



# The Newsletter of the Environmental Education Association of New Mexico

## EE CONNECTIONS

Vol. 16, No. 3: Summer 2008

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Visit the EEANM  
website for more  
information on:

**Grants**

**Jobs**

**Teacher Workshops**

**Calendar of Events  
(NEW!)**

**EE News**

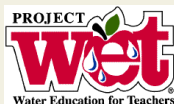
[www.eeanm.org](http://www.eeanm.org)



*Mansel Nelson presents "Sum of the Parts," a Project WET activity, at the Arizona/New Mexico workshop.*

### Project WET/Project Learning Tree Facilitator Workshop

The Navajo Nation Museum was the location for a joint Project WET/Project Learning Tree Facilitator Training in Window Rock, AZ on April 25. The Environmental Education Association of New Mexico teamed up with the Institute for Environmental Tribal Professionals (ITEP), located at Northern Arizona University (NAU) in Flagstaff, to offer a training to 17 environmental educators and college students in the Four Corners area. The morning was led by Project WET facilitator Mansel Nelson, from ITEP, and the afternoon session was facilitated by National Project Learning Tree Director Al Stenstrup. Barbara Garrity coordinated the workshop for EEANM and Dr. Deb Thrall offered assistance with the activities presented. The new facilitators are now prepared to offer workshops to other educators in their own locations, and continued mentorship is available from EEANM and ITEP.



The workshop was funded by a grant from the  
Environmental Education and Training Partnership.



# EEANM *PRESIDENT*

## Message from the President:

*Christy Tafoya*



Dear Members:

Summer is upon us, but things have not slowed down one bit--in fact, things are heating up! From the statewide outdoor classroom initiatives to the national No Child Left Inside legislation, to the great summer programming and camps happening all around the state, environmental education is really on the move here in New Mexico.

Your board continues to work hard for you, diligently meeting every month to work on the Annual Conference, Project Learning Tree and other teacher trainings, grant reports, bylaw changes, financial and recruitment updates. Many of our meetings have been held at outdoor classroom venues, to help us understand the resources and needs across the state.

Our latest meeting was at the beautiful Bernalillo County Open Space property, Carlito Springs in Tijeras, hosted by Educator and Planner, Colleen Langan. EEANM has held numerous, consistent Brown Bag lunches this year across the state, as well, and we are working hard to know you, your issues and your concerns. If you are interested in hosting a board meeting or Brown Bag, call me or Statewide Coordinator, Barbara Garrity.

Finally, please remember to join us this year at the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque for our Annual Conference, *Soar to Greater Heights: Professional Development for a Sustainable Future*, in conjunction with our partners, the New Mexico Science Teachers Association and the New Mexico Council for Teachers of Mathematics. We hope to reach many teachers and outdoor classroom providers, and to coordinate a fun, hands-on outdoor classroom track.

Hope you have had a safe and fun summer and we look forward to seeing you this fall!

-Christy

## General Membership Meeting

The Board of Directors of the Environmental Education Association of New Mexico is considering revisions to its bylaws. Members are invited to come to a meeting to vote on these proposed changes. For more information, contact Christy Tafoya.

**2:00 PM, Wednesday, August 27**

**NM Museum of Natural History and Science**

**1801 Mountain Road NW, Albuquerque, NM.**

# EE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Youth Conference on the Environment

*by Vince Case*



In August of 2007, Katrina Wagner and Sarah Rip-pere, representatives from Sandia National Labs, invited students from School On Wheels Alternative High School, Western Trails Campus to become planners for their 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Youth Conference on the Environment. Over the ensuing 7-1/2 months, students from Vince Case's team brainstormed ideas, collaborated with professionals from SNL and Cyndie Abeyta (former EEANM board member and with the USFWS) to develop and help plan for this event. Having attended Youth Conferences in years past, these high school students longed for a day of interactive, hands-on learning that would take place in the field and keep the interest of more than 125 other high school students from throughout the Albuquerque Metro area.

With the theme of the “Bosque” already chosen by Sandia and the event's other co-sponsors, EEANM and the USFWS, the School On Wheels students felt confident that they could not only add some “teenage expertise” but also believed their experiences in the Bosque and the Rio Grande would help create a conference where young people would be part of the teaching staff for the day. School On Wheels students broke into 4 planning groups, each one responsible for different aspects of the conference. One group focused on developing a “catchy” introduction while the other three groups focused on developing learning activities appropriate to secondary students. The introduction group chose to present a clever introductory skit that showed the audience how to conduct environmental monitoring in the Bosque, following closely the protocols utilized by UNM-Bosque School's Bosque Ecosystem Monitoring Project. Students wrote the script, created props with the help of Susan Koss from SNL, and performed the skit on stage at the April 9<sup>th</sup> conference.



Other planning groups presented their hands-on learning activities with a focus on Bosque plant ecology and Rio Grande water quality. In addition, the USFWS, Wildlife West, Bernalillo County, introduced participating high schoolers to the concepts of watershed health and wildlife in the Bosque.

## EE EVENTS

Throughout the day, students not only learned about the environment, but they enjoyed the natural surroundings Albuquerque has to offer, hearing from adults and teenagers alike.

The day could not have been so successful without the continuous efforts of Katrina and Sarah, Cyndie and her staff, School on Wheels students, over 20 volunteers from SNL and EEANM, and EEANM's own Barbara Garrity who organized the transportation and lunches for the more than 10 schools present. Finally, the National Hispanic Cultural Center's auditorium and "Jardines del Bosque" field site was the perfect location for another fabulous Youth Conference on the Environment!



*Sitting, from left to right - Vince Case (SOW team leader), Natash Lucero, Michelle Archuleta, Magdiel Cobos, Omar Escarcega, Saul Romero, Yessenia Mota*  
*Standing, from left to right - Taryn Torres, Josh Baca, Sarah Ripperre & Katrina Wagner (Sandia National Labs), Jorge Tarango, Ashly Nichols, Eddie Ortiz*  
*Not pictured - Heather Cook*

## **ECO-ED** *The Listserv for New Mexico Environmental Educators*

If you haven't signed on to the eco-ed listserv, you are missing out on a great form of communication regarding environmental education in New Mexico. Signing up is easy; just go to our website at [www.eeanmorga](http://www.eeanmorga) and follow the instructions. Problems? contact [dthrall@swcp.com](mailto:dthrall@swcp.com)





*Participants of the EEANM Quarterly Meeting in Farmington enjoy a tour by Donna Thatcher.*

## **EEANM Quarterly Brown Bag Lunch at the Farmington Riverside Nature Center**

*by Becky Kerr*

On Saturday, April 12, friends of EEANM gathered for a brown bag lunch from 11:00 to noon at the Farmington Riverside Nature Center while chatting and watching the animals through the windows of the observation room. Members laughed and networked with other people interested in environmental education.

Dr. Vicky Ramakka reported on the course she taught for the San Juan College Alternative Licensure Program for mid-career or retired individuals who want to become teachers. Vicky teaches the School, Family and Community Cultures course, with a focus on showing ways teachers can incorporate community resources to enrich their subject matter. Since modeling best practices is a central part of the program, Vicky included a field trip to the Farmington Museum and to the Nature Center. After the field trip, Vicky surveyed the 17 future teachers and found that 11 had never been to the museum, and 12 had never been to the nature center. Astoundingly, some of those who had never been to the museum had lived in the Four Corners area all their lives (ranging in ages from 30s to 50s). The good news is that 15 of the field trip participants said they were more likely to take a group of students to these sites as a result of going themselves as part of the course. This result reinforced Dr. Ramakka's belief in the value of getting teacher education students OUTSIDE.

Stephen Winterstein from Mesa Verde Elementary School in Farmington enjoyed the collegiality of the group. He and Becky Kerr discussed the outdoor educational easement that is adjacent to his school. This easement was acquired by Becky when she taught at Heights Middle School which is across the street from Mesa Verde. Students can use this land for outdoor learning. He was pleased to take his students out to explore the area. He is also interested in the Bioregional Outdoor Education Project for which Becky is the New Mexico Regional Coordinator. Perhaps they will work together during the 2009-2010 school year.

Kelly Hile is a new employee for the E3 Children's Museum in Farmington. She was interested in learning more about the Riverside Nature Center as well as the New Mexico Environmental Education Association.

When we are finished lunch we had a wonderful walk through the park's nature paths and observed the xeriscape demonstration gardens and the Animas River. We went down to the river observing the flora and fauna as we went. Donna Thatcher is quite knowledgeable and pointed out many interesting native plants, birds' nests, and other great features in the park. The garden has a kiosk with information about the plants and animals in the park, along with information on xeriscaping. There is an area with three different types of grasses demonstrating how they look mowed and not mowed along with how much water they require. There are sections of herbs, cactus, hummingbird attracting plants, native use plants, decretive grasses, and others. What a wonderful location! We all had a great time, and made some new friends.

## North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) News

*Dr. Deb Thrall, Member, Board of Directors of NAAEE*

Exciting things are happening at the national level right now, including the No Child Left Inside initiative, which passed in congress this year. This initiative is strongly supportive of getting children outdoors. Research has shown that children are beginning to have high cholesterol due to poor eating habits and inactivity. It is indeed timely for us as a nation to begin to look at children's health as a necessary plan for a more sustainable future. NAAEE's advocacy June phone meeting had representatives from 26 states who focused on instruction for the participants on the creation of environmental literacy plans at the state level in preparation for NCLI.



As part of my board duties, I have been involved in the beginnings of a new Strategic Plan for NAAEE. NAAEE is currently more than half way through implementing its first comprehensive strategic plan. The 2005-2010 plan was developed over a two year period with the participation of hundreds of people. That original process served us well in bringing the organization together and creating a plan that was broad, inclusive, and extraordinarily participatory. It has served us well in many ways – but in other ways it was less strategic and more of a laundry list of things that were quite clearly in need of attention.

Sierra Club and NAAEE's Green Youth Leader Award will be inaugurated at this year's conference in Wichita. This award will be the culmination of a new partnership to begin the process of mentoring young people in the field of EE. This award may be presented to a high school student – primarily for those who are currently or who have just completed their junior year in high school - for recognition for their contribution to or leadership in environmental education at the local, state/province, regional, national or global level. The student receiving the award must have made a significant contribution to EE, and should be demonstrating a serious interest in pursuing environmental education or very closely related major in college or career options.

NAAEE's **Cultural Diversity** committee has issued a report about the diversity of the membership. This document will help the organization guide its membership recruiting as well as being useful for the development and leadership committee in furthering our goals of strengthening the organizations on all levels. Some of the findings of the report included:

- ♦ As a result of Presidential appointments of persons of color to the Board each year, NAAEE's governing body has consistently had diverse representation over the last five years with 38% of its members from diverse cultures;
- ♦ Articles and images of Diversity can be found in every issue of the NAAEE Communicator in 2007, including five articles where diversity is a major emphasis and eight articles featuring international stories;
- ♦ NAAEE's electronic news bulletin, EE-News, regularly carried announcements related to diversity, of which 67% carried announcements on international opportunities or resources.



## Enviroserve

*By David Tichnell,*



During the past school year students from Holy Ghost Catholic School worked with the City of Albuquerque Open Space staff on environmental projects around the City. Approximately 67 different students from the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> Grades completed over 300 hours of service on projects that included trail work, tree planting, and litter removal. Open Space provided all the tools and equipment that were needed to complete these tasks. Both the school and the Open Space Department plan to continue to work together in the future. This work was made possible by a generous grant from EEANM and other sources.

*Note: Mr. Tichnell is a Science teacher at the school and advisor to the group.*

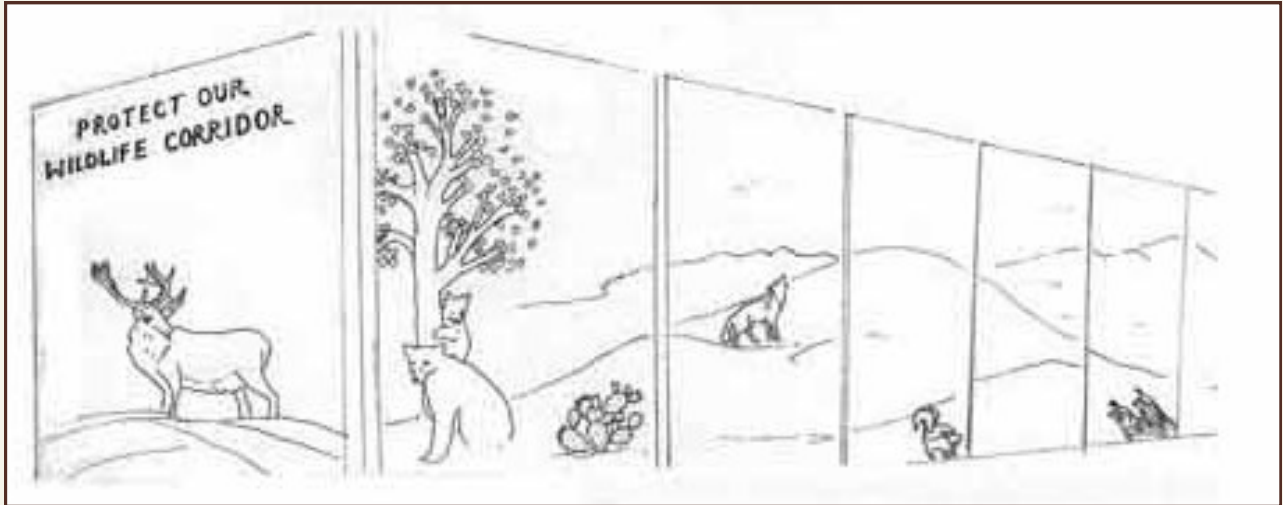
## Santa Fe Brown Bag—EEANM

*by Karen Herzenberg*

Randall Davey Audubon Center was the site of EEANM's most recent quarterly brown bag lunch on Saturday, June 7th, 2008. Hosts, Dana Vackar Strang and Jeremy Phillip shared fresh fruit with visiting educators in the beautiful RDAC classroom. Dana and Jeremy taught us about their programs and facilities and told us a bit about their work prior to joining the RDAC staff (they both started up with RDAC just in time for the 2008 end-of-the-year field trip rush and prepping for summer programs!). Several school teachers attended this meeting as did other EE-ers and we discussed our respective indoor and outdoor classrooms and activities. EEANM President, Christy Tafoya, gave us an update on NCLI legislation and funding situations and, as always, cheered on our collective work. After lunch and conversation, Dana and Jeremy led us on a hike into the Nature Conservancy's Santa Fe Canyon Preserve. There we walked through the lush riparian forest and encountered many (recently hatched?) tiny garter snakes and made our way out to a view of the cattail-laden reservoir which is home to beaver and muskrats. Just before turning 'round to end our time together, we got to see an American Coot swimming with its adorable chick ("cootling"?) through the reeds. Thanks to everyone who attended!

*Note: Karen Herzenberg is an Instructional Coordinator for the Rio Grande Nature Center State Park.*





## Teaching About Wildlife Needs Through Art

*by Cirrelda Snider*

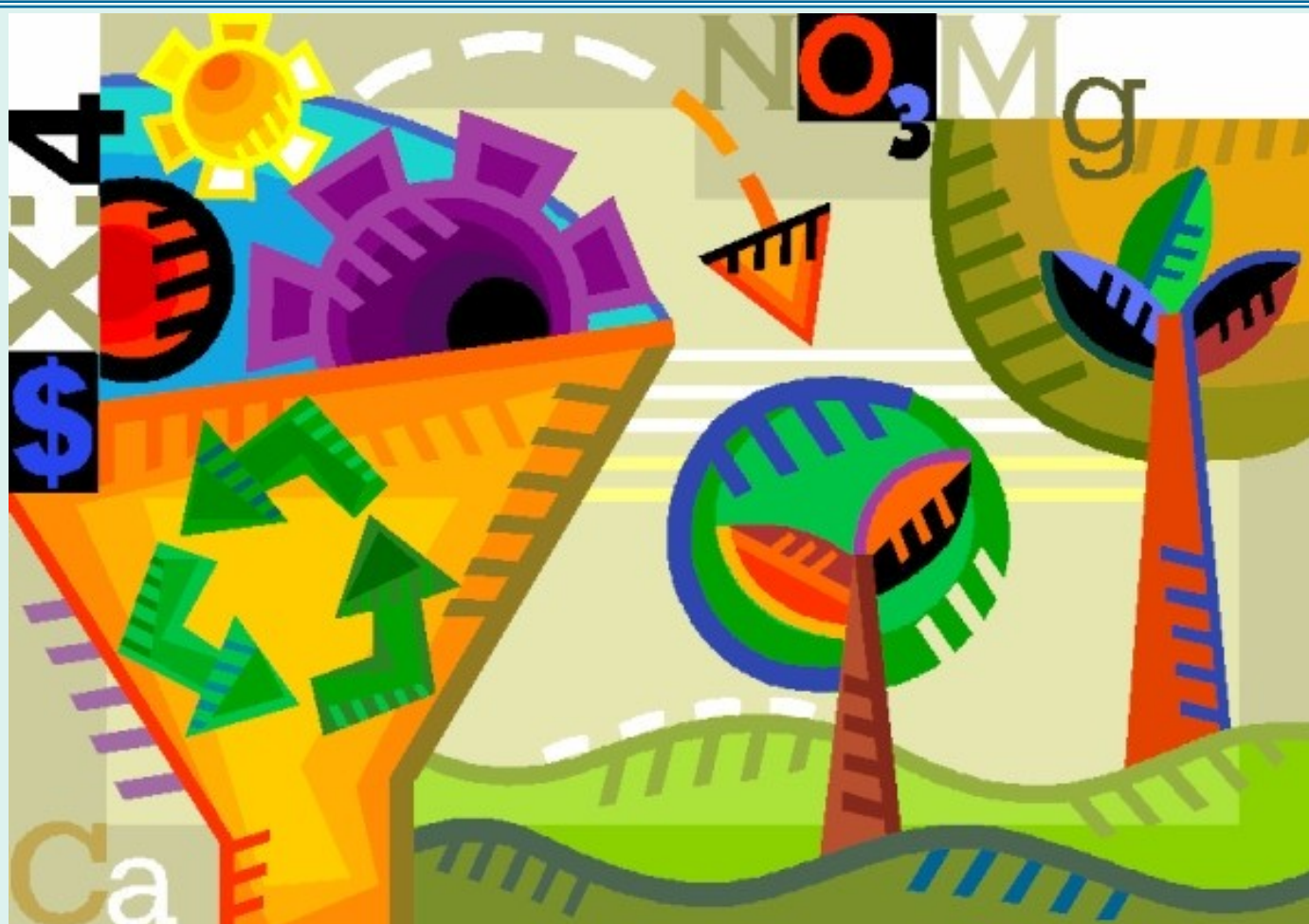
The concept of wildlife corridor (strips of habitat connecting wildlife populations separated by human activities) will be the theme of a 60 foot long mural in the community of Placitas. Thanks to the Placitas Recycling Center Board who graciously welcomed the idea, sections of their cinder block walls will be the ground for a clay tile and glass mosaic mural created by artists and schools in the community, entitled "Protect Our Wildlife Corridors."

Tile and mural artist Laura Robbins, a member of the Placitas Wildlife group called Pathways, came up with the idea and has enlisted the help of tile artist and school mural coordinator Cirrelda Snider. Robbins is also networking with art teacher Ann Dunbar and Environmental scientist Dan Shaw at Bosque Prep who will help students at that school contribute to the project. Plans are in the works to involve students from Placitas Elementary, with the help of its Arts-in-the-Schools coordinator Linda Hughes, as well as local high schools in the creation of plant tiles over the 2008-2009 school year. Two dozen community artists will create life size tile animals local to the northeastern Sandia Mountain foothills, the only side of this mountain group not populated with humans.

For more info on the mural and the group called Pathways, you can visit the articles in the March issue of the Sandoval Signpost

[http://www.sandovalsignpost.com/html/up\\_front.html#2](http://www.sandovalsignpost.com/html/up_front.html#2)

Submitted by Cirrelda Snider, EEANM member from Albuquerque, who will continue to keep folks posted on this project as it develops over the months ahead.



## Soar to Greater Heights: Professional Development for a Sustainable Future

**Joint Annual Conference of NMCTM/NMSTA/EEANM  
October 17-18, 2008**

University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico

Conference Session Proposal form is online at  
<http://mc2.nmsu.edu/NMCTMForms/PresentersForm.php>  
and must be received by Sept. 5, 2008.

*Preconference workshops will be held on October 17, with conference sessions at UNM on October 18. For more information, see EEANM's website at [www.eeanm.org](http://www.eeanm.org).*

## Border Wide Environmental Education Conference

by Kathryn Shaw

A small group representing Bosque School and BEMP – the Bosque Ecosystem Monitoring Program – departed Albuquerque on June 24<sup>th</sup> for Juárez, México to participate in a three day long conference focused on environmental education. The Border Wide Environmental Education Conference was a gathering of people from the environmental education community from across the US – Mexico border. The event was presented by

the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE), by a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency Region 6.

Conference sessions included *Creating an NAAEE Affiliate in Mexico: Exploratory Session*, *Research on Social Perceptions and Representations about Local Development and the Environment* presented by professors from the University of Guadalajara in Jalisco, Mexico, and our small group from Albuquerque presented the third workshop, *Involving K-12 Students in Monitoring of Riparian Habitat for Natural Resource Agencies*. Bosque School science teachers Dan Shaw and Catherine Bailey presented the workshop with the help of a Bosque High School senior, Anna Perez-Umphrey, and myself, a 2006 alumna of Bosque School.

The workshop we presented focused on the work and methods of BEMP, which for the past 12 years has involved K-12 students in collecting data from the bosque that has been analyzed and published by the University of New Mexico for use by government agencies to manage the Rio Grande's riverside forest.

Other New Mexicans attending the conference were Matthew Cross-Guillen with Bernalillo County Environmental Health, who led topic sessions titled *Interactive Water Education* and *Healthy Air: A Right or a Privilege*. From the Gila Conservation Education Center and the University of New Mexico, Kileen Mitchell and Nelida Barajas presented a session about *Portable Classrooms: Trunk Campaigns that Promote Environmental Conservation in the US-MX Border Regions*. Mitchell and Barajas also presented a session on *Experiences in Education for Conservation West of the Chihuahuan Desert*. From the Asombro Institute for Science Education in Las Cruces, New Mexico, Dr. Stephanie Bestelmeyer and Rink Somerday presented a session titled *Community Partnerships Bring Science to Life in New Mexico*. Dr. Deb Thrall, longtime member of EEANM and currently serving on the Board of NAAEE, also attended. Each participant at the conference contributed insight and experience enabling the entire group to learn, connect and expand the environmental education community from across the US-Mexico border.

Kathryn Shaw is a junior at Goucher College in Baltimore, MD, majoring in Spanish and International Relations.





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# WORKSHOPS

## **Project Learning Tree Facilitator Workshop**

August 22, 2008

The Environmental Education Association of New Mexico will host a workshop to train facilitators in the Project Learning Tree environmental curriculum. The facilitators work in varied locations throughout the state and will hold workshops for educators in their own communities within the next school year. Jean Szymanski, the State Coordinator for Project Learning Tree, and Barbara Garrity, EEANM's Statewide Coordinator will provide the workshop and continuing mentorship to the new facilitators. Expensed to attend the workshop will be paid. The workshop is funded by a grant from the AIP Foundation.

## **Project Learning Tree Workshop**

Albuquerque Garden Center, October 17, 2008

Jean Szymanski, the State Coordinator for Project Learning Tree, and Barbara Garrity, EEANM's Statewide Coordinator will provide the workshop. This will be one of the pre-conference workshops before the joint EEANM, NMSTA, and NMCTM Annual Conference (see page 10).

For more information on either of the above workshops, contact:

Barbara Garrity (505) 715-7021, [info@eeanm.org](mailto:info@eeanm.org)

## **Advanced Project WILD-Natural History Workshop**

Lizards, Snakes, Frogs, Toads and Turtles-Wind River Ranch -A free weekend of experiential learning at the spectacular, 4,200 acre Wind River Ranch along the Mora River in northeast New Mexico. Stunning scenery with elk, bison, pronghorn, turkey, mountain lion, and golden eagle!

STAFF: Famed Dept. herpetologist Charlie Painter, co-author of *Amphibians and Reptiles of New Mexico* and other wildlife researchers with decades of field experience will lead you through inquiry-based learning adventures centered on amphibians and reptiles and their habitat.

COST: FREE! Bring your own food and camping equipment. Kitchen, bathrooms and meeting room are available. Some rooms in rustic bunkhouses. Pre-registration required. Space is limited.

WHOM: Educators of all stripes (or scales) and interested adults. No pets please.

WHEN: August 15-17, 2008 (Friday 6:00 pm through Sunday noon).

WHERE: Wind River Ranch, northeast of Watrous, NM check out [www.windriverranch.org](http://www.windriverranch.org)

QUESTIONS? REGISTRATION? Call Kevin Holladay, Conservation Education, Dept. Game and Fish, (505) 476-8095, [Kevin.holladay@state.nm.us](mailto:Kevin.holladay@state.nm.us)

# MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name:

Affiliation:

Year-round Mailing Address:

City/Town:

State:

Zip Code:

Phones: W. (     )

H. (     )

Fax (     )

Email Address:

Web Address:

## CHECK ONE OF THE MEMBERSHIP TYPES

☐ Limited Income/Student Membership.....\$10.00

☐ Individual Membership.....\$25.00

☐ Organizational Membership.....\$50.00  
(Allows for 1 voting member and 2 general members)

*Name and **email address** of voting member*

*Names and **email addresses** of 2 additional newsletter recipients*

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