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TEN YEARS OF PROMOTING
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BY PROTECTING
OUR ENVIRONMENT

► **Responsible Mining** ► **Healthy Rivers** ► **Community Planning** ► **Aquifer Protection** ► **Environmental Health** ► **Sustainability**

GRIP PARTICIPATES IN WHITE HOUSE DISCUSSION ON HEALTH BENEFITS OF CLEAN ENERGY REFORM

**Estimated \$120 billion
annually in health cost
savings from developing
clean energy**

By Allyson Siwik, Executive Director

A shift to a sustainable clean economy will create new jobs and improve public health was the message at an invite-only White House stakeholders meeting designed to engage communities from around the country and gain input from the trenches on the transition to a Clean Energy Economy. Because many of the same sources that emit greenhouse gases are major sources of air pollution, a switch to cleaner energy will reduce particulate pollution, smog and toxics in the air Americans breathe. A recent National Academies report estimated that fossil-fuel based energy production and use in the US contribute \$120 billion annually in health and environmental costs. The National Institutes of Health estimates that the cost savings realized from improving health will offset the cost of addressing climate change and, therefore, should be considered as part of all policy discussions related to climate change.

"Energy reform and environmental protection go hand-in-

SEE *WHITE HOUSE DISCUSSION* ON PAGE 7



VIVA VERDE'S SUCCESS HAS POSITIVE SPIN-OFFS FOR COMMUNITY

By John Vanvig, GRIP Communications Staff

Connections made -- and lessons learned -- at the Viva Verde Expo keep rippling through the region, as GRIP and its project co-sponsors turn their focus to future events and offerings.

Some 500 people from throughout southern New Mexico and beyond convened in Silver City in late June for the inaugural Viva Verde Expo. The associated Viva Verde Guide, listing goods, services and contact information for green businesses across the region, has been distributed to libraries, public gathering places and advertisers for free circulation.

"We're very pleased with the turnout and the response to both the Expo and Guide," said Allyson Siwik, GRIP executive director and a lead planner for the project. "But we're far from finished with this exciting project. We want to continue to provide quality information and resources to individuals, businesses and homeowners throughout our region through the Viva Verde Guide and future programming."

The Expo and Guide, she noted, provided a host of attractions for participants -- and a lot of solid business opportunities for

shopkeepers, contractors and consultants who set up vendor displays at the event at Western New Mexico University -- as well as had a number of positive spin-offs:

- Green business owners renewed their ties and forged new connections with consumers, showing off their goods and services and demonstrating how residents can incorporate green offerings into their lifestyles. Read about Viva Verde business success stories at www.vivaverdenm.com
- Expo participants left the rainy Expo grounds and promptly put their newly gained knowledge to work capturing rooftop runoff and channeling water across their landscapes to supply gardens. Participants continue to implement knowledge gained from Viva Verde in their lives. To read their stories, visit www.vivaverdenm.com
- The New Mexico Green Chamber of Commerce turned to the Viva Verde Guide as a basis for its recruiting efforts in southwestern New Mexico.
- The local Habitat for Humanity connected with Viva Verde Expo Plenary Speaker, Pat Murphy of Community Solutions, to collaborate on a passive solar house design for the Brewer Hill affordable housing development.
- Grant County and Town of Silver City officials cited the Viva Verde project and their involvement in it as part of their successful grant application to launch a collaborative Office of Sustainability, supported with federal stimulus funding, to green up government buildings, coordinate educational efforts and

DID YOU KNOW?

ENERGY STAR-rated compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) use 75% less energy and save about \$30 in energy costs over the lifetime of the bulb? GRIP gave away 1000 free compact fluorescent light bulbs as part of the Viva Verde project, reducing 292 tons of climate change-causing CO2 and achieving \$24,500 in energy savings over the lifetime of all of the CFLs.

SEE *VIVA VERDE SPIN-OFFS* ON PAGE 7



Gila Resources Information Project

305A N. Cooper St., Silver City, NM 88061
(575) 538-8078 (voice/fax)
GRIP@gilaresources.info
www.gilaresources.info

Mission Statement

Recognizing that human and environmental systems are inseparable and interdependent, Gila Resources Information Project pursues two goals: to protect and nurture human communities by safeguarding the natural resources that sustain us all; and to safeguard natural resources by facilitating informed public participation in resource use decisions.

Board of Directors

Sally Smith, President
Jesse Franklin-Owens, Vice-President
Harry Browne, Secretary/Treasurer
Michael Berman
David Rose
M.H. "Dutch" Salmon

Staff

Allyson Siwik
Executive Director
asiwik@zianet.com

Sally Smith
Director, Responsible Mining Program
sallys@gilanet.com

Marya Gendron
Web, Design, Publicity, Production
maryagendron@gmail.com

Siri Khalsa
Membership Coordinator
siridk@gmail.com

Richard Mahler
Newsletter Editor
rmahler@cruzio.com

John Vanvig
Communications Staff
johnlvanvig@yahoo.com

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To become a member and receive a copy of Get A GRIP, a minimum donation of \$10.00 is appreciated. GRIP is a 501(c)(3), tax-exempt organization; your contribution is tax-deductible.



NEW SILVER CITY/ GRANT COUNTY OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY TO BE FUNDED WITH RECOVERY FUNDING

By John Vanvig, GRIP Communications Staff

A new joint effort between Silver City and Grant County to put local people to work, curb CO₂ pollution -- and save taxpayers' money -- will be initiated soon thanks to federal stimulus funds.

The Office of Sustainability, funded with over \$300,000 in energy efficiency and conservation grants from the U.S. Department of Energy, will coordinate and oversee efforts to weatherize homes and public buildings throughout Grant County. The money -- and the new workforce it will help train -- will also go toward installing solar panels on a parking structure at the Silver City Visitors Center.

The office and many of its planned projects were recommended by Silver City Mayor James Marshall's Climate Protection Agreement Citizens Advisory Committee, which worked on a range of proposals for nearly a year before presenting its report to the Town Council in early 2009. GRIP serves on the Climate Committee and provided support for Climate Action Plan and grant development.

Marshall said the committee's recommendations were tailor-made for prompt and effective action.

"This plan not only addressed the global overview," he said. "It also focused on what I call low-hanging fruit: steps we can take that provide an immediate return, which made it easier to achieve implementation. It's another step towards increasing government efficiency -- as well as individual resident's efficiency -- in an informed manner."

Silver City Town Manager Alex Brown said the climate committee's proposals were down-to-earth, which combined with the federal stimulus money made it possible for town officials to move fast.

"They're aimed at saving the town as well as its residents money," Brown said. "Because of the climate committee, we've been ahead of the game -- because of the recommendations they've come forward with. They've done a lot of hard work by gathering information and making some very solid, realizable recommendations. There are lots of things that we felt we could accomplish."

Among the projects town and county officials foresee for the Office of Sustainability:

- Public education campaigns and information clearinghouse for residents seeking to reduce their energy use. The GRIP-organized Viva Verde Guide and Expo programs are specifically cited as part of this effort.
- Weatherization resources for low-income residents.
- Incentives for other residents to tighten up their homes' energy efficiency.
- A Neighborhood Blitz Program using Western New Mexico University students to increase home energy efficiency.

All told, the Office of Sustainability and its related projects are expected to produce six new full-time jobs. In addition, the office will work with WNMU to expand training opportunities in renewable energy and efficiency jobs for laid-off Grant County miners and others hit by the economic recession.

The project's fast start is an encouraging sign that local officials are serious about strengthening the local economy with sustainable development initiatives, according to Mary Stoecker, facilitator for the climate advisory committee.

"I think it shows some real support for the recommendations, but more than that, it shows real collaborative effort by the town and county," she said. "The whole committee is really happy that the action plan is not sitting on the shelf. I don't think it ever made it to the shelf—it went right from 'Here it is' to 'how can we implement it?'"

LOCAL BUSINESSES FORM GREEN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE TO ADVOCATE FOR GREEN PUBLIC POLICY & SUSTAINABLE LOCAL ECONOMY

By John Vanvig, GRIP Communications Staff

In order to strengthen the voice of business in promoting a green economy in New Mexico, more than 700 businesses have joined the New Mexico Green Chamber of Commerce. About 50 businesses have signed up for the local chapter of the statewide group, the Southwestern New Mexico Green Chamber of Commerce, in just two months of organizing, according to Mattie Eagle, owner of the Material Good home store in downtown Silver City, who is spearheading the new group.

If you doubt the power of the collective business voice, consider the US Chamber of Commerce, the world's largest not-for-profit lobbying group, representing the interests of some of the country's biggest corporations. Spending \$91.7 million on lobbying in 2008, the USCC is the strongest opposition to climate legislation in the U.S. Local chambers of commerce tend to mirror the national chamber as larger businesses and corporations that contribute the most in dues tend to have the biggest voice.

For now, the new chamber's focus is on developing a local, sustainable economy.

"In a community like ours, it makes sense to focus on local businesses," Eagle said. "And the green chamber can really help us go after these green jobs."

That may include advocacy work with the statewide green chamber, she said. But in these early stages, the local group is still finding its way.

"That's one of the things we're asking people: what issues are most important to them when they think about a green chamber or promoting a local economy. We're very, very new, so we're not sure where it could go—perhaps forming some kind of buying cooperative for shipping or office supplies, or creating a network where we can find out about other green businesses that may be complementary. There are lots of possibilities out there."

A steering committee meets once a month, Eagle added, and subcommittees are working on the new green chamber's mission statement and a "Buy Local" campaign. Membership in the Green Chamber is currently free as the group gets up and going. To join the Southwest New Mexico Green Chamber

of Commerce or for more information, contact Eagle at her store at 534-4511, visit the store's website at materialgood.com or e-mail the new group at scgreenchamber@gmail.com.

"In a community like ours, it makes sense to focus on local businesses. And the green chamber can really help us go after these green jobs."



- Mattie Eagle, Southwestern New Mexico Green Chamber of Commerce and owner of Material Good

ECONEWMEXICO TO HOLD ECOTOURISM WORKSHOP IN SILVER CITY

Effort will educate and build partnerships for ecotourism in New Mexico

By Allyson Siwik, Executive Director



A state-funded effort to develop eco-tourism in southwestern New Mexico and throughout the state will hold a free workshop in Silver City on December 11. EcoNewMexico was awarded a \$240,000 contract from the NM Department of Tourism to take an inventory of ecotourism assets in New Mexico and to educate communities on the benefits of ecotourism, resulting in a network of ecotourism partners and economic opportunities for local communities.

Eco-tourism is defined by The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) as

"travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people." Because of significant environmental and social impacts of many supposed ecotourism projects around the world, TIES has worked to establish standards for eco-tourism operators that if followed should result in minimal impact to the environment; environmental and cultural awareness and respect; direct financial benefits for conservation; financial benefits and empowerment for local people; and positive experiences for both visitors and hosts. EcoNewMexico envisions that New Mexico becomes "the premier role model and destination for ecotourism and conservation initiatives in the United States."

There are potentially significant economic benefits from an ecotourism industry in New Mexico. Michael Cerletti, secretary of the NM Department of Tourism, said in a press release that eco-tourists spend more money, visit longer and are

seeking "authentic, hands-on experiences." For example, according to a study done by the US Forest Service Rocky Mountain Research Station, "birders number in the tens of millions and spend upwards of \$20 billion dollars per year on bird seed, travel, and birding paraphernalia. Average yearly spending by active birders averages between \$1,500 and \$3,400, with travel being the major expenditure."

The benefits to conservation efforts from an eco-tourism industry are also potentially large. Conservation of our natural areas, such as the Gila Wilderness, Gila National Forest, and Gila River is a necessary element for developing attractive local eco-tourism products.

The FREE EcoTourism Workshop will be held Friday, December 11 from 9am – 4:30pm at the WNMU Global Resource Center. To RSVP, contact Sandy Cunningham at: sandy@eco-newmexico.com or call 505-795-7711.

SILVER CITY'S ELECTRIC VEHICLES EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS!



Ves Grimes, Meter Foreman with the Town's Meter Department, with his staff (Danny Ortiz, Manny Orosco, Grimes; Chris McNeil not pictured) in front of two Miles electric trucks used to read water meters throughout Silver City. "We're real proud of these vehicles. They have exceeded our expectations," glowed Grimes. Going about 30 miles per charge, each vehicle uses about 5 – 6 kWh of electricity per day costing about \$1 a day to run both vehicles. The town is saving as much as 480 gallons of gasoline per month, since now the four department pickup trucks only need to be tanked up once every other week. Each vehicle prevents over 12,000 pounds of annual tailpipe emissions for every gas powered vehicle replaced.

Great job Silver City and the Metering Department for demonstrating how to improve efficiency in town operations, save money, and protect our environment! The see more photos of the electric trucks, visit www.vivaverdenm.com.

ARIZONA WATER SETTLEMENTS ACT UPDATE: *Stakeholders Submit Projects to Planning Process for Evaluation*

By Allyson Siwik, GRIP and Gila Conservation Coalition, Executive Director

In late November, stakeholders from throughout southwestern New Mexico submitted project ideas for consideration under the Arizona Water Settlements Act (AWSA) planning process. The on-going effort brings together stakeholders from throughout the region to determine how to utilize federal subsidy dollars and possibly Gila River water under the AWSA. Submission of projects was the latest step in the planning process that will assess the region's future need for water and evaluate supply and demand management alternatives to meet that identified need.

Convening monthly since October of 2007, the group has made significant progress forward:

- Developed a Process Framework that outlines the AWSA planning process and guides the efforts of the Stakeholder Group;
- Identified Desired Future Conditions that reflect perceived problems related to water supply;
- Developed planning objectives;
- Completed a preliminary supply analysis;
- Compiled a catalog of existing technical information and reports;
- Held forums on economics and science to

outline issues for analyses to be conducted through the planning process.

- Developed preliminary evaluation criteria to use in evaluating alternatives for their ability to meet identified needs.

Stakeholders will meet next on December 16 to make an initial evaluation of submitted projects. Participants will order projects according to how they rank based on eight evaluation criteria, such as compliance with the AWSA, whether the project meets a water supply demand, economic viability, and political and public acceptance among others.

Over the course of the next year, the planning process will compare projects and strategies and screen them to a shortened list of projects to be assessed in more detail. After more in-depth analysis, the group will identify a final set of projects and strategies that will move forward to the Interstate Stream Commission and Governor for consideration.

The Gila Conservation Coalition submitted a set of projects for consideration that can meet the region's future water supply while maintaining the instream flow of the Gila River. These non-diversion alternatives, such as municipal and agricultural conservation

and sustainable groundwater development, meet the region's needs at lowest cost and keep the Gila River intact.

The next meeting of the AWSA Implementation/Technical Committee will be held December 16 at 8:30 am at the Grant County Administration Building in Silver City.

WHO IS GCC?

The Gila Conservation Coalition is a partnership of three conservation groups: Gila Resources Information Project, Upper Gila Watershed Alliance, and Center for Biological Diversity. We are dedicated to the protection of the free flow of the Gila and San Francisco rivers and the wilderness characteristics of the Gila and Aldo Leopold Wilderness Areas. For more information, visit www.gilaconservation.org



GILA
CONSERVATION
COALITION
*Saving New Mexico's
Last Wild River*

VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES:

Update on GRIP Responsible Mining Activities

By Sally Smith, Director of Responsible Mining

Monitoring operational and closure/reclamation permitting and related activities at the three Freeport-McMoRan Inc. (FMI) Grant County mines continues to be a very important part of GRIP's work.

The first five-year renewal for the Closure/Closeout Permits for eventual closing of the Chino, Cobre and Tyrone mines has been under consideration by the state agencies for more than a year. Required by the New Mexico Mining Act and Water Quality Act, these permits prescribe reclamation activities to protect the environment and restore mine lands to a self-sustaining ecosystem. Permit renewal is delayed because reclamation and clean-up issues are still being worked out between the company and state. GRIP continues to be involved in this permitting process to assure that surface and groundwater quality and quantity and air quality are protected for future generations of Grant Countians.

At FMI's Tyrone Mine, miners are still actively employed in ore extraction and leaching operations while finishing up a large portion of required reclamation which you can read about at the informational kiosk just off Highway 90 on Burro Mountain Road.

Chino Mine is not currently extracting ore but continues to leach stockpiles with sulfuric acid solution which is processed, like Tyrone ore, in Solvent Extraction/Electro-Winning Plants on site. Chino is now engaged in reclamation of its older tailings ponds which you can see from Highway 180 south of Hurley. These ponds are required to be regraded to a 3-to-1 slope and covered with non-acid soils and seeded to meet NM Mining Act requirements.

GRIP is pleased to see the significant progress of reclamation work under the accelerated reclamation agreement between the state, FMI and GRIP. Likewise, we are heartened by the company's use of innovative reclamation techniques. The Mining and Minerals Division and the NM Environment Department closely monitor the effectiveness of reclamation work. GRIP also participates in inspections of reclamation activities. Failures in cover performance would require additional cost and effort by the company.

FMI continues to plan for future mining at its Cobre Continental Mine which has been closed for more than a decade. GRIP is also involved in the review of expansion plans for all three mines.

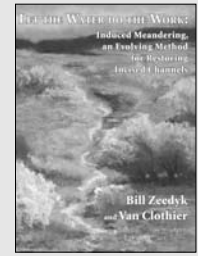
After over 14 years, the Administrative Order on Consent (AOC), the state Superfund-like investigation and clean up of historic mine waste at Chino Mine, finally signed its first of several expected Records of Decision (RODs) requiring the remediation of most yards (approximately 500) in the town of Hurley. The ROD came after the completion of 16 months and an estimated \$12 million of work scraping and replacing copper-laden soils out of residential yards and other properties to protect residents from potentially harmful metals concentrations from historic smelting operations. (see GetAGRIP Fall 2008 for more details)

Other units in the 55 square mile Investigative Area identified for study and clean up include Hanover and White Water Creeks that run through Bayard and Hurley to San Vicente Creek, the Smelter and Tailings areas near Hurley, and Lampbright Draw.

Participation in oversight of the process is open to the public at state-mandated Community Work Group (CWG) meetings held on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at the Bayard Community Center at 7 PM. (Call GRIP office for specifics.) The documents related to the AOC are located in the Bayard and Silver City Public Libraries and WNMU Miller Library.



NEW TO THE GRIP LIBRARY



Building with Awareness the Construction of a Hybrid Home

DVD & Guidebook by Ted Owens

"The overwhelming process of green home construction just got a lot easier, thanks to this entertaining and informative [book].... Combining natural and reclaimed materials with solar technology, designer and owner/builder Ted Owens has crafted an artful home of timber, straw bales, adobe and stone, that is powered by the sun. Owens turned his years of research and two-year construction process into a 5-hour instructional DVD, and a full-color 150-page companion book that contains supplemental photos, diagrams and text as it follows the DVD step-by-step from foundation to finishing touches." From Catherine Wanek, author of *The New Straw Bale Home*.

Let the Water Do the Work: Induced Meandering, an Evolving Method for Restoring Incised Channels

by Bill Zeedyk and Van Clothier. Donated by Van Clothier

"*Let the Water Do the Work* is an important contribution to riparian restoration. By "thinking like a creek," one can harness the regenerative power of floods to reshape stream banks and rebuild floodplains along gullied stream channels. The book is an artful blend of the natural sciences – geomorphology, hydrology and ecology – which govern channel forming processes. The book directly challenges the dominant paradigm of river and creek stabilization by promoting the intentional erosion of selected banks while fostering deposition of eroded materials on an evolving floodplain. The river self-heals as the growth of native riparian vegetation accelerates the meandering process. Anyone with an interest in natural resource management in these uncertain times should read this book and put these ideas to work." From the book cover.

MINING REFORM UPDATE:

Senator Bingaman introduces Hardrock Mining and Reclamation Act of 2009

By Sally Smith, Director of Responsible Mining

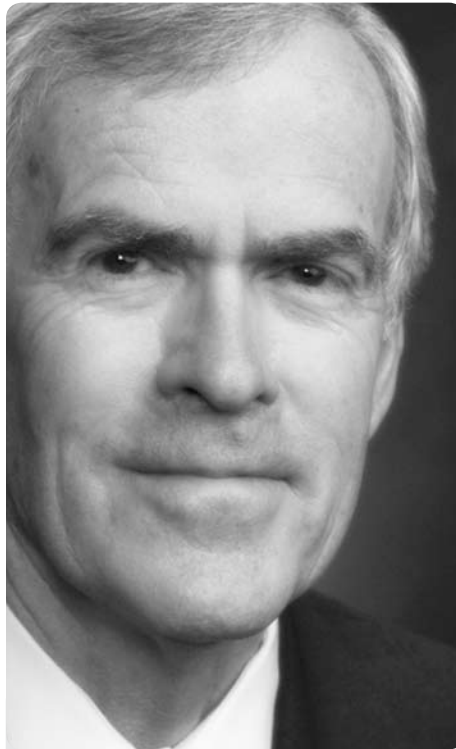
For the first time in over a decade, the Senate seems to be moving forward with reform of one of the most archaic policies governing our public lands. Our own Senator Jeff Bingaman, Chairman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee (ENRC) introduced this past April S. 796, the Hardrock Mining and Reclamation Act of 2009, to regulate the mining of hardrock minerals, such as gold, copper and uranium. This bill if passed as written could create jobs and provide economic opportunities for rural communities while cleaning up a massive legacy of toxic mining pollution.

This bill has the potential to build on the money allocated by the most recent stimulus package to clean up abandoned mines by creating a dedicated fund to facilitate clean up of the estimated half a million abandoned mines littered throughout the West. This money would provide jobs in places where it is needed most, rural communities, like ours, that are victims of mining's 'boom-bust' cycle. This clean up would be funded through three fees: a royalty on new hardrock mines permitted on federal lands -- similar to what all other extractive industries have paid for decades, a fee for lands used in mining operations, and a reclamation fee on all hardrock mining. The reclamation fee alone could create an estimated 55,000 new jobs over the next ten years for rural western communities.

Senator Bingaman has said his goal is to reform and modernize the law, but to do so in a manner that would allow our domestic mining industry to continue to provide jobs and produce minerals important to our nation. "The mining industry plays an important role in our part of the country. It fuels local economies. And it contributes to our national security. At the same time, the industry has been criticized on both fiscal and environmental grounds. The Hardrock Mining and Reclamation Act of 2009 will make responsible changes to this outmoded law," Bingaman said in a press release.

Currently, the Mining Law of 1872 allows billions of dollars of hardrock minerals to be mined from Federal lands without payment of a royalty. General land management and environmental laws apply, but there are no specific statutory provisions under the Mining Law setting surface management or environmental standards.

Efforts to comprehensively reform the Mining Law have been ongoing for decades, but results have been elusive.



"The mining industry plays an important role in our part of the country. It fuels local economies. And it contributes to our national security. At the same time, the industry has been criticized on both fiscal and environmental grounds. The Hardrock Mining and Reclamation Act of 2009 will make responsible changes to this outmoded law."

- NM Senator Jeff Bingaman

Political considerations, such as 2010 challenges to Senator Harry Reid's seat, could affect the timing of this Bill. Hearings of the ENRC began in July of this year on two bills, S. 796 and S. 140, introduced by Senator Feinstein. Senator Bingaman said he looks forward to working with Senator Feinstein on this issue. The House passed HR2262, the Hardrock Mining and Reclamation Act of 2007, in November of 2008 (See GetAGRIP, Winter 2008). The House and Senate versions would need to go to conference committee

to work out differences before final approval.

Senate Bill 796 proposes the following:

Eliminates Patenting: The bill eliminates patenting of Federal lands, but grandfathers patent applications filed and meeting all requirements by September 30, 1994.

Fees: Makes modest increases in the annual claim maintenance fee (from \$125 to \$150) and claim location fee (from \$30 to \$50). Requires a fee in exchange for the use of Federal land that is included within the mine permit area. The fees collected are to be used for the administration of hardrock mining on federal lands. Any excess funds are deposited into the Hardrock Minerals Reclamation Fund.

Royalties: Locatable minerals are subject to a royalty to be determined by the Interior Secretary by regulation of not less than 2 percent and not more than 5 percent of the value of production, not including reasonable transportation, beneficiation and processing costs. The royalty may vary based on the particular mineral concerned. No royalty will be collected from lands under permit that are producing in commercial quantities on the date of enactment. Royalty revenues will be deposited into the Hardrock Minerals Reclamation Fund. Royalty reductions may be granted for all or part of a mining operation where the person conducting the mineral activities shows by clear and convincing evidence that without the reduction, production would not occur.

Permits and Financial Assurances: Permits are required for all mineral activities on Federal land except for "casual use" that ordinarily results in no, or negligible, disturbance. Mining permits are for a term of 30 years and so long thereafter as production occurs in commercial quantities. The operator must provide evidence of approved financial assurances sufficient to ensure completion of reclamation if performed by the Secretary concerned.

Water Reclamation: Financial assurances attributable to the cost of water treatment will not be released until the discharge has ceased for at least 5 years or the operator has met all applicable water quality standards for at least 5 years. The operator may be required to establish a trust fund or other long-term funding mechanism to provide financial assurances for long-term treatment of water or other long-term

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WHITE HOUSE DISCUSSION (CONT'D. FROM P. 1)

hand," stated Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa Jackson. According to Jackson, half of all deaths in the US are linked to environmental causes, such as cancer, heart disease, and respiratory disease. She also noted the disproportionate impact of poor environmental quality on low-income and minority communities. Health data show that African Americans die from asthma twice as often as whites, and have higher cancer mortality rates than any other group. Nearly 30 million Latinos – 72 percent of the US Latino population – live in places that don't meet US air pollution standards.

Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius explained "it's really about the health of our children today, jobs, and the fate of our planet tomorrow. We are learning that the health of our planet and the health of our people are tied together. It's difficult for one to thrive without the other. If we work to reduce pollution, we will also reduce deaths from respiratory and cardiovascular diseases."

Breakout groups with officials provided an opportunity for participants to offer input to the Administration on what is needed at the Federal level to make environmental and clean economy initiatives successful at the local level. GRIP highlighted efforts in smaller, rural communities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as the Silver City Climate Action Plan and Viva Verde. There is also a need to link green jobs training to actual green jobs. Requirements are needed for transmission line and renewable energy projects on federal land to hire local workers to help mitigate high unemployment rates in southwestern New Mexico. In our efforts to develop the clean energy economy, we need to be aware of potential unintended environmental consequences. Transmission line development should avoid or mitigate impacts to important wildlife habitat. Development of concentrated solar in the arid southwest should consider impacts to limited water resources by requiring dry cooling systems that can reduce water consumption by 97% over wet cooling.

White House Officials made clear the Obama Administration's commitment to achieving clean energy and climate legislation. Indeed, as of press time, the President announced his plans to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 17% below 2005 levels by 2020 and 83% by 2050 and attend the United Nations climate talks in Copenhagen in early December. These targets are those laid out in the House climate/energy bill passed in June. The Senate version of the bill is still under discussion. Insiders say that it won't be until 2010 and after health reform is completed before Congress will take up climate legislation again.

VIVA VERDE SPIN-OFFS (CONT'D. FROM P. 1)

strengthen low- and moderate-income home weatherization programs.

"Now we're moving ahead with planning for additional, but probably smaller, events next year," Siwik said. "People really appreciate finding out how to make their homes and businesses more energy efficient, cutting their utility bills while protecting the environment. They just need some help getting connected to the people and businesses that can help them do it, and that's what Viva Verde is all about."

STAY CONNECTED with Viva Verde News & Calendar Updates

The Expo may be over, and the Guide published and distributed, but you can stay connected to the Viva Verde network on-line by visiting Viva Verde on the Web at www.vivaverdenm.com. Sign up for monthly e-mail news and calendar updates to find out about upcoming green events, let others know about events or meetings you're planning, and stay abreast of green developments. As a network of green-minded businesses and consumers throughout the region, Viva Verde and its Website provide a way for thousands of residents and vendors to stay in touch with each other—and on top of the latest green news throughout the area. Sign up for the Viva Verde e-news at www.vivaverdenm.com

RENEW YOUR GRIP MEMBERSHIP TODAY

If you're already a GRIP member, you will be receiving a membership renewal notice in the mail shortly. Please help us continue our efforts to reduce the carbon footprint of our communities, protect the Gila River, and safeguard our region's water supply.



MINING REFORM (CONT'D. FROM P. 6)

post-mining maintenance or monitoring requirements.

Operation and Reclamation :

The Secretary of Agriculture must take any action necessary to prevent unnecessary or undue degradation in administering mineral activities on National Forest System land. The bill directs the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture to jointly issue regulations.

Land Open to Location:

Requires within three years a review of certain lands to determine whether they will be available for future mining claim location. The governor of a state, chairman of an Indian tribe, or appropriate local official may petition the Interior Secretary to undertake a review of an area.

Hardrock Minerals Reclamation

Program: Establishes a program for the reclamation of abandoned hardrock mines in 14 western states. Creates a Hardrock Minerals Reclamation Fund from hardrock royalties, fees, and donations. Each operator of a hardrock mining operation on Federal, state, tribal or private land must pay a reclamation fee established by the Secretary of not less than 0.3 percent, and not more than 1.0 percent, of the value of the production of the hardrock minerals for deposit into the Fund. The bill provides grant programs for all states for hardrock reclamation projects and for public entities and nonprofit organizations for collaborative restoration projects to improve fish and wildlife habitat affected by past hardrock mining.

TAKE ACTION TODAY!

Thank Senator Jeff Bingaman for introducing S. 796 and encourage him to continue to move forward with mining reform.

As chairman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Senator Bingaman is critical to moving mining reform through the Senate. Please take the time to write Senator Bingaman thanking him for introducing S. 796. You can also tell him that mining reform is vital to:

- cleaning up a legacy of abandoned mines in Southwestern New Mexico;
- protecting our water resources;
- assuring clean-up and reclamation of future mining activities;
- future sustainability of our local economies.

Senator Jeff Bingaman

703 Hart Senate Office Building
United State Senate, Washington, DC 20510
(202) 224-5521/ (202) 224-2852 fax
senator_bingaman@bingaman.senate.gov

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Gila Resources Information Project
 305A North Cooper Street
 Silver City, NM 88061
 grip@gilaresources.info
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CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

DECEMBER 11 - EcoTourism Seminar 9am – 4:30pm at WNMU Global Resource Center, Silver City. FREE. Sponsored by EcoNewMexico. RSVP to Sandy Cunningham at sandy@eco-newmexico.com; 505-795-7711.

DECEMBER 11 – Trinity: Book signing with Landscape Photographer and GRIP board member, Michael Berman; 4:30pm. Blue Dome Gallery @ 307 N. Texas St, Silver City

DECEMBER 16 – Arizona Water Settlements Act Implementation/ Technical Committee Meeting – 8:30 am at the Grant County Administration Building.

FEBRUARY 5 – An India Travelogue 7pm; Silco Theater, Silver City. Slide Presentation with GRIP Board President, Sally Smith, on her travels throughout India during her recent sabbatical. In addition to a discussion of the variety of Indian customs, cultures and religions, Sally will also describe some of the country’s pressing environmental issues and opportunities for addressing them.

ONGOING – For a monthly calendar of upcoming “green events” in southern New Mexico, please visit www.vivaverdenm.com

SUPPORT

the Gila Resources Information Project

If you support GRIP’s efforts to protect southwestern New Mexico’s land, air and water, please consider making a tax-deductible contribution today. A donation envelope is enclosed in this newsletter for your convenience. You may also make a secure web donation at gilaresources.info/donate.shtml.