



Jack Loeffler following his talk at the Spring Lecture series at Roswell Museum and Art Center, Thursday. (Lia Martin Photo)

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[Loeffler discusses watersheds](#)

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Jack Loeffler said he moved to New Mexico for the emptiness.

A strange thing to say for a man, who is too big and too vital for the room that barely contains him.

A natural-born intellectual rebel, he is not a man who can be contained in a few words, or a few hundred. His presence talks before he does. Thursday night at the Roswell Art Museum and Art Center, no one in the room wanted to be any place else but there, listening to the second in a lecture series given by Loeffler on the lack of water in the Southwest.

His talk is peppered by his life. He has often experienced life in its raw, wild and savage form. Loeffler may

have been reborn fearless when he came down the Rio Grande rapids for the first time. It was here he touched nature and recognized the fragile character of the environment.

"I ran the Rio Grande rapids for the first time in 1974. There were two boats for three guys. That meant every third day you were by yourself and you could experience the solitude of running a wild river alone," Loeffler said. "It was 110 miles. It took 10 days."

One of his heroes was John Wesley Powell, who was an American West explorer, geologist, adventurer and soldier, who lost his arm at the Battle of Shiloh in the Civil War. He never stopped, Loeffler said.

Powell recognized the significance of the 100th Meridian, and in his day categorized the watersheds regionally.

Other mentors included Peter Kropotkin, a philosopher, who wrote Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution.

Loeffler met Paul Horgan in 1986. He said he was going through the town where he lived in California and happened to look in the phone book. Horgan's phone number was listed. Loeffler had been traveling here and there recording interviews, and thought Horgan would be a great person to interview.

He had just read Horgan's Great River: The Rio Grande in North American History, which was a great book to study by anyone wanting to learn about watersheds.

After reaching Horgan over the phone, Horgan asked him to come for the interview, "Right now!"

On the way to the interview, Loeffler said he was driving and reading Horgan's latest article at the same time, so he would be prepared.

Loeffler moved to New Mexico in 1962. Jazz musician, writer and historian capturing recorded words and music and environmental sounds, he has broadened the minds of others when they consider the art, music and stories of the indigenous people in their own environment.

He recognizes the wisdom of Native American myth, music and culture.

Most important, he wrote of his friendship with environmentalist Ed Abbey. His Adventures with Ed: A portrait of Abbey, was published in 2002.

Loeffler introduced Thinking Like a Watershed, an upcoming documentary radio series and book that consider the sustainability and fluidity of culture in the 21st century, the significance of place within the Southwest and the interconnectedness of our natural, social, and economic systems, much like a watershed. Loeffler is the recipient of the 2008 Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts.

For information about his life's work, visit [loeof](http://loeof.com)

theland.com.

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