

David Mallon, one of the CRC's founders, continues to help us, though he now lives in Oklahoma and is chief counsel for the Cherokee Nation. David was invaluable in our efforts to gain control of the land for development. Since then he has drafted appeals of the Forest Service decision to build a road into John Long Canyon.

**CHIRICAHUA REGIONAL COUNCIL**

FILE  
COPY

**NEWSLETTER**

No. 3  
August 1994

Star Route #74  
Portal, AZ 85632

You helped create the Chiricahua Regional Council (CRC) in response to a 1992 Forest Service plan to turn a big piece of the Coronado National Forest into a National Recreation Area. The CRC helped show that the Forest Service proposal was a budget-driven scheme that neither protected the land nor considered public opinion.

They dropped the National Recreation Area proposal, but that was only one of a panoply of Forest Service and BLM activities that continually affect us. That NRA idea showed us the need to constantly monitor the federal agencies and act quickly to bring issues to the attention of our members.

The CRC is now a tax-exempt corporation and has hired a part-time director, Michael Julian. He and his wife Dale live in Paradise on East Turkey Creek. Michael is a former law professor, district attorney, and public defender, presently working as a carpenter. He's backpacked many thousands of mountain miles and is committed to helping preserve the immense diversity of the Chiricahua region.

Michael is responsible for staying up to date on Forest Service and BLM activities, for keeping members informed, for encouraging more public involvement in Forest Service decisions, and for working to develop a special congressional designation for parts of the Chiricahua region.

The CRC needs to raise money for office equipment and to provide a modest salary for its new executive director. Our tax-exempt status will help, and the CRC gratefully acknowledges several generous donations that have helped us toward becoming a more effective organization.

David Mullan, one of the CRC's founders, continues to help us, though he now lives in Oklahoma and is chief counsel for the Cherokee Nation. David was invaluable in our effort to gain congressional withdrawal of Cave Creek from mining development. Since then he has drafted appeals of the Forest Service decision to build a road into John Long Canyon.

## JOHN LONG CANYON UPDATE

John Long Canyon is on the west side of the Chiricahua Mountains between West Turkey Creek and the Rucker road.

In March of 1992 the U.S. Forest Service proposed building a road into John Long. The CRC opposed that project because the road was to be in a highly sensitive riparian area. The Forest Service gave interested parties less than two weeks to study seven alternatives and submit written replies. This project is inconsistent with the Coronado National Forest Plan for the area.

When the Forest Service ignored the CRC's objections, we filed an administrative appeal. We lost our appeal at the Coronado National Forest level, then appealed to the Regional Forester in Albuquerque. That appeal also failed. The next level of appeal would be the U.S. District Court.

The CRC is presently considering its options. At the very least we'll petition for reconsideration on both the Coronado National Forest and regional levels. New administrators will soon be making decisions, and we're optimistic about stopping this road.

## WOOD AND EMIGRANT CANYON ACCESS

Wood and Emigrant Canyons drain the area northwest of Cochise Head in the northern Chiricahuas. In both canyons county-maintained roads end at private ranches which are surrounded by National Forest.

In March of 1994 the Forest Service proposed constructing 1.2 miles of single-lane road in Wood and .5 miles in Emigrant Canyon. Both roads would end with small parking areas beyond which motorized traffic would be "restricted."

The Forest Service plan provides for public access while minimizing the damage to riparian areas. The CRC supports the Forest Service access plan for both of these

canyons. We do, however, intend to carefully monitor implementation of the plan.

### **THE RATTLESNAKE FIRE**

An unprecedented fire burned a large part of the upper elevation forest in the Chiricahua Mountains between June 28 and July 22, 1994. Started by lightning near Rattlesnake Peak, the fire spread over most of the drainage systems. It was helped by unusually dry conditions and record high temperatures.

Fire crews were able to save most of Rustler Park and all of the Rustler buildings. Of the 28,000 acres burned, about 600 acres crowned-out with complete destruction of large pines and firs. In most areas, however, it took only the understory which hadn't seen fire in decades. Luckily, the fire never reached the Southwestern Research Station or the lower part of the South Fork of Cave Creek.

### **CAVE CREEK RECREATION DEVELOPMENT**

"We plan to provide a wide spectrum of recreational opportunities in the northern Chiricahuas to satisfy a broad range of visitor interests...." Thus, the draft Cave Creek - Pinery Corridor Concept Plan of 1991 reflected the broad scope of recreational development being contemplated by the Coronado National Forest.

At that time the CRC questioned both the plan's advisability and its legality, raising such issues as:

a) Broad scale recreational development of the northern Chiricahuas is a major shift in management focus. This is a systematic federal action that cannot legally be implemented piecemeal, but requires a comprehensive plan.

b) The primary goal of National Forest management should be protection of the resource rather than promotion... and then meeting an ever-increasing demand for new facilities.

c) An area's recreational carrying capacity should always be established prior to planning for development.

d) Surveys and public meetings have clearly demonstrated overwhelming local opposition to major recreational development in Cave Creek Canyon.

e) Any recreational use in Cave Creek Canyon should recognize the area's biodiversity and tradition of biological research as paramount values.

The Cave Creek - Pinery Corridor Concept Plan of 1991 is being replaced by the "Cave Creek Recreation Concept Plan". Once again the Forest Service held a series of

