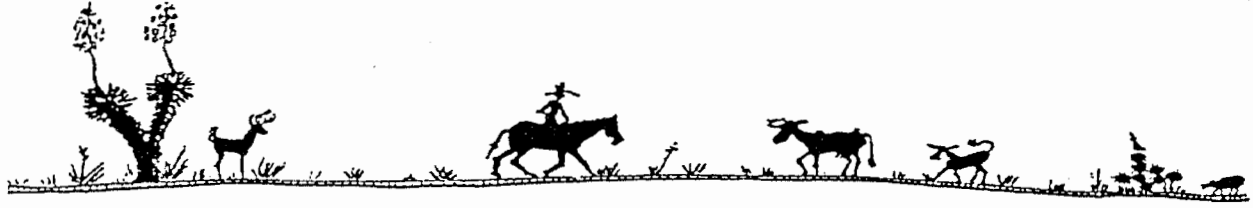


# MALPAI BORDERLANDS GROUP



AUGUST, 2001-NUMBER 8

Hello,

Another year has gone by and the Malpai Borderlands Group has had a lot of visitors, several meetings, purchased another land use easement, and met with many people all over the country. Our workshops have been well attended, and we have attended a wide variety of meetings with other collaborative groups.

We weathered another year with parts of the area receiving less than average rainfall, and had a beautiful spring flower season in spite of the rain being so sparse.

We have elected two new board members who were some of our original Grassbankers.

Our retreat in June in the Chiricahuas was highlighted by rain every day. Joe and Valer Austin hosted us and we think it was a great way to cause it to rain on their place!

In past letters, I have described the hardships and problems that ranchers face almost daily. I was asked by a friend to explain why we continue to struggle to stay in ranching, if it is so much work, grief, long hours and not much rain. I will try to explain our feelings about this:

For us, ranching is a way of life. There is a feeling that you get about accomplishment, working on projects and with animals that is hard to describe. The beauty of the country, the sky, the animals, the open spaces that are awesome; the silence out away from crowds of people; the miracle of birth whether it be animal or plant; seeing wildlife out in their habitat unbothered by our problems; friendship of neighbors and the fun of working together, sharing stories and watching our children grow up on the ranches; the daily challenge to solve our problems, or to deal with decisions means that we have great feelings of satisfaction when we succeed.

These things don't pay the bills, but they make our life more interesting. We are our own bosses, so to speak, although others mandate the rules we follow, we often have the same problems that most any other family or business has. We have the choices to make and the ability to follow through with our plans.

We still live in the greatest country in the world and are fortunate to be here.

We will continue to work to maintain open space and habitat for all the creatures that depend on it for their homes. We will work to educate others who have no idea that a rancher is a conservationist first, in order to take care of the land and creatures on it so that we will be able to survive on the land for generations.

Members, supporters and advisors of the MBG all agree that we need to take the very best care of our fragile ecosystem. If we do a good job, it will reward us tenfold. As we ponder new ideas daily and push ahead with our work -- we pause to thank those who have helped us get this far.

Sincerely,  
Wendy Glenn

## JIM CORBETT

The MBG staff and Board of Directors were saddened to hear of the death of Jim Corbett in early August. Jim was one of the founding members of the original Malpai discussion group, which was the predecessor of the Malpai Borderlands Group. In 1992, he wrote the "Malpai Agenda" in which he laid out the next steps the group could take in order to put our ideas into action. Amazingly, much of what he foresaw has happened much that way!

Jim Corbett was born in 1935 and grew up on a cattle ranch in Montana and was a cowboy and later a goatherder. He was also a schoolteacher, a writer, and a philosopher and was active in the Quaker community. He was perhaps best known as an activist for human rights, being one of the leaders of the "sanctuary movement" which harbored refugees from bloody civil wars in Central America back in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Most of all, he was a friend and a wise man who will be missed by all who knew him.

## OFFICE HOURS AND TELEPHONE

With the advent of new telephone lines into the MBG office sometime early in 2002, we will no longer be sharing the same phone line with the Malpai Ranch and the Glenn Family. We will continue to have the same numbers, but they will be our MBG numbers. There will be an answering machine on the phone line, which has already been donated to the group!



Our office hours will be:

Monday through Thursday, 8:a.m. to 4 p.m.

This will give some relief to the family that lives here and shares the phone and building with the MBG.

## RANCHING TODAY WORKSHOP #5

The fifth MBG Ranch workshop was held in May this year with people attending from Arizona, New Mexico, California, Kansas, Texas, Nevada, Colorado, Montana, and Sonora, Mexico.

One of the highlights of the tour was the participation by Lynn Cornwell, President of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association. He was able to take time out of his very full schedule to make the trip to our workshop. We really appreciate his interest in learning firsthand about what the MBG is doing.

Some of the comments that came back to the MBG on our evaluation form after the workshop are as follows:

*Question: Which part(s) of the workshop did you find most enjoyable and why?*

A: I'm not sure there was a favorite part—all of it was very well organized and informative. I especially appreciated the individual talks given during the day trips. I learned a great deal, there was a lot to take in.

A: The final summary discussion was very useful.

*Question: Which part(s) of the workshop did you find most useful, helpful or educational for you in your life back home and why - i.e.: in terms of helping you for the future on your ranch; helping you work with other groups and/or ranchers, etc?*

A: The reason I attended the Ranching Today workshop was to learn more about what the MBG was doing and how it was working. I was most interested in the issue of burning and the hoops necessary to jump through when so many ranches and federal entities are involved

A: The most useful parts for me were the walks and field lectures where I learned about (1) Ecosystem management activities (incorporating fire into land management, grazing and aquatic system management); (2) Conservation easement terms and conditions, and (3) The pathway from inception to implementation (Gray Ranch acquisition by TNC, start of the Malpai, and bringing ranchers together).

A: Actually getting out on the ground. The Gray Ranch was impressive, but also found the contrast in terrain in a relatively short distance very interesting.

*Question: Were there any part(s) of the workshop that you did not find useful, helpful or educational - and why?*

A: No! You are living proof that this type of collaboration is possible. I can point to you and say "yes" it can be done!!! I will admit though that the timing and circumstances worked for you - and the right people with right mindsets - all proves it can happen.

A: Too much driving and not enough looking around.

*Question: What kind of "take-home messages" did you get from the workshop? And, how can you apply what you learned at the workshop to your life back home?*

A: The "take-home message" I got was that a local organization is hard work, there are varying opinions

about the appropriateness of a particular action, and that the work is ongoing. I also understood that the local organization has to be clear about its own goals and objectives before inviting anyone else in (e.g., The Nature Conservancy) to "help." With those goals in place, at least at the beginning, any new information brought to the table can be discussed in the context of whether it helps or hinders meeting the established goals.

*Question: Are there any parts of the workshop that you would change, expand upon, or downsize?*

A: I heard some of my co-riders comment that they didn't see enough cattle. So perhaps driving to where the cattle are being grazed. I'd also particularly like to see the experimental burn sites from the ground. But I also understand that those trips would add at least another day to the workshop. Otherwise, as stated before, I thought the entire weekend was extremely well put together.

A: I would like to have known more about how the easements work.

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## ROOS, MAGOFFIN STEP DOWN FROM MBG BOARD

The Annual Meeting of the Malpai Group saw a change in two of the Board positions. Leaving the board with our many thanks for their service were Ed Roos and Matt Magoffin.

Ed Roos was one of the original founding members of the Board of Directors. His enthusiasm and dedication were vital to MBG's success during the startup phase of our history. Ed worked especially hard in the area of beef marketing and alternative economic opportunities for area ranchers. He believes strongly in protecting the ranching way of life and the open spaces it requires. Several years ago, he conveyed a conservation easement on his ranch property near Rodeo, N.M., to the Malpai Borderlands Group. Ed and his wife Claudia live in the Animas, N.M., area and Ed will continue to serve the MBG in an advisory role.

Matt Magoffin joined the Malpai Board in 1997. Matt and his family have been responsible for some of the most innovative conservation work that MBG has been involved in. The Magoffin's ground-breaking work with the Chiricahua leopard frog started even before MBG's involvement. Matt and MBG have partnered on numerous projects, not the least of which was a conservation easement on the Magoffin Ranch, conveyed to the Malpai Borderlands Group in 1999. Matt, his wife Anna, and sons Chris and Mike reside on the Magoffin Ranch in the San Bernardino Valley east of Douglas. Matt will continue his participation with the MBG as a cooperator and advisor.

## MALPAI STUDENT SUMMER INTERN PROGRAM

by Richard W. Winkler,  
Animas Public Schools, Science Department

This summer was an interesting and informative experience for the students that were selected for the Malpai Science Intern program. Three students from Animas High School, Shane Shannon, Preston Ellis, and Brian Beltran and four high school students from Douglas, Arizona, Nick Gonzales, Chris Magoffin, Mike Magoffin, and Sarah McDonald participated in the student internship program this past summer. In addition to the local high school students a number of college students from around the country participated in research and restoration in the borderlands including Nate Chisholm (Montana State), Graham Eberly (Cochise College), Aaron Lamb (University of New Mexico), Walter Merker (UC Santa Cruz), and Cecilia Retelle (University of Minnesota) were chosen to work along with Dr. Charles Curtin and his colleagues this summer as assistants. The students learned biological field research techniques and helped with the various on-going studies at the Gray Ranch, in southwestern New Mexico.

As a high school biology teacher, I feel great appreciation to the Malpai organization which has given these students the opportunity to actively practice biology in the field. The students will not only be employed for the summer, but will gain an understanding of how scientists actually apply biological methodology in the field. These students will gain an understanding of how science is applied to the semi-arid country in which they live.

Dr. Curtin and I discussed the science work program and its advantages. We both agree that having a positive experience, such as a work program, could have a lasting effect on the course of studies for these students prior to college. I have taught each of the Animas students for three years and feel that they have an aptitude and appreciation for science. Dr. Curtin feels that in addition to helping with work in the borderlands, the interaction with students and the Malpai Group communicates the need for cooperation between ranchers, researchers, and conservationists to preserve open-space. The internship program was coordinated by Charles Curtin of the Arid Lands Project and Pippa Roulette from Portal, Arizona. Charlie Painter of the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish helped advise students in the field, with Barney Tomberlin of Portal, Arizona assisting in the administration of the work. All of the students are excited about the new job and its challenges.

*[MBG plans to continue an internship program well into the future and high school and college students interested in participating should contact the MBG office. W.G.]*

## MEETINGS ATTENDED

MBG Board members and Advisors have participated in the following events:

- Arizona Black-tailed Prairie Dog State Wide Working Group Meeting, Sierra Vista, Arizona
- Arizona Cattle Growers' Association Annual Meeting, Pinetop, Arizona
- Buckeye Conservancy Meeting, California
- Colombia University/UNESCO International Conference on Biodiversity and Society, New York
- East African/Southwest North America Workshops
- Ecological Society of America Annual Meeting, Utah
- Forest Service Rural Community Awards Committee Meeting, Couer d' Alene, Idaho
- Great Valley Center, Chico, California
- Duke Foundation Leadership Workshop, Pine Butte, Montana
- Hewlett Foundation, Western Regional Conferences, B.C., Canada and Los Angeles, California
- Kansas Livestock Association, Topeka, Kansas
- U.S. Forest Service Staff (grassbank), Washington D.C.
- National Academy of Sciences Testimony ("Opportunities in Agriculture")
- National Association of Appraisers (conservation easements)
- National Association of Conservation Districts Annual Meeting, Texas
- National Cattlemen's Beef Association Conference (Forage Management Session Panel), San Antonio, Texas
- National Governors Conference, Washington D.C.
- Owyhee Cattle Growers (collaborative planning), Boise, Idaho
- Pima County Planning (conservation easements), Arizona Historical Society, Tucson, Arizona
- Quivera Coalition Grassbank Conference, Santa Fe, New Mexico
- Society for Conservation Biology, Board of Directors Meeting
- Sustainable Rangelands Roundtable, Salt Lake City, Utah
- Town Hall Meeting, Colusa, California
- U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution (workshop on NEPA), Denver, Colorado
- Udall Center Common Ground Roundtable Meetings, Arizona
- Udall Center Symposium on Environmental Conflict Resolution, Tucson, Arizona



## CAST AND CREW

### NEW BOARD MEMBERS

We are lucky to be gaining two new Board Members who have been involved with the MBG and were original grassbankers.

Edward Elbrock has been a lifetime resident of the Animas Valley. His mother's parents settled in Price Canyon, Arizona, in 1906, moving to the Animas Valley in 1922. His father's parents settled in Cottonwood Canyon, Arizona, on the Geronimo Trail Road in 1917. After his father's death, his mother moved to the Animas Valley in 1931. Edward's parents met attending school at the old Animas Middle School.

His father bought the headquarters of their present ranch in 1945 where Ed and his wife Tricia live now. Ed started operating the family ranch after his father's sudden death in 1965. Edward purchased the ranch from his mother in 1970. He has since increased the size of the ranch.

To help pay for the ranch and support his family, Edward started doing heavy equipment work servicing windmills and wells. Doing this type of work demanded material, so in 1978 he founded the Valley Mercantile Supply Store. In 1979, he began drilling wells and started Elbrock Water Systems to service water needs of Southeast Arizona and Southwest New Mexico.

He served on the Animas School Board for fourteen years, and is presently serving as director on the Columbus Electric Co-op Board since 1978, and serves on the Hidalgo County ASCS Board since 1974.

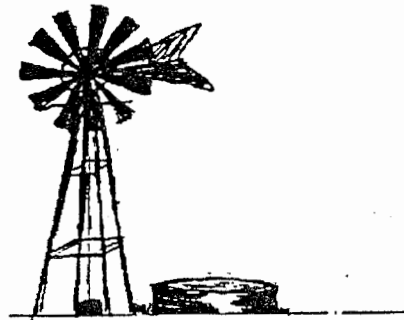
Edward was one of the first ranchers to participate in the original Grassbank with the Animas Foundation/ Gray Ranch in 1995. Edward says, "After a prolonged drought, the Grassbank was a way to save my cow herd and let the ranch recover. It was a win-win situation that worked well and I am happy with the results."

Bill Walter is a third generation New Mexico rancher. He grew up in Animas, New Mexico and worked on his family ranch located in the Peloncillos. His grandfather, Curly Walter, homesteaded the ranch in 1919, building a house, corrals, and out buildings. Wart Walter, Bill's father, was raised on the ranch and grew up in the old house that is still located on the place. Wart worked on the ranch his whole life, inheriting it from his mother and father. He is known for being an excellent cowboy and trained cutting horses in Tucson for a time. He passed down his knowledge to his three sons teaching them ranching and cowboy skills.

Bill attended Animas High School and New Mexico State University studying Civil Engineering. He went to work for Southwest Terminal in Road Forks, NM for 10 years. He and his wife then bought Umphres Propane and Portal Propane and started a local business. They also own a school bus and contract with Animas School. The school bus runs 50 miles south through the Gray Ranch and Middle Animas to bring children to school. It has operated this route for 60 years.

Bill and his brothers, Randy and Warren, ranch their family place together, working to improve the cattle herd and grass areas. Bill and Warren also lease a separate smaller place together that runs about 50 head.

Bill is married to Bethany Ratliff from San Simon, Arizona. Beth grew up on her family farm in the San Simon valley and attended the University of Arizona and Western New Mexico University. She is an artist and Art teacher at San Simon School, teaching during the day and painting in between. They have two sons, Corey, who is sixteen, and Alex, who is thirteen. The boys attend San Simon High School and drive back and forth with their mother. Corey and Alex also help on the Walter ranch, learning the fine art of cowboying and the ins and outs of a ranching business. Corey's FFA project incorporates the ranch business and labor as an agribusiness venture. Corey and Alex, along with their cousins, represent four generations of New Mexico ranching.



### SCIENCE ADVISOR

Pete Sundt (autobiography)- Raised in Houston, Texas, I went west as soon as I could drive, ended up in southern Arizona in the early 1970s. Met my wife Kei through the visionary goatherder Jim Corbett and embarked on several years of intensive back-to-the-land idealism, culminating in an idyllic rancharia in Aravaipa Canyon. But my frontal lobes were itching for education, and we uprooted ourselves to Tucson for a long period of university study, leavened by crisis as our sons fell victim to big city vices. People kept offering me jobs doing rangeland monitoring, assessing the condition of rangeland over time, and when Malpai Group was founded (with help from that same visionary goatherder) I was in the right place at the right time. For several years now I have led field crews each summer to monitor the effects of controlled fires (the Maverick and Baker Burns), grassbanking, and vegetation manipulation by heavy equipment. Along with the many well-qualified observers and students of rangeland associated with MBG I try to be aware of what's going on with the land and advise the group accordingly. I also sing and play the guitar, and have been known to duet with Warner Glenn on fiddle.

[Pete has done the bulk of the monitoring work for several Malpai projects. W.G.]

## **FIRE**

### **FIRE AND FOREST SERVICE NOTES**

By Rich Kvale

During this past year we have been working intently on the Peloncillo Programmatic Fire Plan. The Section 7 ESA Consultation for the Fire Plan began in November, 2000. During the formal consultation process it became evident that the Fish & Wildlife Service had concerns with the proposed action primarily as it related to fire intensity levels and the possible effects on New Mexico ridge-nosed rattlesnake habitat. The decision was made by John McGee, Coronado Forest Supervisor, to withdraw from consultation on the Programmatic Fire Plan and focus on the Baker Prescribed Burn in the southern Peloncillo Mountains. Consultation on the Baker Burn then went fairly smoothly and was completed in time for implementation of the burn. Consultation with the four Native American tribes, Chiricahua and Mescalero Apaches, Zuni Pueblo, and the Hopi, took a considerable amount of time which resulted in a delay of Decision Notice authorizing the Baker Burn. By the time the legal period for appeal had passed, the southern Peloncillo Mountains had received rainfall, postponing the Baker Burn until next spring.

During the next few months, the Coronado National Forest will re-initiate formal consultation with the Fish & Wildlife Service on the Peloncillo Programmatic Fire Plan. Some agreements were reached with interested and invested parties in May, 2001, regarding some of the "stickier" issues which should allow for a smoother consultation. Additional survey and mapping of NM ridge-nosed rattlesnake habitat will be an important factor in settling some of the Service's concerns.

### **WATERSHED AND FIRE STUDIES**

By Peter Warren

The Malpai Group has been cooperating with the USDA Forest Service Rocky Mountain Research Station, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and neighboring ranchers on a project to study the role of fire in oak woodlands and savannas of the Peloncillo Mountains and adjacent Borderlands region. One key project involves twelve watersheds of approximately 40 acres each that will be treated with cool- and warm-season fire, or left as unburned controls. The study is designed to determine the effect of season of fire on ecological variables such as vegetation and small animal populations, and on watershed functions such as runoff and sediment movement. The experimental watersheds have been prepared during the past year with weather stations and with gauges and flumes to measure runoff and sediment. Preliminary ecological sampling has been done for vegetation and small mammals. Principal Investigator Dr. Jerry Gottfried plans to gather two to three years of baseline data before beginning the fire treatments. We won't see the experimental results until

five years into the project, but the results will be an important contribution to helping us understand how to manage oak woodland habitats. This project is a good example of the long-term studies that are needed to understand the landscape-scale effects of fire in our Southwestern mountains, and of how strong community support is important to sustaining research of this kind.

### **RANCH MANAGEMENT AND EASEMENTS**

Ranch management and conservation easements are two separate things. We believe that each rancher should run his ranch as he has learned is the best way for his own type of operation; developing and implementing his own personal ranch management plan. Our easements are written to preclude subdivision of ranches and perpetuate open spaces. They are not written to manage ranching. The rights for subdivision are sold for just compensation. The MBG has provided a unique opportunity for ranchers in our area that does not exist everywhere else. Each individual rancher has approached the MBG with a request to consider purchasing the easement on the property he holds. Land use easements in the MBG are directed at stopping open country from being subdivided.



### **SCIENCE MEETING**

By Charles Curtin

From January 8 to 10, 2001 the Malpai Borderlands Group, in conjunction with the Arid Lands Project, hosted the fourth annual Borderlands Science Symposium. Over the last several seasons the MBG science meetings have alternated between a smaller intensive workshop in one year and a larger, more general meeting in the next. This past winter's meeting was of the more general community format and was conducted over two days, and included over 100 attendees, and 25 speakers. The goal of the meeting was to bring together members of the conservation, research, and ranching communities to review what is known about the interaction of fire and grazing in the borderlands. The planetary addresses were given by Dr. Gary Meffe, the Editor for the journal, Conservation Biology and Dr. Rick Knight from the Colorado State University. Presentations at the meeting ranged from recent borderlands monitoring results, long-term studies of reptiles and amphibians, fire ecology, and the history of science and community-based conservation.

## BILL MCDONALD TESTIMONY TO CONGRESS

On June 12th, MBG Executive Director, Bill McDonald traveled to Washington D.C. to testify before the Senate Finance Committee in favor of reducing or eliminating the capital gains tax for landowners who sell conservation easements to a qualified land trust. He also urged the Senators on the committee to back tax incentives for landowners who donate the use of their land for a Grassbank®. While he was in Washington, Bill met with Arizona Senator John Kyl and discussed issues ranging from conservation easements to prescribed burning. Senator Kyl continues to be a big supporter of MBG's efforts.

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## MBG MEMBERS AND ADVISORS PARTICIPATE IN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

The Malpai Borderlands was one of nine case studies world-wide, including sites from Africa, Asia, Australia, China, and South America, chosen for inclusion in an International Conference on Biodiversity and Society held in late May in New York City. Malpai board member Drum Hadley read his poetry, while Malpai advisor Ben Brown of the Animas Foundation participated in a panel discussion, and Malpai advisor Charles Curtin of the Arid Lands Project presented a case study on Chihuahua Desert Grasslands. The Malpai Borderlands Group was the only non-United Nations supported project featured in the meetings because the Group's efforts illustrated the power of taking a cooperative approach to resource management in which local people take a leadership role in preserving their landscape.

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## GRASSBANK®

Grassbank® was coined by Drum Hadley in the early years of the MBG. The original Grassbankers had the choice of trading their easement for grass. They could have gone to other pastures and paid cash for the grass. They got the cash value for their easements in grazing for their cattle for a period of time from 3 to 5 years.

At this time there is no grassbanking going on in the MBG area. There are some Grassbanks in other parts of the West. A new organization, Grassbank Inc. is being formed to oversee the use of the registered name so that the values of responsible ranching and grazing will be upheld.



## REPORT ON LIVESTOCK DISEASE IN EUROPE

By Reese Woodling

I had a chance to learn a bit about the effect of Foot and Mouth and "Mad Cow" disease on the livestock industry in England and Italy while traveling there this June. While in London, my wife and I visited with several people from the English countryside who said that the government is downplaying the seriousness of the situation. This is mainly so tourism, which is down 70% from the previous year, will have a chance to recover. We noticed a scarcity of beef on the menus in restaurants and on grocery store shelves in England and Italy.

When we flew home, we expected to be asked by U.S. Customs where we had been, and asked to have our shoes and clothes disinfected if we had visited a farm in England, and to have our luggage searched for items that may carry the virus. But none of this happened! When we asked an agent about it, he said, "We tell the media we do these things, but we really don't worry about the problem." After seeing the disastrous effect these livestock diseases have had on the European beef market, we were dumbfounded. The potential for a virus to be carried into the U.S. by an airline passenger seems to be great and could cause havoc in our livestock industry.

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## ENDANGERED SPECIES

The MBG does not take any stand on reintroduction of any endangered species with the exception of the Chiricahua leopard frog. We respect the opinions that each individual has about these issues. We don't necessarily agree with every opinion.

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## TNC SUPPORT STAFF

Elena Contreras grew up in Irving, Texas, and received a Bachelor's degree from the University of North Texas in Denton, Texas in psychology in 1990. She moved to New York in 1991, worked in various psych-related jobs at psychiatric units, research facilities, and hospitals. She has done various jobs including volunteer work at the Bronx Zoo as a bird keeper and monkey/capybara research in Argentina. She has also worked at a bank, worked at a dog kennel, and worked as an assistant polo horse groom.

Elena has been Bruce Runnels' executive assistant for the Rocky Mountain Division of The Nature Conservancy since March of 1999, living in Fort Collins, Colorado for the past few years. She is presently pursuing a graduate degree in ecology from Colorado State University, for which she is working on a bird monitoring project in Southeast Colorado on and near the Bohart and Chico Basin Ranches.

Elena has been a great help to the MBG in many ways, including assisting with the organization of the Ranching Today Workshops.

# THE MALPAI BORDERLANDS GROUP

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Bill Miller, Jr.	Post Office Canyon Ranch, Rodeo, New Mexico	Executive Director
Drum Hadley	Guadalupe Canyon Ranch, Douglas, Arizona	Bill McDonald
Seth Hadley	Canyoncito Ranch, Animas, New Mexico	
Ray Turner	Ecologist, USGS (ret.), Tucson, Arizona	<b>Legal Counsel</b>
Warner Glenn	Malpai Ranch, Douglas, Arizona	Mike Dennis Bill Boyd
Mary Winkler	Winkler Ranch, Rodeo, New Mexico	
John Cook	The Nature Conservancy, Little Compton, Rhode Island	
Reese Woodling	Cascabel Ranch, Animas, New Mexico	
Larry Allen	Natural Resource Consultant, USFS (ret.), Tucson, Arizona	
Edward Elbrock	Elbrock Ranch, Animas, New Mexico	
Bill Walter	Walter Ranch, Animas, New Mexico	

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Crystal Foreman Brown Gerry Gottfried Rich Kvale Matt Magoffin Ed Roos Bruce Runnels  
Charlie Siepel Sam Smith Pete Sundt Bill Weeks David Western Tom Valone

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Peter Warren, Program Coordinator  
Wendy Glenn, Office Manager  
Mary McDonald, Finance Director  
Carrie Krentz, Information Systems Specialist

## Art Work

Anna Magoffin

## Newsletter

Wendy Glenn Sarah McDonald  
Peter Warren Carrie Krentz

Phone: (520) 558-2470

Fax: (520) 558-2314

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Malpai Borderlands Group  
6226 Geronimo Trail Road  
P.O. Drawer 3536  
Douglas, Arizona 85608