

Friends of the Sandia Mountains

Annual Newsletter, September 2010



Friends of the Sandia Mountains
PO Box 1832,
Tijeras, New Mexico 87059
www.friendsofthesandias.org

Remaining Meetings of 2010

7:00 pm at Sandia Ranger Sta.

Tuesday, October 5

Ruthanne Hamrick
Running the Leadville 100
(The leading ultra-marathon in U.S.)

Tuesday, November 2

Bob Julyan
A Family Trek through SW France

December: No meeting

From the President

Snow, Calypso and Nine Mile. . . . Large New York law firm? Name of a popular rock band? Double-play combination from the 1919 Chicago White Sox? No, those are three things that stand out in my mind when I look back over the past year in the Sandias.

First of all, anyone who enjoys the varied winter activities our mountain can offer will certainly remember the winter of '09-'10 as one well above the average for snowfall. The snow levels were excellent, and it seemed, as spring attempted to take over, that winter was in no hurry to leave. In fact, in a somewhat delightful paradox, the 8th Annual Sandia Mountain Snowshoe Race (sponsored by the Friends of the Sandia Mountains) was postponed a week due to too much snow! Actually, it was the unplowed Crest road that presented the problem. The course itself was in great shape. The race was held the following weekend and was a big success.

Perhaps because of the conditions described above and the ample spring soil moisture levels that resulted, it appeared to me that the often elusive Calypso orchids were simply everywhere! Sections of trail where I had never seen them before seemed to harbor them by the dozen. To me, that is an example of one of the primary joys of the Sandias. . . . No matter how many times you may visit exactly the same spot, what awaits you on your next visit may come as a complete surprise.

Nine Mile, as in Nine Mile Picnic Area, represents a significant accomplishment for our organization. This PA had been closed by USFS for two years due to hazard trees and deteriorated tables which made the area unsafe for public use. FOSM volunteers conducted a review of the facility, developed a rehabilitation plan and submitted recommendations to the Sandia Ranger District. FOSM agreed to meet the major expenses related to this effort and to provide the needed labor. The plan was approved and the infrastructure work began this year as soon as weather permitted. Work had been underway previously to address the approximately 100 hazard trees that needed to be removed for safety reasons. These trees were felled and limbed, the resulting slash was chipped, and the mulch produced was well spread.

Other work included pruning vegetation from overgrown paths and clearing off many years of washed-on soil that had obliterated most of the paved paths and table pads in the PA. Many hours were spent removing and replacing rotted table top and bench planks. This involved obtaining usable planks from tables which were not to be included in the renovation and moving them to those being repaired. Using new wood, table leg extensions were bolted onto table legs which had been shortened by rotted off ends. The FOSM paint crew then finished the job. All twelve tables in the two main picnic areas were rehabilitated. Repairs were also made to the bent and cranky gate at the PA entrance. The PA was re-

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opened for public use at the end of July following a celebration lunch at the site attended by 19 volunteers and District Ranger Cid Morgan. The little used reservation-only group area will remain closed for now.

The Nine Mile was probably the largest single project ever undertaken by FOSM and our members can be justifiably proud of this accomplishment. Perhaps one of the best parts is knowing that due to the ingenuity of some of our volunteers (thank you to all our retired engineers!), the total out-of-pocket expense to FOSM for gate repairs, hazard tree felling, and table repair was only \$435.00. Labor savings for USFS, *priceless!*

As always, my sincere thanks and appreciation to the FOSM Officers and Board members for their support and guidance, to our volunteers for their dedication and hard work and to our friends and partners at the Sandia Ranger District for their cooperation and support.

See you on the mountain,

Bob Lowder

OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS	
President:	Bob Lowder
Vice President:	Gerry Sussman
Treasurer:	Tim Brown
Secretary:	Jean Paananen
Board Members	
Mike Coltrin	Don Carnicom
Jane Harrison	Anne Hickman
Sam Beard	Matt Bosquez
Dan Benton	Sally Lowder
Larry Littlefield	
Officers listed above are also Board Members.	

Adopt-A-Trail Program

About 12 years ago, the district ranger at that time asked a young FOSM organization to assume responsibility for coordination of the Adopt-A-Trail (AAT) program, and we have done so ever since. During 2010 the AAT organizations collectively volunteered 1138 man-hours to maintenance of their adopted trails (through August 31). One of the most significant events of the year was the addition of Ryan Reineke as Trails Foreman to the SRD staff, providing the first year-round paid staff support exclusively for trails.

We now have 30 organizations in the program, a net increase of two for the year, and several groups have adopted more than one trail. During the year the NM Outlaws Multisport Club adopted Three Gun Spring Trail, the Active Singles Meetup Group adopted Domingo Baca Trail, and the 898 Munitions Squadron from Kirtland AFB adopted 10K Trail north of the Crest Highway. Also, the High Desert Residential Homeowners added the Elena Gallegos Trail 305 to their previous adoption of Foothills Trail 365 south of Simms Park Road and organized work on these trails for the National Trails Day event co-sponsored by the USFS at Simms Park on June 5. In addition, the Albuquerque Outdoor Meetup Group switched their adoption to the Embudito Trail from a section of the South Crest Trail.

Other noteworthy accomplishments during the year included the updating and editing of the twelve pages of material on the AAT Program at the FOSM Website and a revamping of the USFS Agreement for Sponsored Voluntary Services used by the program to include a specific reference to the Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) for trail maintenance. Also, the AAT brochure available at the front desk of the SRD was updated and republished.

Two meetings to update AAT organizational contact persons were held at the Sandia Ranger station on December 8, 2009, and January 9, 2010. The most important agenda item was clarification of the archaeological clearance status of the trails provided by Erin Hudson, USFS archaeologist. She explained that trails fall into one of three categories: 1) trails cleared for routine maintenance, 2) trails cleared

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through exempted undertaking, and 3) trails with no clearance. Routine maintenance allows a wide range of options within a 15-meter corridor along the trail centerline, including such soil disturbing activities as widening and repositioning. Seven of our adopted trails fall into this category. Exempted undertaking allows limited maintenance of existing features such as water bars, but new ground disturbance is prohibited. Ten and one-half of our adopted trails fall into this category (Only half of Tecolote Trail is cleared.). Finally, no ground disturbing activities are allowed on trails without any level of archaeological clearance, but such activities as pruning, limbing trees, clearing brush, and removing downed trees are permitted. Twenty-one of our adopted trails fall into this category. This last fact presents the greatest challenge to the program, because only three groups with adopted trails in this category reported hours during the year. We made recommendations for setting trail clearance priorities, but no additional archaeological clearances were obtained during the year. (Dan Benton)

Junior Ranger Program

This has been a slow year for the Junior Ranger Program due to snow on the trails at the beginning of the summer and trail construction by the Southwest Conservation Corps. To date, we have awarded 80 Junior Ranger patches and certificates to children out of the Crest and Four Seasons Visitor Centers. (Sally Lowder)

Renovation of Nine Mile Picnic Area

This season's renovation of the USFS Nine Mile Picnic Area, adjacent to the Crest Highway appropriately enough at the nine-mile marker, was likely the largest project ever undertaken by the Friends of the Sandia Mountains.

This picnic area is considered by many to have been located in one of the most beautiful settings in the Sandias. Even during some of our recent dry years, this picnic area always seems to be just a bit greener and cooler than any of the others and has always been known for its abundance of wildflowers. Unfortunately, it was painfully apparent to our volunteer crews that the infrastructure of the PA was showing

the signs of many, many years of use. Paint on the tables was faded or worn off, the wooden planks on the tops and benches were weathered or broken and the paved paths were covered by washed or blown in soil.

In July of 2009, FOSM volunteers Anne Hickman, Sally Lowder, and Bob Lowder conducted a survey of the Nine Mile tables to determine the extent of the deterioration. Each table in the upper and lower main areas and the group reservation site was evaluated, problems were documented, and each was photographed.

The original renovation plan called for the purchase of new wooden planks to replace those which were badly deteriorated. New fastening hardware would be used where the old bolts and nuts could not be reused, and the repaired tables would be painted. The table tops measured 4" by 12" by 8', and the benches were 4" by 12" by 6'. Lumber of these dimensions is a special order item. Cost estimates were obtained for the needed materials. It was expected that this work would cost somewhere in the \$2500 range.

The FOSM Board of Directors approved the renovation proposal, and it was forwarded to the Sandia Ranger District for consideration. It was subsequently accepted. With the arrival of cold weather in the fall, the project was postponed until the next spring. The PA had been closed to public use due to the dangers posed by the rotted tables and the almost 80 hazard trees identified there.

With the arrival of warm weather this year, work began anew on the project. The first priority was to remove all the hazard trees. This in itself constituted a major effort. In all, 112 trees had to be felled. It was deemed appropriate not to repair tables until after all the hazard trees were down, "just in case." As it was, despite the often complicated location of some of the trees, all were removed without any damage whatsoever to the existing infrastructure. The felled trees were limbed and bucked into sections for easy removal by fuel wood permittees, and the branches were chipped.

Work could then begin on table repairs. It was then that a rather unpleasant discovery was made. Previously unidentified wood rot was found in many of the tables' supporting beams. It then no longer

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seemed to be practical to add new surface materials to old partially deteriorated supports. After consultation with the SRD management, the original renovation plan was abandoned. FOSM then investigated the possibility of purchasing new manufactured tables as replacements. It was soon discovered that it would cost almost as much as the total original renovation plan to purchase just one or two of the currently available tables approved for use on USFS facilities, yet another major disappointment.

All was not, however, lost. Thanks to the ingenuity of our volunteer crew, it was discovered that enough beams could be found for repairs by turning some of the existing ones over to sides not exposed to years of weathering, using wood fillers for repairable areas and utilizing tables in the little-used group reservation area for spare parts. Then 2" by 6" pressure treated wooden extensions were bolted above the rotted ground ends of table legs as needed, and the paint crew followed up with a fresh coat of paint to finish the job.

Overhanging and protruding shrubbery was trimmed back from the internal pathways and massive amounts of soil were removed from them. Some pathways that had been covered for so long that nobody on the crew has ever even seen them before were rediscovered and cleaned off. A weathered "Smokey Bear" USFS signboard was replaced, the restrooms repainted, and the damaged PA access gate was repaired.

The final "materials bill" for this project was \$435.00. This compares with the original proposed cost of \$2500.00 or so, or perhaps \$15,000 to \$20,000 to purchase USFS-approved manufactured tables. The value of the hundreds of hours of volunteer labor would likely be in the many, many thousands of dollars.

It might be easier to list the volunteers who *did not* contribute to this effort, but in recognition of their dedication and plain hard work, thanks go out to (in no particular order); Tim Brown, Amanda Torbett, Joy Bosquez, Jerry Pekarek, Jane Harrison, Tom Baker, Joyce Simonds, Sally Lowder, Sara Morlan, Linda McDowell, Ann Hickman, Bob Lowder, Carl Smith, Phyllis Grein, Lou Romero, Rikki Barrett, Don Carnicom, Jean Payne, Paul Torno, Rav Nicholson, Sam Beard, Larry Littlefield, Beth Corwin, Bill

Savage, Jane Peterson, Jim Loner, Dick Bauman, Matt Bosquez, Dan Benton, Jim Peaslee, Frank Larson, Larry Moore, and Margaret Carroll. Recognition also goes to the USFS Fire Crew members who helped pull out slash from the more remote locations in the PA and to the SRD maintenance crew who helped cut vegetation from the roadsides and restroom areas. And special thanks for the approval, support, and encouragement of the SRD management, without which this project would not have been possible. (Bob Lowder)

Paint Crew Projects

This year nine volunteers worked approximately 130 hours each painting USFS information signs, vehicle parking stripes, tables, restrooms, and handicap parking spaces. The crew also removed graffiti. Most of the work was done on the east side of Sandia Mountain with some work in Oak Flat and Pine Flat Picnic Areas south of I-40. Volunteers were Joy Bosquez, Sara Morlan, Phyllis Grein, Jean Payne, Rikki Barrett, Amanda Torbett, Anne Hickman, Joyce Simonds and Jane Harrison.

Some of the larger and most noticeable projects were painting the following: Triangle Scenic Byway Sign at the intersection of NM-14 and NM-536, twelve picnic tables with benches at Nine Mile Picnic Area, the large white helispot sign on the pavement at Sandia Crest, compressor enclosure at the SRD shop, Doc Long picnic shelter cross beams exposed to the weather, and two benches at the Cienega Nature Trail. They also sanded and painted six large Smokey Bear signs in the shop during the winter. (Jane Harrison)

Sandia Ranger District Signage Program

The Friends have undertaken a major new initiative to inventory all signs on the Sandia Ranger District, evaluate which signs need to be replaced, develop a plan for sharing the cost of new signs with the District, and purchase and install the signs on a timely basis. A program outline to carry out this initiative has been generated.

Throughout FY2010, signs were replaced based primarily on availability of existing replacements and

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the ability to repair and reinstall existing signs. The Signage committee met every two or three months to further develop the program plan, work out the format for the District Sign Inventory, establish priorities for replacing signs with the greatest need and reviewing available manufacturing processes for the new signs. Preliminary quotations were obtained for six highway signs, which included Tree Spring, Ellis, and the Survey XC Ski Trail highway crossings which have been missing for a number of years.

Our goals for FY2011 are as follows:

- 1. Obtain approval**, purchase and install the six Crest Highway signs described above (Tree Spring, Ellis and Survey). These will be made from aluminum rather than the traditional plywood. All new highway signs will be aluminum.
- 2. Prepare a proposal** for the Crest/Tram Nature Trail signs, Kiwanis Meadow signs, Crest Observation Deck signs and the large kiosk type trailhead signs all over the District. This will include determining what we have, what we need, the exact text and map information for the trailhead signs and how all of the signs will be manufactured. Newer processes are now available which should give longer life and improved vandalism protection.
- 3. Get the details** for the overall SRD Sign Inventory worked out so we can begin collecting field data and hopefully bring others on board to help complete this task.

Individuals interested in participating in this program can contact either Don Carnicom (d-mcarnicom@msn.com /281-3421) or Orman Paananen (ormanpaananen@comcast.net/353-0748). Dana Howlett, recently retired from the SRD, will be joining the program soon. (Don Carnicom)

Volunteers Fell Almost 400 Hazard Trees

Volunteers continued felling hazard trees in picnic areas and at trailheads during FY2010. The new silviculturist, Paul Tidwell, used the Southwestern Region Hazard Tree Evaluation Form to designate trees with the following defects as hazard trees: dead, dying, dead branches, exposed roots, cracks in trunk, lightning scar, leaning, insect damage, dead top,

trunk wounds, forked trunks, cankers, bole (trunk) decay, cavities, and disease.

The number of hazard trees felled in the picnic areas and at trailheads from September 2009 through August 2010 is given in the table below. Please note that these numbers include numerous small trees felled in order to safely fell the marked hazard trees. The number of outings reflects the number of days or partial days in which trees were felled at a site. The total number of felled trees was almost 400 in 50 outings. Most trees were less than 18 inches in diameter, and the maximum diameter was 27 inches.

The slash (branches) of the felled trees was chipped with the large Sandia Ranger District chipper. The volunteers working on felling and chipping outings were Bob and Sally Lowder, Bill Metz, Sam Beard, Bill Savage, Rav Nicholson, Bob Moore, Matt Bosquez, Larry Littlefield, Don Carnicom, Jane Harrison, Robert Southwick, Dick Baumann, Linda McDowell, Newton Garland, Jim Peaslee, Jean Payne, Tim Brown, Larry Moore, Frank Larson, Carl Smith, Dan Benton, Anne Hickman, Paul Torno, Debra Neubauer, Jerry Pekarek, Jim Loner, Margaret Carroll, Phyllis Grein, and Rosie Preston. (Sam Beard)

Picnic Area or Trailhead	Trees Felled*	No. of Outings**
Nine Mile	112	10
Tree Spring	101	7
Cienega Can.	89	6
Dry Camp	24	5
Balsam Glade	15	3
Sulphur Can.	14	3
Ellis	5	1
10K	2	1
Doc Long	12	1
South of I-40	33	13
Total	396	50
* No. of trees felled includes large and small trees felled in order to safely fell the marked hazard trees. ** No. of volunteers on each outing varied from a few people to a maximum of 18 people.		

La Cueva/Juan Tabo Tree Pruning Project

A few years ago a contractor improperly pruned the trees along the roads and in the parking lots in the La Cueva and Juan Tabo Picnic Areas. Branch stubs up to 12 inches long were left on one-seed junipers, pinons, and gray oaks. On four outings from January to March, volunteers cut the stubs back to their branch collar with chain and pruning saws. The number of trees pruned in each picnic area and along access roads is given in the table below. The sawyers pruned about 1600 branches assuming about six stubs on each tree.

Volunteers chipped the slash from the original pruning and from the corrective pruning on four outings between March and May. They collected litter, and one day they also removed a large obsolete Game Management sign as requested by the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish.

This project not only improved the appearance of this popular area but also improved forest health by pruning to the branch collar where special wood tissue attempts to heal the wound and discourage disease and insect attacks on the tree. The volunteers working on this project were Dan and Pat Benton, Tim Brown, Larry Moore, Karin Stenaee, Bob and Sally Lowder, Bill Savage, Sam Beard, Larry Littlefield, Jane Harrison, Anne Hickman, Bill Geck, Jim Peaslee, Bill Metz, Edward Wallhagen, Paul Torno, Jerry Pekarek, Carl Smith, Tom Baker, Rav Nicholson, and Debra Neubauer. (Sam Beard)

Location	No. of Trees Pruned
La Cueva PA Road (FR-333B)	88
La Cueva Parking Areas	42
Juan Tabo Road (FR-333) to Stone Pillars	41
La Luz TH Road (FR-333A) and Juan Tabo PA Road	94
Total	265

Over 400 Trees Removed from Trails by CTR Individuals, by AAT Program Participants, and on FOSM Outings

The volunteer trail maintenance program managed by FOSM is divided into three parts – maintenance by individual Cibola Trail Rangers (CTR) e-group members, maintenance by volunteers on scheduled

FOSM outings, and maintenance by AAT (Adopt-A-Trail) groups or individuals.

Cibola Trail Rangers (CTR) E-group – The CTR E-group is a very efficient program for reporting trail conditions and conducting timely year-round trail maintenance. The members of this e-group hike, mountain bike, cross country ski, snowshoe, and horseback ride most of the trails in the Sandia Mountains. They report trees across the trails to the e-group, and the information goes to all members of the e-group. Usually within one or two weeks CTR members will remove most of the trees under 12 inches in diameter year-round in all weather conditions with hand tools on unscheduled outings. Large trees are usually removed on scheduled FOSM outings with crosscut saws or chain saws. During FY2010, CTR members not associated with AAT Program removed about 178 trees. Sam Beard maintains a record of reported and removed trees in a Word table. Almost every week somebody is out there, so keep your trail reports coming in via the Cibola Trail Rangers e-group. If you would like to join in on the fun, call or email me. (Sam Beard, 505-828-0673, samgbeard@msn.com)

Scheduled FOSM Trail Outings – The FOSM officers and Projects Chair schedule volunteer outings to remove fallen trees or do trail tread maintenance when either a large number of trees and/or large diameter trees are reported on a trail. Crosscut saws and/or chain saws may be used on these outings. This year FOSM volunteers removed 50 trees and did trail tread work on two trails. (Sam Beard)

Adopt-A-Trail Groups – Volunteers reported to the CTR e-group that 189 trees were removed on AAT outings by individuals or groups. All the trees removed by AAT groups were probably not reported to the CTR e-group.

Bill Metz’s Crosscut and Chain Saw Certifications

Volunteer Bill Metz earned a crosscut saw C-certifier level at the Region 2/Region 3 Wilderness Ranger Rendezvous on June 1, 2009. He is now certified at the highest level of crosscut saw proficiency. As a crosscut advanced sawyer, instructor, and certifier, Bill is qualified to conduct classroom and field training and certify crosscut sawyers at all proficiency levels – A, B, and C. In September 2009, Bill earned a power saw advanced C sawyer-feller level. He is qualified to instruct and certify sawyers at the A and B chain saw proficiency levels. (Sam Beard)

Chain Saw Certification Class

FOSM and the Sandia Ranger District sponsored a spring chain saw certification class for volunteers and USFS employees. Advanced C-sawyer Bill Metz (volunteer) and Sunbear Vierra (SRD employee) conducted classroom sessions on March 22 and 23. Sunbear was also the USFS liaison for the class. Kitisie Smiset presented the required First Aid, CPR, and Blood Borne Pathogens classes.

Bill field-certified the following sawyers as Intermediates (B) with the assistance of Sam Beard: Dan Benton, Larry Moore, Bob Lowder, Don Carnicom, Carl Smith, Bill Savage, and Sam Beard. The following sawyers were certified as Apprentices (A): Paul Torno, Bob Galloway, and Rich Besser. Larry Littlefield and Brian Pilgrim were not field certified, because Bill left the area for the summer and no other certifiers were available. They may operate a chain saw under the direct supervision of a B or C sawyer. (Sam Beard and Bob Lowder)

National Trails Day Projects on Sandia Ranger District

The 2010 National Trails Day event on June 5 was held at the Elena Gallegos Picnic Area and in the surrounding City Open Space and the adjacent National Forest. The lead organization was the City Open Space Division, and primary sponsors were the Open Space Alliance, Friends of the Sandia Mountains, Sandia Ranger District, and REI. FOSM contributed \$500 for T-shirts. The event started at 8 am with volunteer sign-in and food provided by various businesses. After welcoming remarks by representatives of the sponsors, the volunteers went to project sites near Elena Gallegos PA. At about 1 pm the volunteers gathered at the Group Shelter for lunch and door prizes.

The Friends of the Sandia Mountains thank the Sandia RD for supporting this annual event. We especially appreciate the efforts of Lisa Jones and Ryan Reineke who provided tools and pickups.

Pino Trailhead Kiosk Maintenance – Project Leaders: Jane Harrison, Bob and Sally Lowder. The volunteers working on this project were Don Carnicom, Bill Geck, Bob Lowder, Sally Low-

der, Jane Harrison (Paint crew leader), Phyllis Grein, Sara Morlan, Jean Payne, Amanda Torbett and niece Lindsey Herbert. They repaired and painted the large information kiosk at Pino Trailhead and also painted two smaller signs farther up the trail. (Sally Lowder)

Installation of User Trail Barriers -- Project Leaders: Dan Benton and Ray Berg.

Ray and Dan led volunteers to do erosion control work on South Foothills Trail 365. Two badly eroding user trails were blocked off at each end with post and pole barricades, and debris was scattered along the length of the blocked trails. Directional signs were installed to keep users on the official trail. This portion of Trail 365 has been officially adopted by the High Desert Homeowners' Association, and Ray serves as their coordinator. Ray's team of eight erected two double pole barricades on one section, and Dan's team of five erected two single pole barricades on another. (Dan Benton)

Embudito Wildlife Water Troughs Cleanout -- Project Leader: Susan Ostlie.

Susan led six volunteers who did maintenance at the Embudito Canyon water troughs in the wilderness. They shoveled very heavy wet gravel into 5-gallon buckets that were carried about 50 feet downstream of the troughs. Wheelbarrows cannot be used in the wilderness. They also removed gravel from beside the upper trough so that it would not slide into the trough. The volunteers found heavy rocks and about 8 inches of gravel in the upper trough and 4 inches in lower trough. They removed some gravel from the troughs, and the group agreed to meet later early in the morning to complete removal of the gravel. (Susan Ostlie)

North Foothills Trail Maintenance -- Project Leader: Sam Beard

The crew of Bill Savage and other volunteers Chadette and Harris worked on the North Foothills Trail 365 from Simms Road near the picnic area entrance to the north about 2 miles. They used two Pulaskis, a pick mattock, and shovel to clean out about five dozen small drainage dips so that water will drain off the trail. Bill also pruned brush beside the trail at several locations with his hand clippers. If we have this project next year, we will probably emphasize pruning of the brush growing into the trail. (Sam Beard)

E-mail Groups

The Friends assist with management of the Sandia Ranger District volunteer program by maintaining the Cibola-Trail-Rangers and Sandia-Volunteers-and-NMFOF e-mail groups for faster, easier, and less expensive communication with volunteers. A third e-mail group, Friends of the Sandias, is provided for FOSM members. FOSM utilizes Yahoo Groups who provide e-mail group service free of charge.

Sandia Volunteers and NMFOF (SVANMFOF) E-mail Group -- The SVANMFOF e-mail group provides convenient e-mail-based communication among the USFS employees, Sandia Ranger District volunteers, and members of FOSM. The types of information to be transmitted to the SVANMFOF e-mail group network includes newsletters, emergency messages, schedules of activities, announcements, last-minute schedule changes, and other information of interest to the members of the group. Volunteers may learn of schedule and other changes quickly through the e-mail group mailings. There are currently over 417 members in this group. This e-mail group is moderated – that is, designated members of the group must approve all messages before the message is sent out to everyone. The approvers or moderators are USFS employees and FOSM Board members. This group consists of official SRD volunteers (including AAT group members) and members of FOSM. The SVANMFOF e-mail group is coordinated by the e-mail group owners Bob and Sally Lowder. Margaret Furman also assists with the management of this e-group.

Cibola Trail Rangers (CTR) E-mail Group --The Cibola Trail Rangers is an e-mail-based group of hikers, bikers, cross country skiers, snowshoers, and horsemen who frequent the trails in the Sandia Ranger District and are interested in exchanging information on trail conditions on a continuing basis. This e-mail group is not moderated – messages sent to the group will be posted. If you would like to join the CTR e-mail group, please send a message to the e-mail group owner, Don Carnicom, d-mcarnicom@msn.com. There are currently over 135 members in this group.

Friends of the Sandia Mountains (FOSM) E-mail Group -- The Board of Directors of the Friends of

the Sandia Mountains (FOSM) has established this e-mail group for the routing of information that is appropriate for members only (such as election data). This 102-address e-mail group is moderated. Designated moderators of the group must approve all messages before the message is sent out to everyone. (Margaret Furman and Sally Lowder)

Eighth Annual Sandia Mountain Snowshoe Race in 2010

The Eighth Annual Sandia Mountain Snowshoe Race was scheduled for January 23, 2010, but the Crest Highway was not plowed; therefore, the race was held on January 30. Ninety-nine (99) participants enjoyed excellent snow conditions in clear weather. Matt and Joy Bosquez were Race Directors, Rodger Sack, La Luz Trail Run race director, assisted with timing, and Anne Hickman obtained refreshments and contributions for the race. The net profit of \$1944 will be used to support FOSM projects on the Sandia Ranger District. The volunteers who helped with the race were Phyllis Grein, Jean Payne, Don Peterson, Art Arenholz, Sam Beard, Bob Lowder, Mike Coltrin, Larry Littlefield, Rosie Preston, Jane Harrison, Sally Lowder, Tim Brown, Bill Geck, Don Carnicom, Bill Savage, Gerry Sussman, Tim Brown, Jim Peaslee, Larry Moore, and Adair Peterson. (Bob Lowder and Sam Beard)

Ninth Annual Sandia Mountain Snowshoe Race in 2011

The Ninth Annual Sandia Mountain Snowshoe Race, presented by Friends of the Sandia Mountains, is scheduled for January 22, 2011. The Race begins at 10:00 am at the lower level parking lot at Sandia Crest and is a 5-km trek through the beautiful Cibola National Forest. Registration begins at the REI store or by mail on December 1. Registration forms will be available online at www.sandiasnowshoe.com). The registration fee of \$30 (\$45 after Jan. 8, 2011) includes a long-sleeved T-shirt, pre- and post-race refreshments, and prizes in several categories. The race is limited to 150 participants, and racers of all levels are invited to participate. The race filled up early last year, so don't delay and miss out on the fun. (Matt and Joy Bosquez)

Barrow Wildlife Water Maintenance

In about 1992, Beverly deGruyter installed the Barrow Wildlife Water as a Habitat Stamp Project near a section of the Old Crest Road between Doc Long Picnic Area and Tree Spring Trailhead. The fiberglass dome of the rain collection tank is 14 feet in diameter. Water flows through a pipe to a concrete water trough about 60 feet from the collector.

In August 2009 Bob Galloway found this system and reported it to SRD volunteers. After it was checked by FOSM members, District Ranger Cid Morgan gave permission for FOSM to prune along the road and for a SRD fire crew to take a fire engine to the site. In October volunteers cleaned the collector with water from the engine, unplugged the water pipe, and cleaned the water trough. Don Carnicom and other volunteers installed strainers at the tank drain and a float valve at the trough.

In June 2010, Don replaced the damaged plastic water pipe to the float with one protected by a piece of flexible steel conduit. The two filters were clean, and he will check the system after a rain to confirm that water is flowing to the trough.

In December 2009, Dan Benton and Sam Beard hiked to a very similar water system on top of a low ridge only a 10-minute hike from the Piedra Lisa North Trailhead. The water in the tank and trough was covered by ice, and the system appeared to be in excellent condition. This collector appears as a white dot on satellite photographs of the area. (Sam Beard)

FOSM Publications

Visitors Recreation Guide to the Sandia and Manzanita Mountains --This year we continued to distribute the Visitors Recreation Guide which includes information about picnic areas, camping, volunteer work, parking fees and passes, wilderness restrictions, temperature and precipitation, a map of the Sandia and Manzanita Mountains, a list of trails (length and difficulty), and Leave No Trace policy. Many articles and pictures were prepared by individuals from throughout the community covering most of the recreational opportunities available in the Sandia Ranger District such as bicycling, skiing, hiking, horseback riding, climbing, and hang-gliding. Much of the information is also available on the

Friends web site, www.friendsofthesandias.org, under Recreation. Copies of the free Guide are available at the Ranger Station, Four Seasons Visitor Center, Crest Visitor Center, REI, Albuquerque Convention and Visitor Bureau, and Tinkertown. (Don Carnicom)

Sandia Crest Scenic Byway Guide – This guide presents local history and information at all the Scenic Byway signs along the Crest Highway. During the past year, a total of 170 copies were sold: 155 to the Sandia Crest House, 10 to the Friends of Tijeras Pueblo for sale at their bookstore in the Sandia Ranger Station, and 5 at FOSM meetings. The sales provided \$170 to the FOSM treasury. Since we took delivery of the original order on March 31, 2006, a total of 1418 copies have been sold. (Bob and Sally Lowder)

Field Guide to the Sandia Mountains – Our Field Guide was published in 2005 when 10,000 copies were printed, and UNMPress reprinted 5,000 copies last year. Sales are over 11,000 and climbing. Copies of the Guide are still in many local bookstores. (Gerry Sussman)

Maintenance of Trails Adopted by FOSM

Cienega Nature Trail -- On May 20, 2010, Bob and Sally Lowder cleared winter debris from the paved Nature/Braille handicap trail. It was noted that there was one broken pole on the fence by the stream and two cracked benches along the paved walk way. We returned to Cienega on July 7, 2010, with a full FOSM crew to clear mud and debris that had been washed in by the summer rains. Using shovels, brooms, and a gasoline-powered blower, all mud and debris were cleared from the trail. Bob used the new FOSM Stihl 450 clearing saw to cut heavy grass and vegetation along the walk ways and around the benches. All the grass cuttings were swept up and cleared from the area. Two deteriorated wooden bench tops were removed and replaced with new wooden tops prepared by Lynn Bender and painted by the Paint Crew. Don Carnicom provided the expertise for the bench repair. Volunteers working on this project were Rav Nicholson, Bob and Sally Lowder, Jim Loner, Jerry Pekarek, Jane Harrison, and Phyllis Grein. Dan Benton and Frank Larson also installed a new pole in the streamside fence.

Tecolote Trail -- On May 20, 2010, Bob and Sally

(Continued on page 10)

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Lowder hiked Tecolote Trail and repaired eight water bars and four check dams and removed litter from the trail and the picnic area. Some minor brush cutting and tree pruning was done. They also removed two downed trees from across the trail and repaired a reroute that had formed. Noted was a broken top tree 8 feet above ground level that was slightly hung-up in two other trees. On May 24, 2010, volunteers Sam Beard, Bob and Sally Lowder, Jim Peaslee, Carl Smith, and Jim Loner removed this broken top tree. They also removed part of a tree that was struck by lightning a few years ago. This "tree part" was near the trail tread and, while stable, could pose a threat to hikers in windy weather. (Sally Lowder)

Air Compressor Enclosure

During the summer of 2009, Sam Beard and Bill Metz constructed the frame and upper walls of an enclosure for the new air compressor at the south end of the SRD shop. The compressed air is used for several operations including cleaning chain saws and inflating vehicle tires. In July 2010, Bob Lowder, Sally Lowder, and Sam covered the enclosure top with roofing felt from earlier FOSM projects and leftover shingles from the SRD storage yard. They also completed the sides of the enclosure by installing plywood purchased with FOSM funds. Later Larry Moore and Sam fabricated and hung a door, and the Paint Crew painted the structure. (Sam Beard)

Programs at Monthly Meetings

Over the past year, Vice-President Gerry Sussman scheduled diverse and interesting speakers for our monthly programs.

October - Dave Ferguson (Abq. Botanical Gardens) talked about the cacti of the Sandias.

November - Doug Romig presented a program about forest soils.

January - Dave Weaver told us about his fascinating trip to Mongolia.

February - Larry Littlefield gave us an overview of his wonderful books covering wildflowers, trees, lichens, etc. of the Sandias.

March - Prof. Barry Kues of UNM covered 300 million years of mammals in New Mexico from the Pennsylvanian Period to the Pleistocene.

April - Ruthanne Hamrick told us about her visit to Copper Canyon in Mexico and 50-mile run with the Tarahumara.

May - Prof. Mousumi Roy of UNM gave a presentation about the Rio Grande Rift.

June - John Solomon talked to us about Wilderness Survival.

July - Dr. Tom Williamson of the NMMNH presented a program on Ice Age Vertebrates in the Albuquerque area.

August - Lance Davisson, the NM Urban Forester, talked to us about his Big Tree program.

September - Elke Duerr spoke about the Mexican Grey Wolf Recovery Program in our state.

(Gerry Sussman)

News Notes

1. The following items were purchased with FOSM funds to support projects on the SRD: wood to complete the air compressor enclosure, Stihl 450 clearing saw for cutting grass and brush, Stihl 460 chain saw with 28 and 32-inch bars, materials for the Nine Mile Picnic Area renovation, and tools to support the hazard tree removal projects.

2. In September 2009, ten volunteers and one USFS employee completed repairing the buck-and-pole fence around Kiwanis Meadow using poles obtained by the SRD. Twelve poles were installed on the south side of the meadow, and three poles were mounted on the short section of fence at the north corner of the meadow. (Sam Beard)

3. In late August, FOSM volunteers cut willow brush at the entrance to Sulphur Picnic Area and at the intersection of the Crest Highway and Cienega Road to improve the sight distance for vehicle drivers.

4. As part of their contribution to the SRD Hazard Tree Removal and Fuelwood Projects, FOSM volunteers used chain saws to cut 3-foot to 5-foot felled tree trunks into 1-foot lengths so that permitted wood haulers could handle the wood in Sulphur Canyon and Doc Long Picnic Areas.

FOSM Records Retention

Throughout the year we continued to get our corporate records collected and filed. Now all electronic files and hard copy records are stored in a locked cabinet in the FOSM office at the Ranger Station. The electronic files are stored on a flash drive that is updated about once a month. I also keep a duplicate set of files on another flash drive and on my hard drive. Any director issuing a document they wish to have retained can copy it to the email address, fosmrecords@friendsofthesandias.org, and it will end up on the flash drive. We plan to scan all of the hard copy records and add them to the electronic records when we can find somebody available to do it. (Don Carnicom)

Grounds Maintenance

Grounds maintenance around the Ranger Station this year included:

- 1. Spraying USFS-approved herbicide** in the island of the north parking lot and in the gravel beds behind the building. It worked very well and killed most of the invasive weeds, largely cheat grass and hairy brome. Several tall weeds and small woody plants were removed from the highway ditch areas with loppers.
- 2. Hand removal of weeds** from the bed immediately in front of the building between the building and the sidewalk.
- 3. Completion of eradication** of the Siberian elms in the arroyo south of the bridge to the shop and north of the USFS property line. That included herbicide spraying of numerous small elms up to 4 feet tall, but more importantly cutting the stand of larger Siberian elms near the highway and then “painting” their stumps with concentrated herbicide. The chain saw cutting was done by Ryan Reineke, USFS. The trees were laid out neatly next to the highway shoulder for chipping later. (Larry Littlefield)

Community Outreach

1. Gerry Sussman and Tim Brown staffed a table at the **Bear and Wolf Fair** held at Wildlife West Nature Park in Edgewood and sponsored by Sandia Mountain Bear Watch to promote awareness and understanding of large predators. Brochures were handed out to those attending, who came mainly from the East Mountains.

2. Tim Brown, Anne Hickman, Jane Harrison and Phyllis Grein manned a two-day booth for FOSM at the **New Mexico Outdoor Expo** held at Albuquerque Open Space Shooting Range and sponsored by New Mexico Game and Fish. The Expo provides an opportunity for kids and adults to learn various outdoor skills such as firearms, archery, fishing and climbing. It is always well attended by those from the greater Albuquerque area.

3. Don Peterson, Jane Harrison and Phyllis Grein staffed a table at the **32nd Annual Conference on Aging Resources and Civic Engagement Fair** held at Isleta Casino and sponsored by the New Mexico Aging and Long-Term Services Department. It is an opportunity for seniors to learn how to get involved in volunteerism.

4. An interview of Bob and Sally Lowder by the **Albuquerque Journal** resulted in an article and brown paper insert in the newspaper about FOSM and how to get involved in volunteerism. (Tim Brown)

Treasurer's Report

We began FY2010 on October 1, 2009, with a balance of \$15,259.97 and on August 28, 2010, the balance was \$23,075.60. In addition we have two CD's which total \$21,118.24 and rollover every 6 to 9 months. The largest expenses were \$3,049.17 for tools and supplies for weekly projects, \$2,506.39 for Fundraising/Publicity that included \$2,342.20 for Snowshoe Race expenses. The largest income sources were \$683.44 from Field Guide sales and royalties, \$6484.70 from donations, \$4286.25 from the Snowshoe Race, and \$1905.00 from memberships. (Tim Brown)

Membership Status

The Sunday Albuquerque Journal brown-paper inserts on November 27 and December 7 about the Friends of the Sandia Mountains resulted in our getting nine new memberships by April 20.

We now have 124 memberships compared to 119 last year at this time. We added over 20 new memberships this year. New members are Gale Owings, Jim Loner, Beth Corwin, Tom and Paula Michel, Lorraine Garvey, Malena Calderson, Amanda Torbett, Cynthia Johnson, Ken Genco, Rose Preston, G. Golden, Cliff Mathews, Elena Kayak, Jerry Grayson, William A. Wiley, Jr., Ed and Kathy Wallhagen, Phil and Grace Bubser, Margaret Carroll, Cindy Engle, Erin Hendrick, Ron and Barbara Baird, John Braly, Joann Pounders, and Mark Huntzinger. Welcome aboard everyone! (Tim Brown and Sally Lowder)

Refreshments at Monthly FOSM Meetings

The FOSM Board thanks the following members who contributed refreshments for the monthly meetings: January, Anne Hickman; February, Jane Harrison; March, Pauline Ho and Richard Buss; April, Kitsie Smiset; May, Dan and Pat Benton; June, Jeanette Buffett; July, Joy Bosque; August, Don and Adair Peterson; September, Jean Payne; October, Bill Savage; November, Anne

Financial and Physical Audits

In December, Art Arenholz and Don Peterson completed an audit of the financial records. They reported the records to be accurate and in good shape. In December, Don Peterson completed a physical audit of all of the FOSM physical assets. The physical assets mainly include tools, t-shirts, books, patches and badges. (Tim Brown)

BALLOT: OCTOBER 5, 2010 ANNUAL MEETING

We appreciate the contributions of those board members whose terms are expiring at the end of September: Sam Beard, Matt Bosquez, Jane Harrison, Larry Littlefield and Anne Hickman. The continuing board members are: Dan Benton, Don Carnicom, Mike Coltrin and Sally Lowder. The members listed below have been nominated for officer and board member positions. (Officers are also members of the board.) Other nominations are encouraged. If you are interested in serving as an officer or board member, please contact Dan Benton, Nominating Committee Chair, at 797-1941.

President:

- 1. Bob Lowder _____
- 2. _____

Vice President:

- 1. Gerry Sussman _____
- 2. _____

Treasurer:

- 1. Tim Brown _____
- 2. _____

Secretary:

- 1. Linda McDowell _____
- 2. _____

Board members: (Vote for four)

- 1. Sam Beard _____
- 2. Matt Bosquez _____
- 3. Jane Harrison _____
- 4. Larry Littlefield _____
- 5. _____
- 6. _____

Notice to members of FOSM: If you are unable to attend the annual meeting, you may vote by mailing this ballot to:

Friends of the Sandia Mountains
P. O. Box 1832
Tijeras, NM 87059

FRIENDS OF THE SANDIA MOUNTAINS

If you hike, bike, ride a horse or use the Sandia Mountains in any way, we know you enjoy what nature has given us. As you know, all this traffic takes a toll on our forest lands. Working in conjunction with the **United States Forest Service** as a volunteer organization, we provide many services in support of the Sandia Ranger District.

WHO WE ARE

Friends of the Sandia Mountains is a non-profit organization of local volunteers. We are dedicated to working in partnership with the USFS, other groups, and individuals to maintain, protect and restore the natural, cultural and scenic resources of New Mexico's forest lands for the enjoyment and use of present and future generations. Our focus is conservation and education within the Sandia Ranger District of the Cibola National Forest and adjacent lands.

WHAT IS THE NEED

This uniquely beautiful land can't wait another minute. It truly needs our help! As USFS funds are inadequate to handle the increasing demands on the forest land by the public, the Friends of the Sandia Mountains will work to help meet the forest needs. Learn more about how you can be a part of this vital effort.

WHAT WE DO

Conservation
Education
Restoration
Site Stewardship
Wildlife & Habitat Monitoring
Trail Construction & Maintenance
Junior Ranger Program
Visitor Services
Fundraising
Adopt-A-Trail
Co-publisher of **Field Guide to the Sandia Mtns.**

YOU ARE INVITED TO **JOIN OR RENEW**:

You can be part of this effort; work with friends, visitors and USFS personnel.

Tell us briefly how you would like to participate & we will get back to you.

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Phone & Email

Dues:

- \$10 Student
- \$15 Individual
- \$20 Family
- \$30 Sustaining
- \$50 Sponsor
- \$100 Benefactor
- \$250 Life Sponsor
- \$500 Corporate Sponsor

Please make your check payable to:
Friends of the Sandia Mountains

Mail To:

Friends of the Sandia Mountains
P. O. Box 1832
Tijeras, NM 87059

www.friendsofthesandias.org

FOSM is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Dues and donations are tax deductible.

Friends of the Sandia Mountains

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Friends of the Sandia Mountains
PO Box 1832,
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