

# THE TRUST *for* PUBLIC LAND

CONSERVING LAND FOR PEOPLE

## New Mexico

ISSUE I  
2008

River Renaissance  
page 1

Notes from the Field  
page 2

Funds in Flux  
page 3

Ute Mountain  
page 3

Railyard Update  
page 4

Legislative Update  
page 4

On the Land:  
Gutierrez Canyon  
page 6



TPL is partnering with World Wildlife Fund and others to preserve a portion of the Rio Grande in Seldon Canyon, pictured above. Aerial photograph © Adriel Heisey

### RIVER RENAISSANCE: PROTECTING AND ENRICHING THE WATERS THAT DEFINE NEW MEXICO

by Don Usner

New Mexicans treasure streams and rivers, perhaps because so few flow across this rugged, arid land. Passionate conservation advocates keep eagle-eyes trained on these ribbons of green, watching over every bend and working to keep the water flowing.

TPL claims its place among this dedicated cadre, recognizing that although the Rio Grande, the Gila, the Canadian, the Chama, the Pecos, and other smaller watercourses cover a very small percentage of New Mexico's landscape, they support the state's greatest biological diversity, quench the thirst of much of the human population, water most farms, and lure countless visitors from urban centers.

"I count these rivers and streams among our greatest treasures," says biologist Steven Albert, "but they're in pretty rough shape right now. Impoundments, diversions, the drought...these are putting a squeeze on all New Mexico watersheds and rivers."

Rio Grande advocate Alan Hamilton concurs, adding, "There's no better way

*continued inside...*



The Trust for Public Land conserves land for people to enjoy as parks, gardens, and other natural places, ensuring livable communities for generations to come.





Photo: Laurel Savino

## Railyard Update

### AS CONSTRUCTION ENTERS FINAL PHASE, YOUR SUPPORT IS CRUCIAL

by Laurel Savino

Against all odds, the Railyard Park + Plaza is rising from the earth. As of this writing, construction is 50% complete and on track to open to you in mid-summer 2008.

If you drive past the site, you'll see the features of the new park beginning to emerge out of the hub of activity: a huge circular shade ramada with porch swings and a rose garden; a long linear shade ramada stretching from Paseo de Peralta into the heart of the park; and a back-to-back climbing wall and slide structure. Near Cerrillos Road, you'll see the red concrete rings and boulders for Child's Play, the playground designed for Santa Fe kids by artist Mary Miss. Rings for fruit trees and gabion barriers made of southwestern stone line Cerrillos, helping to beautify the street and minimize road noise.

Soon there will be a performance green with power for a stage or movie screen and a long bike path/walkway along the railroad tracks from St. Francis Drive

to Montezuma Avenue. As you read this, 400+ new trees and hundreds of shrubs, flowers, and grasses are starting to go in. And though you can't see it, there will also be an innovative irrigation network extending throughout the park to deliver rainwater harvested from the roofs of railyard buildings.

The generosity of Santa Feans, the City, the County, Governor Richardson, and Santa Fe's state and federal congressional delegations, who know what unforgettable central parks can mean for great cities, has made this remarkable city park possible.

It's not too late for you to join this group of visionaries. We have a relatively small amount of funding left to raise. If we're successful, we can open the park on schedule in mid-summer. If you've thought about giving, now is definitely the time. Please use the enclosed envelope and note that your gift is for the Railyard Park + Plaza, or call Laurel Savino at 505.988.5922 x114. \*

## Legislative Update

With only 30 days to complete the work in even-numbered years, the 2008 legislative session was truly action packed, with many conservation successes to celebrate!

The legislature granted \$1.5 million to the Land and Wildlife Fund of the Department of Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources, to be used to acquire land and conservation easements for the protection of wilderness areas, trails, and agricultural lands. A river restoration bill was also passed, granting \$2.8 million to the Department of the Environment for river restoration and conservation along our rivers.

Thanks to Governor Bill Richardson and the Santa Fe delegation (Speaker Ben Lujan, Senator John Grubestic, Representative Lucky Varela, and Representative Peter Wirth), the Railyard Park + Plaza secured \$725,000 in funding. And, in the Village of Los Ranchos, thanks to Senator Dede Feldman and Representative Teresa Zanetti, funds were obtained for Anderson Farm, a property TPL has been working to protect for several years. Our thanks go to all of those in the legislature with the vision to take action to preserve the landscapes and rivers of New Mexico! \*

To learn more about the railyard, and to support the project, contact Laurel Savino at [laurel.savino@tpl.org](mailto:laurel.savino@tpl.org)