

Vermejo Park Ranch, NM: Aug. 4 - 5, 2008

Vermejo Park Ranch, acquired by Ted Turner in 1996, covers nearly 600,000 acres in northern New Mexico. Maintaining the ecological integrity of the ranch is a top priority for Turner and his staff. The Turner Endangered Species Fund is working to reintroduce the black-footed ferret to Vermejo, beginning the process by establishing an expansive prairie dog colony. Additionally, Vermejo Park raises bison for Ted's Montana Grill and has some of the last pure populations of Rio Grande cutthroat trout. To restore healthy forests, Vermejo is thinning its extensive Ponderosa pine stands and maintaining the new, lower density with controlled burns. To pay for these projects, Vermejo Park allows very controlled, limited, and well planned coal bed methane extraction.

The Rockies researchers spent two days touring the ranch with experts from several different ranch projects.



Vermejo Park's old coke ovens



Photographing Turner's bison



The Rockies learns to thin the forest using the Hydro-ax



Learning about black-footed ferret reintroduction



Touring a coal-bed methane site