

The Quivira Coalition's Bulletin

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The mission of The Quivira Coalition is to foster ecological, economic, and social health on western landscapes through education, innovation, collaboration, and progressive public and private land stewardship.



Fourth Annual Conference A Big Success

It looks like we've got a tiger by the tail. From January 13 to the 15, 2005, nearly five hundred people (a new record) packed the Albuquerque Hilton to learn, listen, and shake hands as part of our Fourth Annual Conference. Ranchers, conservationists, and state and federal land managers came from places as distant as California, Washington, Montana, even Canada (see chart on page 2).

The speakers were a diverse crowd as well, representing ranches, agencies, and universities from as far away as South Africa, and as near by as Albuquerque's Valley High School! Topics ranged from goats to birds, to a history of private property, to getting along with predators, to making a profit in the cattle business, to the Buddha.

We were honored to have Allan Nation join us on Friday as our keynote speaker. Nation, a widely sought-after lecturer and teacher, publishes The Stockman Grass Farmer, a monthly publication that focuses on management-intensive grassland enterprises around the world. He entertained the large crowd with an energetic analysis of the livestock business – challenging many cherished beliefs in the process!

A copy of Nation's talk will be available soon on our website, along with those by Sumner Erdman, Eric Freyfogle, and Fred Provenza.

We were also honored to be joined by **Senator Pete Domenici** (R-NM), who encouraged the audience to "think big" when looking at natural resource issues. Impressed by the diversity in the room (we had a show of hands),

Domenici expressed his support for any effort that was inclusive, including The Quivira Coalition.

He seemed very pleased with our work, and we were very pleased that he could join us. The standing ovation he received at the conclusion of his talk, and the rave reviews we received for all our speakers, tells us we have a hard act to follow next year.



Keynote Speaker, Allan Nation

Half and Half

We expanded the Conference this year to include two all-day symposiums on Thursday prior to the start of the main event. One was a Range School, taught by good friends from Colorado. The other was an in-depth exploration of the idea of "water-banking" – storing water in streambanks (where it would naturally be) instead of in reservoirs. Both events were well received and well attended – the Range School drew 100 "students" and the "water-banking" symposium drew nearly 150 people.



Senator Pete Domenici

On Thursday afternoon, the South-west Grassfed Livestock Alliance (an organization with the potential to make a difference in the region) met for its second annual general membership meeting.

The Conference began in earnest Thursday evening with a lively look at

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the “major possibilities” of minor livestock breeds around the nation. The event was organized and hosted by award-winning author and heritage foods advocate Dr. Gary Nabhan, Director of the Center for Sustainable Environments at Northern Arizona University. We’d like to thank Gary and his friends for their support. We are honored by his friendship.



Maryann McGraw

in the West – open space, wildlife, culture, economy – we need to unite our efforts and manage land as if fences didn’t matter.”

We tried hard to link each speaker to this theme, and the feedback we received from participants was almost unanimously positive.

Our aim, as usual, was to provoke. Not every listener agreed with every speaker – and sometimes the disagreement was substantial – but people were destructively prodded.

One reviewer put it this way on an evaluation form: “I loved the diversity of the speakers and their backgrounds. I believe this is one of the things that keeps bringing people back to these conferences – even if you don’t agree with all the ideas, you are stimulated.”



Fred Provenza

On Friday morning, the main show began, and the floodgates opened. The theme of the Conference was **Half Public, Half Private, One West**. Here’s how we explained it in the Registration materials: “*To ensure the long-term vitality of the values that we all cherish*

And it wasn’t just about ideas. Another respondent said “I will use things from this conference. I have many opportunities to do things differ-

ently on my ranch, from grazing to noxious weed control.”



Doc and Connie Hatfield’s Presentation

Ultimately, the chance to network – to meet and talk with lots of people – seems to be an attraction of the Conference. It is a chance to take time out from our busy lives and simply *talk* with people.

So, after four years of very hard work we feel like we can begin to say that a sense of community forming among those of us in the ‘radical center.’ There is hope and energy in the air, and people are genuinely enthusiastic about the future.

If our Conference continues to contribute to this sense of community, then all the hard work is worth it.

We’ve already starting planning for next year! ☺

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All Photos are courtesy of Gene Peach.

2005 Conference Statistics
492 Participants

New Mexico Attendees	264
Out of State Attendees	206
Ranchers or Land Managers	36%
Environmental Community	14%
Federal Land Managers or Employees	16%
State Land Managers or Employees	5%
Native Americans	3%
Academic Community	6%
Business Community	6%
General Public and Other	10%

Executive Director Courtney White's Opening Remarks (excerpt)

We are all familiar with poet Robert Frost's famous line that "good fences make good neighbors." But in "Mending Wall" the line is spoken not by the narrator but by his neighbor, a farmer, and it is the only thing his neighbor says in the entire poem. It's left to the narrator to muse over its meaning, as well as over the stone wall that separates them, noting "Something there is that doesn't love a wall."

Gravity, for instance. Hunters are a problem for walls too, the narrator observes, as are their prey, which sometimes hide in a stone wall's holes. Neighbors can be a problem for walls as well, as can his cattle.

But none of this matters to the narrator's neighbor, who has the last word in the poem: "Good fences make good neighbors."

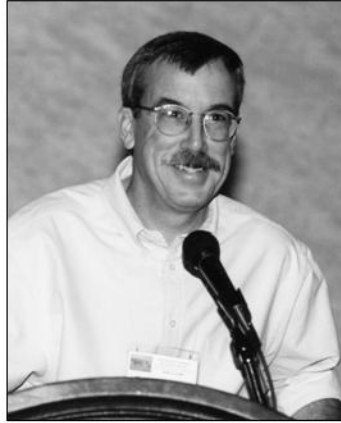
For Frost, however, "mending" is the issue, not the wall. If we choose to erect walls between us then we assign ourselves the perpetual job of mending them, including the relationships between neighbors. Nature tugs, people mend.

In the American West, there is no more significant, or sturdy wall than that between public and private land. It is a fence, in fact, that almost cleanly divides the West in half physically; but more importantly, it divides the region emotionally.

Like all walls, however, the public/private division is an artificial one, subject to the same forces that tug at Frost's fictional stone wall. Nature, for instance, stubbornly refuses to acknowledge this fence, as many ecologists and conservation biologists having been pointing out. But emotionally too, the divide is an unnatural one.

Where, for example, does "wilderness" begin or end really – at a fence line? Does "wildness" exist on one side of the divide and "commodity" on the other? Where do private rights stop and public responsibilities begin?

The time has come in the West to focus on the "mending", not the wall. It's one West after all – physically, historically, and emotionally – one community, with both private rights and public obligations firmly in place. Like Frost's metaphorical



New England farm, western neighbors must learn to get along – mend together – if the community as a whole is to remain healthy.

This Conference is all about mending. We respect the fence, and the opinion of our neighbors, but we also recognize that we must work together for the common good.

Good fences might make good neighbors, but a handshake is much better. ☺

A Call for a Western Congress

In his talk at the Conference, Daniel Kemmis said it was the right time to consider a Western Congress.

It's a call that we support here at The Quivira Coalition. We believe the level of innovation, collaboration, and change in the region has reached a point where we can, and should, begin to influence policy. Our energies should be collected and harnessed into a West-wide movement that aims to improve economic and ecological conditions simultaneously through cooperation.

It is also time to link individuals and organizations to one another across a large landscape so that we can look, learn, and teach together.

We believe a Western Congress can be an important step in both these directions.

The goal of the Congress would be modest: to select four or five policy objectives that are pragmatic and far-reaching – achieved by a consensus of participants representing the 'radical center' in the West.

The aim is to devise western solutions to western problems, crafted and supported by westerners of diverse backgrounds. We believe the 'toolbox' of ideas has been significantly increased in recent years and that westerners themselves are in the best position to make prudent choices.



Daniel Kemmis

At the same time, we are mindful that the West is nested in larger ecological, economic, and political spheres in the nation and in the world. No region is an island, therefore any policy changes proposed must necessarily work in the 'real world'.

We are also mindful that our knowledge of the natural world is incomplete, and that entrepreneurial energy continues to expand in new directions. Still, we believe there are enough homegrown ideas and solutions to get started with the hard work of change.

The 4th Annual Clarence Burch Award


The Quivira Coalition
1413 2nd St. Ste. #1
Santa Fe, NM 87505

It was an emotional evening.

It began with an outstanding dinner of "slow" food – tender Corriente beef from the **Anderson Ranch** in northern Texas, organic turkey from Tom Delehanty's **Pollo Real** farm near Socorro, salad and winter vegetables from **Camino de Paz Farms** in Española, goat cheese from **Coonridge Farms** near Pie Town, and pecan pie made from **Mesilla Valley Pecans**, in Las Cruces.

The food was so tasty and well-prepared that when the hotel's chefs were brought out, they received a standing ovation.

Over the meal, chef and author Deborah Madison explained the goals of the "slow" food movement to the nearly two hundred people in attendance, praising all of us for 'walking the talk' – especially the Hilton Hotel.

An emotional awards ceremony followed, featuring the 2005 Burch winners: ranchers Jim and Joy Williams, Forest Service range conservationist John Pierson, consultant Kirk Gadzia, and Forest Service employees Janice Stevenson, Marcia Andre, Steve Libby, and Dave Stewart.



2005 Burch Award Winners

Jim Williams and Steve Libby movingly described their long journey from antagonists to cooperators. At one point, Jim Williams was not on speaking terms with the Forest Service, which controls half of his ranch. Thanks to the intervention of Kirk Gadzia and others, a process of dialogue was started. Today, the relationship between the Williamses and the Forest Service is strong and productive.

And the results of this new relationship can be seen where it matters most – on-the-ground. We are honored to have them share the \$15,000 award.

We ended the banquet with guest speaker Michael McGarrity, a celebrated New Mexico author and recipient of the 2004 New Mexico Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts & Literature.

In fact, the banquet was a fitting conclusion to three days of looking, learning and shaking hands. ☺

We are updating our website!

www.quiviracoalition.org

Our website will soon allow you to:

- Become a New Member
- Renew Your Membership
- Give a Gift Membership
- Register for Workshops
- Purchase Books, Mugs and Caps

*Remember, we are always
looking for new members and
a Quivira Coalition
membership makes great gift!*

