

Building Resilience... One Acre at a Time

The Quivira Coalition's Seventh Annual Conference

Building Resilience: Creating Hope in an Age of Consequences

By all indications, our Seventh Annual Conference, held January 17-19th at the Marriott Pyramid Hotel in Albuquerque, was the most successful one yet. Over 500 people attended the three day event, including 112 ranchers, 199 conservationists, 22 tribal members, and 127 from the general public.

The Conference featured three international speakers – Michel Meuret, from Avignon, France, and Jonah Western and John Kamanga, from Kenya – in addition to ecologist Lance Gunderson, archaeologist Eric Blinman, agrarianist Wes Jackson, energy experts Mark Sardella and David Bacon, Navajo shepherders Roy Kady, Jay Begay, and Collen Biakeddy, and many others.



Speaker Jonah Western and 2008 conference participants.

But perhaps most importantly, the Conference theme of resilience went over extremely well with attendees. It represented a bit of a gamble on our part – would folks take to a theme that not-so-subtly raised “gloomy” questions about our ability to withstand the surprises inherent in climate change, Peak Oil, water and food shortages?

These are elements of what I call the Age of Consequences – the era in which we, and subsequent generations, begin to grapple with the cumulative effects of two hundred years of full-throttle industrialism. It's not just about the effects of greenhouse gases or toxic wastes, but our decisions also. Action has consequences,

of course, but so does inaction – and we did plenty of both last century.

Metaphorically, I think of the Age of Consequences as a hurricane that has been building slowly over open water for some time but is now approaching shore. We can already feel its winds. Naturally, a strenuous effort is needed to lower the wind speed of this hurricane as much as possible – such as reducing the amount of greenhouse gases entering the atmosphere. However, we must also prepare basic support systems, including food, fuel, and shelter, since the hurricane is destined to make landfall no matter what we do.

In other words, we need to build ecological and economic resilience – which the dictionary defines as “the ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change” – among landowners, organizations, and communities so that they can weather the coming storm.

Well, the answer from the speakers and Conference-goers was a resounding ‘Yes!’

From the 164 people who attended the Range School, which focused on profit and drought management, to the 168 people who attended our symposium on Water Harvesting, to the concurrent sessions on energy, conservation, ranching, easements, herding, and common wealths, plus all the plenary speakers, the consensus was: resilience is here to stay.

Building resilience, in fact, is now officially part of The Quivira Coalition's mission statement.

For more information both on the Conference and our work, visit: www.quiviracoalition.org.

On behalf of all of us at The Quivira Coalition, I want to thank everyone involved with the Conference – our speakers, sponsors, vendors, volunteers, hotel contacts, and especially the attendees for helping us create a very hopeful event.

Courtney

See you in 2009!*

*** PLEASE NOTE: Our Eighth Annual Conference will be NOVEMBER 4 -6th, 2009.**

PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!

Land and Water Program

2007 was a busy year for the Land and Water Program. We appreciate all those who donated to our 2007 Land and Water Fund Campaign!

Operation of the **Valle Grande Ranch** continued with the help of our new ranch manager Mike Archuleta who lives in Rowe with his wife and four children. This year focused on streamlining the operation, building equity in livestock and developing the local beef market. We began the year with 16 bred heifers and two bulls and ended with 32 heifers, 6 cows and calves, 9 steers and two bulls. In addition, we sold 15 steers to local consumers in Santa Fe. Our experience working with local beef sales has taught us a lot about the challenges of building local food capacity. We are sharing these lessons with other producers who are bravely trying to follow a similar path. Visitors to the Mesa in the fall noticed some additional activity on the north end of the allotment as Forest Guild crews began clearing trees for the second CFRP Forest Health project on the Mesa. The project expects to restore approximately 900 acres of ponderosa forest.

The **New Ranch Network** small grants program supported projects in Texas, Arizona and New Mexico. Texas projects funded from the Dixon Water Fund included The Ogallala Commons' Playa Lakes Festival, a Bill Zeedyk Water Harvesting from Roads workshop in Hudspeth County, hosted by Chris Gill, and a low stress stockmanship clinic with Guy Glosson in Aldeo, TX.

With support from the NRN, PNM and NM State Legislature funds, The Ojo Encino Ranchers Committee launched their first restoration outreach project with neighbors in Rincon Marquez. This erosion control Ant Hill Project involved five youths from the Rincon Marquez community and was organized, planned and implemented by members of the Ojo Encino Ranchers Committee.

The Tio Grande Allotment located in the Tres Piedras Ranger District used a Forest Service NRN grant to help transition from their departing range rider to his replacement.

The NRCS Conservation Innovation Grant also supported range riders last season. Ojo Encino hired a range rider to help ranchers round-up stray animals and implement infrastructure maintenance (fences and gates). The second grant supported a range rider apprentice who gained experience on four different livestock operations. We expect the NRN Range Rider Program will continue to grow in 2008.

The Quivira Coalition's Land Health Services program provided general coordination support and monitoring services for the Valles Caldera's grazing program. *This was the first year the grazing program netted the Valles Caldera Trust a profit since its inception.*

Restoration Projects and hands-on workshops kept staff and volunteers busy in 2007. Our three-year wetlands restoration project on Cedro Creek, located within the Cibola National Forest/Sandia Ranger District near Albuquerque, NM, came to a close. In March local residents, students and teachers from Van Buren Middle School planted riparian vegetation along five reaches of the creek. In June volunteers from the Albuquerque Wildlife Federation, local

residents, state and federal employees constructed a large rock bowl structure along the Sandia Prep Reach and in August 40 volunteers from PNM, local residents and the general public installed 14 rock structures along Sabino Creek, a tributary of Cedro Creek. Over the three years, 179 volunteers, along with contractual restoration professionals, constructed 154 treatments (practices or structures) along ~2.14 miles of the Cedro Creek Watershed to affect the productivity of approximately 17 acres of wetland habitat (*see report on our website: www.quivicoalition.org*)

2007 was also a busy year for our Comanche Creek Restoration work on the Valle Vidal. The season started in May with a willow planting volunteer day where willow cuttings were planted along eroding banks within elk-exclusions. The Comanche Creek Educational Signs at the confluence of Costilla Creek and Comanche Creek and at the Chuckwagon parking area were re-created and then installed in by volunteers Avery Anderson and Rebecca Watters. A three-day educational and work weekend lead by Bill Zeedyk was held July 26-29. Sixty-nine volunteers from the Sierra Club, Taos Soil and Water Conservation District, NM Trout, Trout Unlimited – Truchas chapter, Boy Scouts of America and the general public, five Quivira Staff and four dedicated riparian restoration specialists installed 24 post vanes along the middle reach of Comanche Creek. During September, upland Monitoring transects were re-read, photo points re-taken, geomorphology surveys repeated, and twelve very hardy volunteers constructed 18 new vanes and reconstructed six others along the middle reach of Comanche Creek (*for the complete report on Comanche Creek visit our website at www.comanchecreek.org*)



Bill Zeedyk leads a group discussion on Comanche Creek on how a vane structure protects an eroding bank decreasing the amount of sediment entering the creek to improve habitat for the Rio Grande Cutthroat trout.



From the New Ranch Network: Restoration Ranch Exchange

In our quest to continually improve the New Ranch Network, we are initiating the Restoration Ranch Exchange e-mail forum. The Restoration Ranch Exchange provides a real time forum where ranchers, managers, landowners and others interested in habitat improvement, cattle production, sustainable ranching, restoration, public education, science & research or related subjects can exchange ideas and information of importance. There is no cost and it is open to all. Entries should be brief, meaningful and give a reference name and phone number where appropriate. This will not be a "chat-room," "gab-fest" or venue for political diatribes. Some e-mail lists send mailings so often or messages so lengthy they become mind numbing. We are aiming to keep this forum crisp and concise. Members simply type in an entry and send it to The Quivira Coalition where it will be distributed to the exchange network. If you want to know more, you can reach either the sender or referenced person directly. If the subject doesn't interest you, hit "delete." The network can also be used for advertising goods and services of relevance to the restoration ranch community.

Typical entries might include:

[1] Bob Hotchkiss of the National Wild Turkey Federation is looking for **suitable habitat for turkey introduction**. If you have an interest, he is personable and impressed us as knowledgeable: (803) 637-3106 ext. 3811, cell (570) 466-3948.

[2] Raymond M. Turner (co-author of the 1965 "The Changing Mile" and 2003 "The Changing Mile Revisited") has released "**The Ribbon of Green, Changing Riparian Vegetation in the Southwest**" University of Arizona Press, Tucson, in which he and co-authors challenge the notion that "we've lost 90% of the riparian vegetation

in the Southwest United States" as a popular but misguided idea traced to an unsupported conclusion in a single 1977 paper.

[3] **New Mexico Governor Richardson signed HB990** allowing landowners, effective 1/1/08, donating land or easements for conservation purposes to offset taxes to a new limit of \$250,000. It was \$100,000 and non-transferable, but now it can be transferred. Transferability makes the law similar to Colorado's where brokers sell them for 80-85% of face value, meaning those ranchers with little taxable income who typically can't use these benefits can now sell for a \$215,000 return. (Tax Credit Connection, Inc. [505] 629-9651, www.taxconnection.com.)

[4] **Used Mesh Fencing Wanted:** The Santa Ana Pueblo is involved in an antelope restoration project on the Santa Ana Mesa and along the Rio Jemez. This year we are implementing various habitat and infrastructure improvements so that the table will be set for a release next winter. One of the infrastructure improvements we are involved with will help the Pueblo control antelope movements, especially across jurisdictional boundaries where restored antelope will not be protected. To control antelope movements, the Pueblo will reinforce approximately 5 miles of strategically-identified existing fence lines with hog-wire or mesh fencing. We are looking for landowners that have stockpiled used mesh fencing and willing to donate it to this project. Glenn Harper - gharper@santaana.org

Join us by sending an e-mail to Mike Bain at mbain@quiviracoalition.org.

If you have questions, reach Mike at 505-820-2544 Ext. 6# or at the above-mail address.

A Personal Appreciation for a Job Very Well Done

By the time you read this Bulletin, our good friend Sheryl Russell will have left The Quivira Coalition for greener pastures. We knew this day was coming, but still it's sad to see a buddy go – if even only to Bernalillo!

Sheryl has been involved with The Quivira Coalition for over six years, starting as a volunteer and growing eventually into her role as the mayordomo of our Annual Conference. Everything she did – whether it was to make sure that the sign-up sheet was signed up by EVERYONE at workshops, to keeping the office shipshape, to conducting hardball negotiation with hotels, to, well, everything – she did extraordinarily well.

And if it looked smooth and effortless to those of you who attended the events she organized – that's a perfect testimonial to her skills!

The Quivira Coalition could not have accomplished half of what it did over the past six years without Sheryl.

On a personal note, I met Sheryl ten years ago when both of us were 'doing time' in the tourism industry. We shared a memorable two-week 'Tony Hillerman' bus tour together, Sheryl as the tour boss, and I as the guy with the trivia questions for the guests. I remember being impressed as much by her great sense of humor as by her ability to keep the group on time.

Later, our lives crossed paths again when Sheryl showed up our house one day, not long after Sterling and Olivia were born, as a volunteer with the nonprofit group Muchas Mamas. Thus began a wonderful friendship that I treasure. People move on, but memories, and the good work accomplished over the years, do not.

On behalf of Gen, Sterling, Olivia, and everyone associated with The Quivira Coalition – especially those who have had the good fortune to know Sheryl – I wish her the best of luck in her next adventure!

Sincerely,

Courtney

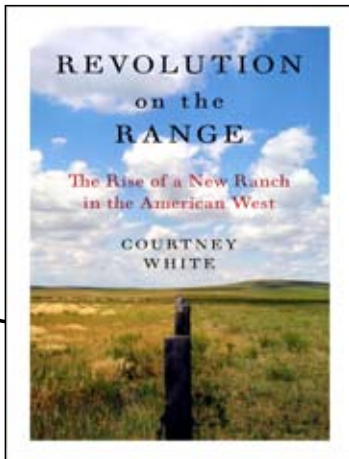


Upcoming Events

We are currently in the process of planning for 2008 outdoor classrooms, workshops and trainings. Stay up to date on our websites www.quiviracoalition.org or www.newrach.net. We have a low-stress livestock clinic planned for late April or May, will be back on Comanche Creek in mid July, and we have penciled in a Monitoring & Planned Grazing workshops for early fall.

Courtney's book will be arriving in book stores in early June.

To order, visit www.islandpress.org.



The Quivira Coalition
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JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

Coordinator needed for the
Aldo Leopold Centennial Celebration

To mark the 2009 centennial of Aldo Leopold's arrival in the Southwest, a year-long series of events are being planned by a diverse group of organizations in New Mexico and Arizona. A Coordinator will be hired for 20 months, starting in May, 2008, to better organize these events. Enthusiasm, self-discipline, people skills, energy, and a passion for Leopold and conservation are required!

To read the job description and apply, visit: www.leopoldcelebration.org.

Welcome Mike!

We are pleased to welcome Mike Bain to The Quivira Coalition Staff as our new Program Coordinator. Mike will take over our on-the-ground restoration projects including Comanche Creek and Mora River restoration project through our New Mexico River Ecosystem Restoration Initiative Grant. Mike holds a B.S. in Secondary Education, specializing in the Social Sciences, and an MBA from Jacksonville State University at Jacksonville, Alabama. Over the past three years he has served as Executive Director of the Cimarron Watershed Alliance, Inc. where he implemented and managed riparian restoration, forest restoration, fire abatement, and watershed public outreach and education projects with funding from EPA 319(h) Clean Water Act, New Mexico Water Trust Board, USDA Stevens Allocation, New Mexico Energy Minerals & Natural Resources Department, and private sources. In addition, he has had a 28 year career in managing livestock, timber, and wildlife assets for private holdings. With all these qualifications, Mike will be a great asset to the organization ...welcome aboard!



Courtney

March 2008