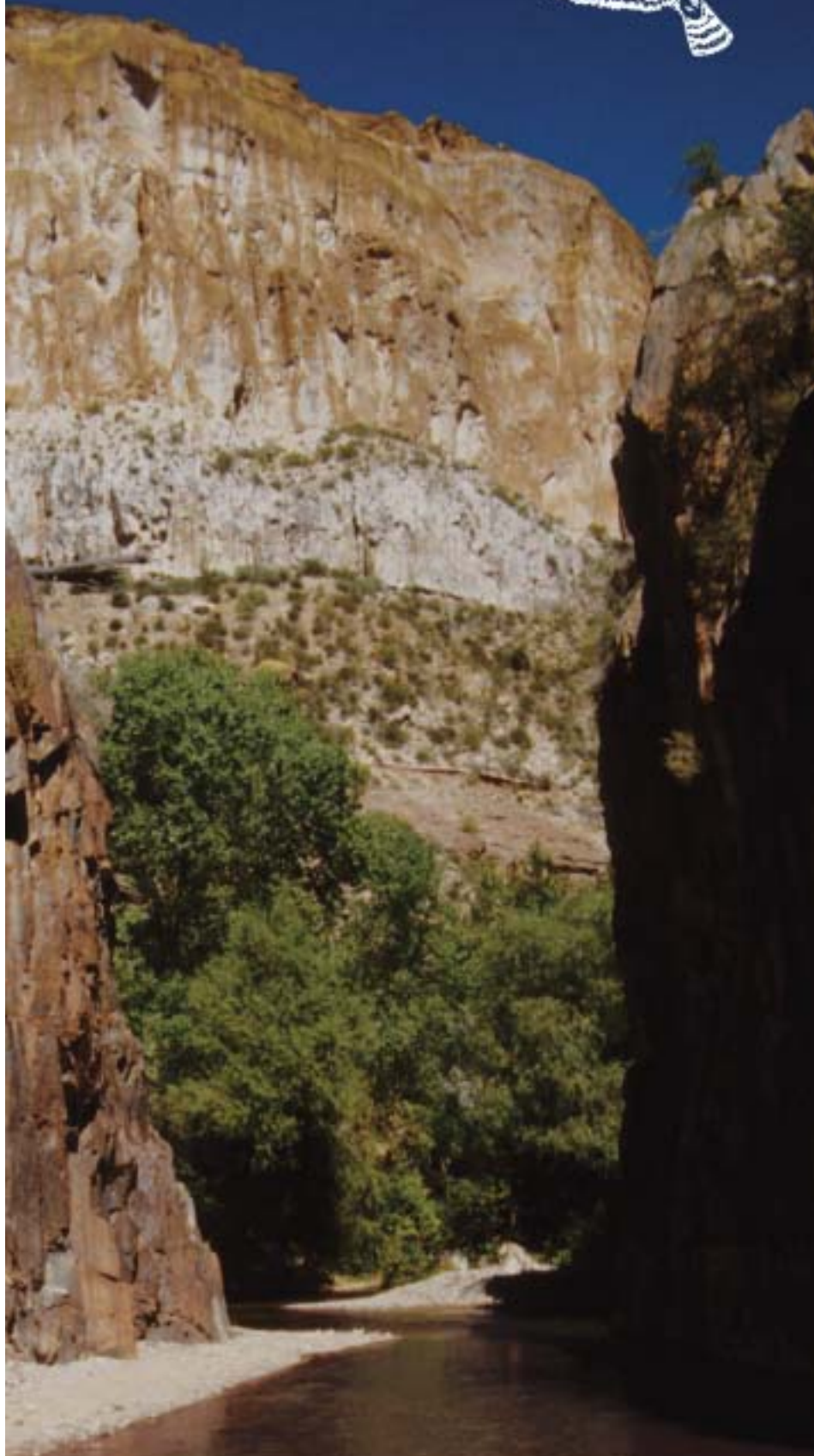
- Roads & Restoration,
- Wildlife Monitoring (Tracking),
- Missing Link,
- Wilderness, and

- Mexico—the Chihuahua Research Station in Janos, and the Jaguar Program in Sonora.

Please make your check out to Sky Island Alliance, with a note in the Memo line about which fund you'd like to support. We'll make sure your money goes to the programs that mean the most to you, and we'll send you reports!

**Sky Island Alliance**

P.O. Box 41165  
Tucson, AZ 85717



**We will never get to  
the end of it, never plumb the  
bottom of it, never know the  
whole of even so small and trivial  
and useless and precious a place  
as Aravaipa.  
Therein lies  
our redemption.**

—Edward Abbey

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*Sky Islands Wilderness*

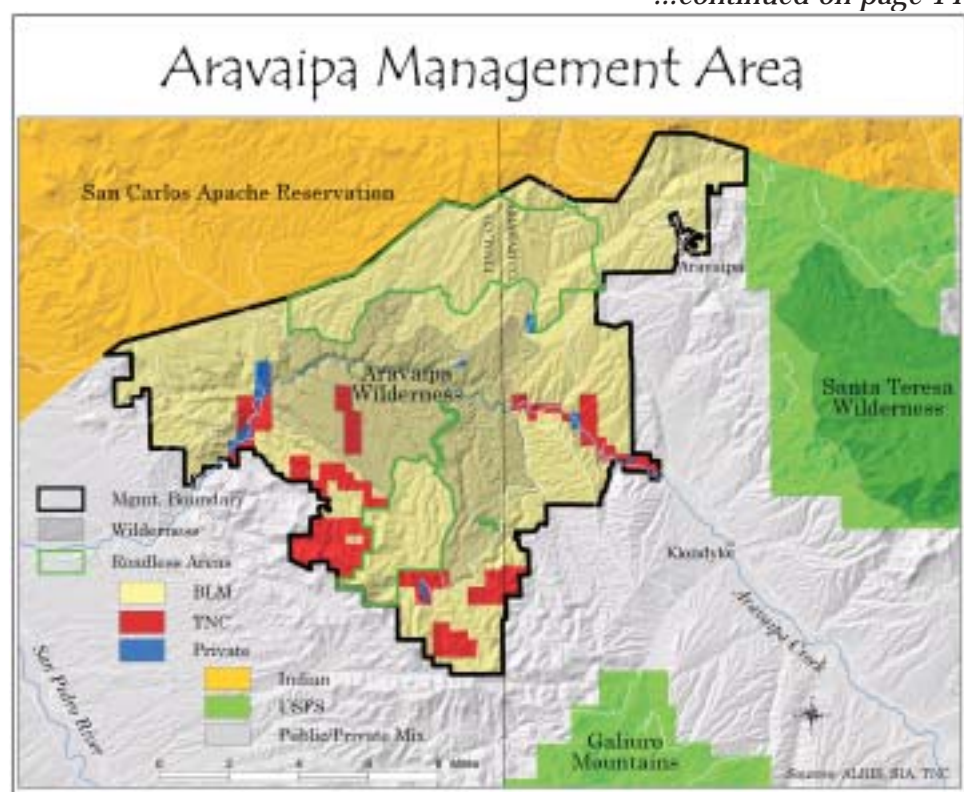
## Laughing Waters of Aravaipa

by Bob Van Deven

**A**ravaipa. The word itself might have been shaped by wind moving through cottonwoods and walnut trees, rushing between walls of conglomerate and tuff, swirling through humid grottos thick with ferns and columbines and wild grapes until it finally emerged, fully formed, from the mouth of a canyon. In it one can hear the snap of the flycatcher's beak, the sound of acorns being ground on stone metates, the turning of leaves. It's a suggestive word, mysterious. And though it has an accepted meaning—*laughing water*—the name Aravaipa says just as much about an idea as it does about a place.

The Aravaipa region is a rorschach blot of grassy tablelands, winding riparian corridors, and agave-studded cliffs hinged at its center by a canyon nearly 1,000 feet deep. The gorge was carved by a perennial stream that drains a vast swath of land between the Galiuro and Santa Theresa Mountains, providing habitat for Arizona's best remaining community of native fish, seven species in all. Sycamores, willows, and other deciduous trees line the banks while the terraces are thick with mesquite and hackberry. Above these stand rank upon rank of saguaro cacti marking the abrupt boundary between woodland and desert. This stratified landscape permits extraordinary diversity in what seems like minimal space; within a single square mile one may glimpse black bears, spotted owls, coatis, and bighorn sheep, as well as 40 species of reptile and nearly a dozen species of bats.

...continued on page 14



Aravaipa Management Area. Existing Wilderness Areas are shown shaded. Adjacent roadless areas that could be used to expand these Wilderness Areas are outlined in green. Lands inside the black boundary are being managed jointly, with management plans now being revised.