



Bill Ela

Biographical Sketch, Southwest RAC Member

Judge Ela served Mesa County and the Colorado Senior District Court for 34 years until his mandatory retirement in 1999. He now works as a certified mediator and arbitrator. His background includes practicing law with a firm specializing in hard rock and uranium mining on the Colorado Plateau. Judge Ela's avocation has always been living for and in open space—would seem it's in his blood—his family settled on Pinyon Mesa in 1881. The Ela family remains active in agriculture, celebrating its 100th anniversary as certified organic orchardists.

Judge Ela is serving his first term on the RAC as a representative of the public-at-large in Category 3. Of most importance to him is sustainability and preserving open space. Wisely managing recreation and working closely with other federal agencies to protect wilderness are essential in Judge Ela's view. He'd also like to explore how the RAC can play a role in supporting green concepts to counter global warming.

Judge Ela leads an active life enjoying hiking, boating, four-wheeling, climbing 14'ers, star gazing, bird watching and fishing. Most of all, he's very proud of his orchardist wife Shirley and five children; all of whom kept their Colorado roots deep in the orchards while going on to pursue higher education and successful careers.