

Brian Long

I am a long term resident of Northern NM (since 1975) and have been doing wildlife research here for many years. One of my projects is studying the Pacific marten in the Rio Hondo watershed. I have witnessed the ongoing destruction of marten habitat here for so long that I now have to brace myself before I go up the valley to prepare for the next assault on the river and habitat that I know I will see. Often I cannot face it, and turn around. This is a truly sad state of affairs, and one I know is shared with many others. The health of the Rio Hondo is of the utmost importance for all the wildlife in and around it and deserves every protection that can be enacted. The marten is at the southern limit of its range here and in the Santa Fe Mountains.

Another species of concern is the American dipper which spends its entire life close to and in fast flowing rivers and streams. It is totally dependent on water-living invertebrates, fish, and insects, which it forages for underwater. The water must be clean for these insects & fish to thrive. I suspect that the decline in the number of historic nesting sites being used in recent years is most likely attributed to poor water quality due to development and faulty sewage treatment. This must be addressed and corrected, and this designation will hopefully help with corrective measures that will benefit us all. Thank you - Brian Long