

Gila Livestock Growers Association  
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3-1-06

Dear Members,

In the past several weeks we have had some success with water rights workshops and as promised are planning two more.

The purpose of these workshops is to provide the Deming OSE with consistent livestock water applications so that they may be confirmed as easily and swiftly as possible by the OSE. The intent of the workshops and their publications is to provide a format to make this process as simple and un-intimidating as possible. Right now we are concentrating on the format for filing on livestock waters on grazing allotments in the Gila San Francisco Basin and how to file proper paperwork on already adjudicated livestock waters. However, this same format would be beneficial knowledge for a rancher in any other basin so don't hesitate to attend if your allotment is in another basin as the paperwork process is similar for each watershed.

The workshops will inform you how to submit paperwork on allotment based livestock waters in accordance with New Mexico water law. It will also include instructions for researching the chain of title that should accompany the water applications.

Because the 1978 US Supreme court ruling, US V. NM ruled that allotment based waters belong to the beneficial user, the livestock owner. Ranchers running livestock on USFS allotments are the only entity legally entitled to put these waters to beneficial use.

However others may feel entitled to apply for these same waters. Therefore, it is extremely important that livestock owners understand NM water law allows them to legally apply for allotment located livestock water under the prior appropriation doctrine, which states first in time, first in right.

**The first has been set at the Beaverhead Lodge Ranch on March 9 at Ten am.,** for a group of people who have expressed interest.

We will be happy to try and accommodate smaller or larger numbers if you cannot make it to either workshop. If you would like to set up a workshop or just get more information please call 505-772-5753.

The second will be held in Buckhorn or Glenwood on or around the first week in April, hopefully in conjunction with a visit with Congressman Steve Pearce. Details are being worked and will be forthcoming.

Congressman Pearce's office continues to assist us in our dealings with the FWS over the Mexican wolf reintroduction and his aids have plans to accompany some ranchers who are facing livestock reductions by the USFS. While the agency is citing drought for the reductions rain was plentiful in the areas affected, however, most of the ranchers dealing with the reductions have been suffering extreme livestock losses to Mexican wolves and the attention of wolf advocates has fallen on them.

Invitations to this workshop and meeting with the congressman will be forthcoming.

Sincerely  
Laura