



## Sportsman's News Roundup

Sept. 8, 2010

### Still waiting on antelope, bear, cougar proposals

The Department of Game and Fish has not yet announced when it will finalize proposals that revise or eliminate the controversial A-PLUS program, as well as new harvest levels for bear, mountain lion and deer. The department was flooded with public comments on several of the proposals, which was cited as the reason for postponing the State Game Commission meeting in Ruidoso originally set for Sept. 30. Once the updated proposals are posted on the department's website, the public will have at least 30 days to comment. At the same time, the department is expected to announce the date of the Game Commission meeting.

In the meantime, **sportsmen can still comment on the department's original proposal** to overhaul A-PLUS (Antelope Private Lands Use System), which takes upward of 70 percent of antelope licenses out of the Big Game Draw and gives them to certain landowners to sell, give away or discard. Option 3A would allocate the majority of antelope licenses through the Big Game Draw, allowing landowners – not the Department – to determine how many hunters to allow on their property. [Click here to weigh in on this important decision and to encourage the Game Commission to do the right thing](#) by bringing the percentage of antelope hunting opportunity guaranteed for New Mexico residents more in line with other western states. To learn more about the A-PLUS options and why Option 3A is the best choice for sportsmen and landowners, [click here](#).

### Huge crowd makes Outdoor Expo a hit

Attendance at the annual Outdoor Expo ran well ahead of last year, Department of Game and Fish officials said during the Aug. 21-22 event. As usual, there were shooting stations where kids and adults could try their hand at various firearms, as well as informational booths. NMWF was there to hand out copies of the new Outdoor Reporter and to ask hunters to support a major increase in antelope hunting opportunity for New Mexico residents. One of the highlights of the weekend was the shotgun exhibition by Tim Bradley of Team Benelli. Bradley entertained the crowd with amusing banter, then took everyone's breath away with his shooting prowess. At one point he tossed seven clay pigeons into the air and hit all seven with individual shots. He got a big laugh when he announced the "Benelli salad shooter" (right), then proceeded to blast a potato, a cabbage, a can of whipped cream and other kitchen goodies out of the sky.



### Alamogordo forum shows economic value of healthy public lands

New Mexico Wildlife Federation is hosting an economic forum in Alamogordo on Sept. 18 to show **the link between healthy public lands and a vibrant economy**. On tap are presentations by economists, business owners, sportsmen and others that will show the positive economic impact enjoyed by communities that have protected public lands nearby. The event is 6-9 p.m., Saturday, Sept. 18, at the Tays Event Center on the NMSU campus in Alamogordo ([click here](#) for a map). For more information, contact John Cornell at (575) 895-5090.

### Stream protections could be weakened

**Several of northern New Mexico's premier trout streams could lose new-found water quality protection** unless sportsmen speak up at hearings in Santa Fe next week. In recent years the Rio Santa Barbara in the Pecos Wilderness and numerous streams and lakes in the Valle Vidal area including the Rio Costilla and Comanche Creek were protected under a program known as Outstanding National Resource Waters. **The designation ensures that the streams will not be degraded from their present state.** Next week the state Water Quality Control Commission will consider a proposal ([click here](#) to read it) that expands ONRW designation to streams in all wilderness areas on U.S. Forest Service land in New Mexico, but reduces the level of protection each stream receives. New Mexico Trout, Trout Unlimited, NMWF and other sportsmen concerned about water quality are **asking that the commission maintain current protections** to ensure that future generations of anglers have healthy trout streams. If passed as written the proposal would weaken stream protections in the Valle Vidal and other places. Public comments on the proposal will be taken at 1 p.m. daily from Tuesday through Friday, Sept. 14-17, in Room 307 of the State Capitol Building, 490 Old Santa Fe Trail ([click here](#) for a map). Contact NMWF for more information.

### Online survey asks about Valles Caldera

Anglers, hunters and others who would like to see greater access to Valles Caldera National Preserve have an opportunity to voice their concerns about the future of the area, one of the public land gems of New Mexico. Matt Gagnon, a UNM graduate student, is conducting a thesis on outdoor recreationists' values and perceptions of the Valles Caldera. He has created **a short survey that aims to gauge sportsmen's recreational experiences and thoughts on or about the preserve**. It only takes a few minutes to complete. [Click here](#) to take the survey.

### Young hunters carry the torch

Seventeen-year-old Emmett Wynn of Albuquerque (right) had an **epic bighorn sheep hunt in the Pecos** last month, taking the largest sheep ever by a youth hunter and the third-largest to come out of that area in the last two years. "What an adventure," said his father, Brandon Wynn: "Fifteen miles on horseback and over 4,000 vertical feet on foot in one 18-hour day." They hiked up and down, up and down in the North Truchas Peak area, Brandon said, to get the ram that should score right around 175 points B&C. No wonder Dad was tired afterwards.



Last March we wrote about 8-year-old Raylynn Pena of Pecos, who had just completed a phenomenal first hunting season. After finishing hunter education, she took a turkey, an antelope, an elk and a deer. Now, at the advanced age of 9, it doesn't look like Raylynn (left) has lost her touch. Her father, Manuel Pena, reports that in August **she shot a buck antelope at 324 yards**. Keep it up, Raylynn.

We're always happy to get pictures of our young hunters and anglers. **Send them to [nmwildlife@nmwildlife.org](mailto:nmwildlife@nmwildlife.org).**

### And finally

**If you appreciate receiving these monthly news updates, please share them with a friend** and ask them to get involved by joining our Sportsman's Alert network. New Mexico sportsmen need to stay involved to

ensure our hunting and fishing traditions continue. **And please make a donation to NMWF.** With sportsmen like you, we can continue to make a difference. [Click here to donate now](#).

### About the New Mexico Wildlife Federation

Founded in 1914 by sportsman and conservation pioneer Aldo Leopold, the New Mexico Wildlife Federation is New Mexico's first and most effective conservation advocate. We are dedicated to protecting New Mexico's wildlife, habitat and outdoor way of life. We spearheaded permanent protection of our hunting and fishing rights in the Valle Vidal, and stopped cold the previous sell-off of your public lands. We believe that the best way to get things done is to build consensus with common goals.

Our key priorities are: Opportunity Habitat Youth

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