

# Friends of the Sandia Mountains Annual Newsletter, September 2013



**Friends of the Sandia Mountains  
P.O. Box 1832,  
Tijeras, New Mexico 87059**

## From the President

When it is time to prepare this column each year, it is my practice to look back over the preceding twelve months and recall something that has left a significant impression in my memory. This is usually a project, an event or set of circumstances that seems to stand out for some reason. This year, the subject came to me quickly and easily. It was two words – *nature's resilience*.

Those of you who have been familiar with our mountain for the last decade or so know that conditions have all too often been less than favorable for the flora and fauna that call the Sandias their home. This past year has been a prime example. A winter snowpack that was mediocre at best at the top and almost non-existent lower, was followed by a terribly dry spring. I recall hiking up Three Gun Spring Trail in May.

## Remaining Meetings of 2013:

**7:00 pm at Sandia Ranger Sta.  
Tuesday, October 1**

Dave Weaver  
Day of the Dead – Oaxaca, Mexico

**Tuesday, November 5**  
Sam and Edwina Beard  
Cruise to the Arctic Islands

**December: No Meeting**

The area from the trailhead and up through the switchbacks was absolutely parched. It appeared that everything growing in this south-facing slope area was either dead or rapidly on its way to becoming so. It was even hot and dry at Oso Pass and the vegetation at that altitude was also obviously under great stress.

Hikes in other parts of our mountain presented similar dismal scenes. Certainly readers who were out on the mountain during this time have their own memories of this sad state of affairs. Then, as is often the case, it became necessary to close the forest again. We waited for our often fickle monsoon. Finally, the rains came.

And come they did. In what seemed like only a matter of days, our fire danger level went from Extreme, to Very High, to High and finally to Moderate. There is only one level below that; Low, which we usually only see in winter. Then, as it has done for

millennia, the mountain responded in an almost explosive rejuvenation of green. Flowers returned and things that had for so long displayed an almost gray look once again became a healthy green. Kind of reminds me of those old Chia toys; just add water and watch the magic happen! – *nature's resilience.*

As always, our hard working volunteers were busy over the past year. Amazing progress was made at the Talking Talons forest health project. The new fence at the Tree Spring Trailhead not only looks great, but has fulfilled its purpose of routing foot traffic to the appropriate entry pathway. Our Annual Sandia Crest Snowshoe Race was once again a big success. Details on these and other topics can be found in the following pages.

My sincere thanks go to all our dedicated volunteers for their hard work and for all they do on behalf of our organization. Thanks also to the FOSM Officers and Board for their guidance and direction and to the staff of the United States Forest Service Sandia Ranger District whose support and encouragement are vital to our mission.

See you on the mountain,

Bob Lowder, President,  
Friends of the Sandia Mountains

### **Don Peterson**

This year we lost a long time member when Don Peterson passed away on October 19, 2012. Don was a valued supporter of our organization for many years and an active participant in numerous phases of our mission. Among other things, he assisted with membership, newsletter publication, annual audit, and handling official mail. He also served on the Board of Directors for

many years, and his presence is greatly missed. Our condolences go to his family and friends.

### **Having Fun with Crosscut Saws**

*(Note: Jim Lunn began working on FOSM projects in January 2011 and was soon helping repair chain saws and design items that the volunteers use. He is now a member of the FOSM Board of Directors and is chair of the Equipment Maintenance Committee.) (Sam Beard)*

#### **1. My Introduction to Crosscut Saws --**

My fun with crosscut saws began when I got my first saw with the promise that I would put the saw to work in the forest where it was designed to be used. The promise required me to figure out how to clean and then "tune up" that first saw. My success with that saw triggered my desire to learn more about crosscut saws. After much study, designing and building specialized tools and custom handles, I gained confidence and a better understanding of how to rehabilitate crosscut saws. I completed the clean-up and tune-up of seven additional crosscut saws last year.

#### **2. My Latest Crosscut Saw Adventures --**

During the past 12 months I have completed the restoration and tune-up of an additional 16 crosscut saws. These saws include a Forest Service saw and saws belonging to Kerry Wood, Carl Smith, Bill Savage, Bill White, and Sam Beard. I spent many hours searching antique stores and junk yards for old crosscut saws. I have looked at over 100 saws from which I acquired several to restore for other FOSM members.

**3. A Favorite Saw --** While on a hunting trip, I found an old three-foot D-handle one-man saw in an antique store in Durango, Colorado. The saw looked terrible when I first saw it hanging on the wall in a dark

dusty hallway. It was rusty, had paint stains, and a broken handle. One positive feature was the teeth. They looked good and had never been sharpened. When I cleaned up the saw, I was very pleased to find that the rust was just surface rust with no pitting. I also found the original logo from the saw manufacturer. The saw turned out to be a rare vintage saw made by Simonds. After building a pair of new handles, the saw looks brand new. I estimate the saw to be about 120 years old. It now belongs to FOSM member Christopher Fritzsche.



Christopher Fritzsche's vintage Simonds crosscut saw

**4. Testing Crosscut Saws --** In December 2012, Carl Smith, Bill White, and Jim Lunn took nine crosscut saws out for field testing. Bill brought his two D-handle saws, and Carl brought his newly completed felling saw. I brought two Forest Service saws and four of my own saws. Testing was fun and successful. Each saw was assessed for cutting ability and ease of use. My combination (felling and bucking) saw nick named "Lou's Number One" is still my personal favorite.



Jim Lunn in the field with 9 crosscut saws

### **5. A Custom Saw for Rav Nicholson --**

Rav decided to get a one-man (person) saw to carry when checking her adopted trail. She field tested several different saws and decided on a three and one-half foot D-handle saw. She then asked for custom handles made from juniper heart wood. The saw cuts great and the handles turned out to be a big hit.



Rav Nicholson and her custom saw

**6. A Saw for Linda McDowell** -- Linda decided she wanted a three-foot D-handle saw that I had reconditioned and tested extensively. I found the saw at a garage sale in Duluth, Minnesota, when returning from a fishing trip in Canada. The saw was in really bad shape when I found it. The teeth were worn out, only about 1/4 inch long. I ended up cutting a complete set of new teeth for the saw and shortening the saw by 6 inches, making it ideal for carrying on long hikes. After seeing the custom handles on Rav's saw, Linda asked for custom juniper handles for her saw too. She now has one of the best cutting and best looking saws around.



Linda McDowell and her new saw

**7. Crosscut Saws Can Be A Lot Of Fun** -- I would encourage anyone, who would like to learn more about crosscut saws, to ask a saw owner to show you their saw. Who

knows, you too may enjoy the experience of hearing a vintage saw "sing". (Jim Lunn)

### **Talking Talons Collaborative Forest Restoration Program**

The task of the Friends of the Sandia Mountains in the Talking Talons Collaborative Forest Restoration Program (CFRP) over a period of three years is to clear the pinon-juniper forest to restore meadow conditions on 14 acres of a 30-acre parcel at the northwest corner of the Sandia Ranger District (SRD) south of I-40. FOSM volunteers fell and limb the trees and buck the trunks into stove/fireplace lengths. This fuelwood is then piled and is available for collection by Scouts who distribution it to needy families. From October 1, 2012, to February 6, 2013, FOSM volunteers worked a total of 907 hours in 11 days.

During October, November, and December, volunteers felled and limbed 4.5 acres of trees in the FY13A area along the National Forest boundary on the west side of the project area. On December 5 the sawyers and swampers bucked wood in the FY12A area for Scouts to collect on December 8 and distribute to needy families. After bucking the wood, the volunteers started felling in the one-acre FY13B area. On February 6 the volunteers completed felling in this area.

On January 23, Sandia Ranger District firefighters led by Matt Rau, Fire Management Officer, burned the slash on the FY12A, B, and C areas cleared earlier. Matt was very happy with the results of the burn of this "meadow."

On September 25, 2013, FOSM volunteers are scheduled to buck the wood in the FY13A area in preparation for the Scouts and other volunteers to collect the wood as

part of an Eagle Scout project to provide firewood to needy families. (Sam Beard)

### **Projects Related to Providing Water for Wildlife**

This year FOSM volunteers worked on three projects to improve the availability of water for wildlife on the Sandia Ranger District.

#### **1. Tablazon Trick Tank Wings**

**Installation** -- On April 22, Earth Day, ten volunteers worked with two USFS employees from the Cibola National Forest Supervisor's Office, Beverly deGruyter and Jim Swetnam, and two N. M. Game and Fish employees, Dale Hall and Ellen Heilhecker, to install 22 wing panels around the top of the new Tablazon Trick Tank. The wings greatly increase the rain collection

area. The tank is located 3 miles south of the Tablazon neighborhood east of Tijeras. The diameter of the 3500-gallon tank is 10 feet, and the diameter of the wing assembly is 26 feet. With the rain collection surface area provided by the wings and the top of the tank, eleven inches of rain are required to fill the tank. From the tank, the water flows through a 50-foot pipe to a drinker with a float valve.

In the photograph below, the top of the tank, the wings, and angle steel struts supporting the wings can be seen behind the volunteers. In addition to installing the wings, the volunteers filled the ditch going to the drinker and painted the tank with flat green paint so that it would blend in with the native vegetation.



Tablazon Trick Tank Crew. L to R: Lou Romero, Jerry Pekarek, Jim Lunn, Beverly deGruyter, Jim Swetnam, Bob Lowder, Sally Lowder, Sam Beard, Tim Brown, Pat Benton, Bet Gendron, and Ellen Heilhecker. Dan Benton and Dale Hall are not shown. (Photo from Sally Lowder)

Volunteers also constructed a low berm and shallow ditch to divert water around the tank and reduce erosion at the base of the tank.

**2. Inspection of Wildlife Water Sites in the KAFB/Military Withdrawal Area –**

On July 10, Sam Beard and Dan Benton accompanied Dustin Akins, KAFB Cultural/Natural Resources Office, on an inspection tour of seven of the ten wildlife water collection and drinker sites in the Military Withdrawal Area on the Sandia Ranger District on the west side of the Manzanita Mountains. The condition of the equipment at the sites and the maintenance required are given the table below. FOSM plans to work on this equipment this fall. (Sam Beard)

Site Name	Condition and Maintenance Required
4-Hills – North	Operational.
4-Hills – South	Install silt deflector.
Madera – North	Operational.
Madera – South	Not operational.
Sol se Mete – N (SsM-N)	Install silt deflector.
SsM – Middle	Check float operation.
SsM – South	Check float operation.
SsM – Trough	Clean trough.
Burn – Cyl. Tank	Operational.
Burn – Flat	Did not inspect.

**3. Inspection of Wildlife Water Sites in David Canyon Area –**

In March Dan Benton, Jim Lunn, and Sam Beard inspected the three wildlife water sites in David Canyon on the Sandia Ranger District on the east side of the Manzanita Mountains. They also recorded the GPS coordinates of the sites. The condition of the equipment at each

site is given in the table below, and some maintenance is needed.

Site Name	Condition
Lined Stock Tank	Good condition. Shallow pool of water.
West Site near Road	Poor to fair. Patch holes in lining. Re-install pipe and strainer.
East Site in Forest	Good. Water in drinker. Tank full. Patch holes in lining.

**Maintenance of Developed Sites**

Throughout the year volunteers worked at several developed sites to improve their appearance and to make them safer for visitors.

**1. Oak Flat Group Picnic Area –**

In October a crew worked at the entrance to the site and the road to the Locust and Pine picnic areas. All the brush and small trees (oak, juniper, locust, pinon, and pine) were pruned or cut back from the asphalt pavement three feet for better sight distances. All the slash was chipped, and the power blower was used to blow small debris from the road. Kerry Wood, Trails and Wilderness Program Manager and Advanced Sawyer, felled a 20-inch diameter pine into the Yucca area parking lot. It had been leaning toward a restroom. The volunteers limbed and bucked the trunk and also pruned the brush around the parking lot. All the slash was then chipped.

**2. Ranger Station and Shop Areas –**

In January volunteers cut willow brush near the shop with a chain saw and power brush cutter. After lunch the group cut brush around the north parking lot at the Ranger Station. All this slash was later chipped.

**3. Nine Mile Picnic Area –** In August the volunteers worked one day cleaning up this

picnic area. One crew removed forest duff and dirt from the paved walks and table pads. Another crew bucked logs and cut brush around the group reservation area where new picnic tables had been installed. All the slash was then chipped and blown into the forest.

**4. Cienega Canyon Picnic Area** – In late summer the volunteers worked five days cutting brush and limbing up trees along the road shoulder and roadside ditch. The slash was chipped on later work days so that the appearance of the area is much better and sight distances are greater.

**5. Twelve Developed Sites** – At the picnic areas and trailheads along the Crest Highway where danger trees were felled, slash was chipped and stumps were cut lower for safety and better appearance. (Sam Beard)

## 216 Trees Removed from Trails

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

### **Cibola Trail Rangers E-group** –

Volunteers in the CTR e-group frequently visit the forest and report trees across the trails to the e-group, and the information goes to all the e-group members. Usually within one or two weeks, CTR members will remove most of the trees under 12 inches in diameter year-round with hand tools on unscheduled outings. During FY2012, CTR members not associated with the AAT Program removed about 163 trees. Sam Beard and Sally Lowder maintain a record of reported and removed trees in a Word



Chipping slash in Cienega Canyon Picnic Area. Photo by Carl Smith

table. If you would like to be in the CTR e-group, contact Don Carnicom, 505-281-3421, [d-mcarnicom@msn.com](mailto:d-mcarnicom@msn.com).

**Adopt-A-Trail Groups** – Volunteers reported to the CTR e-group that 26 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.

**Scheduled FOSM Trail Outings** -- In addition to trail maintenance done by individuals and small groups as part of the Cibola Trail Rangers e-group program, FOSM schedules trail work outings when more volunteers and equipment such as cross cut saws are required to remove larger trees. Maintenance of trails was scheduled for about 20 days this year. The volunteers pruned branches and brush and removed fallen trees, leaners, and hang-ups from a total of 25 trails. A total of 27 trees were removed on scheduled FOSM outings. On April 29 crews worked on parts of five trails in the Crest Area.

Probably the most strenuous recurring trail maintenance outings were on Pino Trail. More of the many white firs killed by the tussock moth caterpillar infestation several years ago are now falling. The hike from Elena Gallegos Picnic Area is about 5.5 miles long with an elevation change of 2800 feet. It is in the wilderness, and volunteers must carry all the tools including crosscut saws and Pulaskis. In addition to removing numerous fallen trees, the volunteers on May 29 moved a large boulder from the trail and included it in the foundation of the rebuilt trail tread.

Another memorable outing this year was to David Canyon where eleven volunteers worked a full day bucking and limbing a large 36-inch diameter fallen tree into fireplace-length fuelwood and splitting the

larger pieces so they could be moved by one person. The sawyers used several chain saws, including the firefighters' Stihl Model 066 saw with a 36-inch bar. This wood was eventually collected by homeowners with fuelwood permits.

Four volunteers worked another long strenuous 10-hour day when they hiked all of Faulty Trail in October and removed nine fallen trees. (Sam Beard)

### **Volunteers Fell 103 Danger Trees**

Volunteers continued felling danger trees in picnic areas and at trailheads during FY2013. Kerry Wood, Sandia Ranger District, used the Southwestern Region Danger Tree Evaluation Form to designate trees with the following defects as danger 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 danger trees felled in the picnic areas and at trailheads from September 2012 through August 2013 is given in the table below. 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 103 in these outings. Most trees were less than 18 inches in diameter, and the maximum diameter was 26 inches. The slash (branches) of the felled trees was chipped with the large Sandia Ranger District chipper.

Some trees were felled with crosscut saws during the period of Stage II Fire Restrictions. Kerry Wood, Advanced Sawyer, felled four large trees with diameters of 17 to 31 inches leaning toward a building or other structures in Doc Long, Sulphur Canyon, and Cienega Canyon Picnic Areas. (Sam Beard)



Picnic Area or Trailhead	Trees Felled*	No. of Outings
Cienega Can.	2	1
Doc Long	6	3
Sulphur Can.	9	3
Tree Spring	1	1
Balsam Glade	26	4
Capulin Spring	1	1
Nine Mile	23	2
10K South	12	2
Dan's Loop	10	1
Ellis	6	1
Crest Area	2	2
Pine Flat	3	2
Oak Flat	2	1
Total	103	24

\* Other large and small trees were felled in order to safely fell the marked danger trees.



Don Carnicom (L) and Bill White making a sloping face cut in a danger tree with a crosscut saw. Photo by Carl Smith

### FOSM Email Notification Groups

Communication to and between members is important for most organizations, and ours is

no exception. Several years ago FOSM created three email groups using the Yahoo Groups system which is provided at no cost.

**Friends of Sandias** – This group of about 112 email addresses is made up only of current members of the Friends of the Sandia Mountains. It is used to provide information that pertains only to FOSM members, such as election matters, etc. Messages going out to this group must be approved by one of our assigned moderators.

**NMFOF/Volunteers** – This group of about 321 email addresses is made up of all FOSM members, other authorized USFS/SRD volunteers and others who have expressed an interest in receiving the information it provides. This system provides announcements of FOSM projects, monthly FOSM meetings, information from our partners at the USFS Sandia Ranger District, etc. Messages to this group also require approval by a moderator. (NMFOF stands for New Mexico Friends of the Forest, our original and corporate name.)

**Cibola Trail Rangers** – This group of 128 email addresses provides a forum for anyone to report trail conditions on our Sandia trails. Many of our projects have resulted from information provided on this system. Messages posted on this system do not require moderator approval. (Bob Lowder)

### 11th Annual Sandia Snowshoe Race in January 2013

The 11th Annual Sandia Snowshoe Race was held at 10:00 am on Saturday, January 19, 2013. The roughly 5-kilometer course began and ended at Sandia Crest. There were 122 entrants. The overall best time was by David Harrington, age 32, at 31 minutes and 10 seconds. The top finisher in the

women's category was Maureen Nowels, age 35, with a time of 37 minutes and 29 seconds. Other winners in their respective categories were: Breana Martin, Jonah Thompson, Emily Chavez, Cameron Crews, Rachael Cunnick, Thomas Smith, Mary Marchese, John Larson, and Gordon Sargent.

Area sponsors, both businesses and individuals, donated \$1687.98 worth of food and prizes for the race. Overall receipts for the race totaled \$4248.50. Expenses were \$2003.52 (mostly for the cost of t-shirts) leaving net proceeds of \$2244.98. This race is the main fund raiser for FOSM each year.

Our thanks go to Matt and Joy Bosquez for serving as Race Directors for this event the past few years. Lou Romero will assume those duties for the 2014 race. Details can be found at [www.sandiasnowshoe.com](http://www.sandiasnowshoe.com) (Bob Lowder)

### **12th Annual Sandia Mountain Snowshoe Race in 2014**

The 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Sandia Mountain Snowshoe Race, presented by Friends of the Sandia Mountains, is scheduled for January 18, 2014. The Race begins at 10:00 am at the lower parking lot at Sandia Crest and is a 5-km trek through beautiful trails in the Cibola National Forest. Registration begins at the REI store or by mail on December 1, 2013. Registration forms will be available online at [www.sandiasnowshoe.com](http://www.sandiasnowshoe.com). The registration fee is \$30 (\$45 after January 4). The fee 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 limit is usually met early, so please don't delay and miss out on the fun. Late registration begins January 4, 2014, and ends when the limit of 150

racers is met or at 9:30 am race day. (Lou Romero, Jim Lunn and Beth Corwin)

### **FOSM Publications**

**Recreation Guide to the Sandia and Manzanita Mountains** - This year we continued to distribute this free visitors guide that includes information about picnic areas, camping, volunteer work, parking fees and passes, wilderness restrictions, temperatures and precipitation, maps, trail lengths and difficulty, and Leave No Trace. The guide is available at the Ranger Station, Crest Visitor Center, REI, Albuquerque Convention and Visitor Bureau, and Tinkertown. In addition, they are frequently distributed at all FOSM outreach activities. (Don Carnicom)

**Field Guide to the Sandia Mountains** – Just under 12,000 copies of this book have been sold. (Gerry Sussman)

### **Sandia Ranger District Signage Program**

Three years ago the FOSM Signage Committee undertook a major new initiative to inventory all signs on the Sandia Ranger District, evaluate which signs needed to be replaced, then design, purchase and install the signs on a timely basis. These activities were completed with the majority of the replacement signs being installed in the Crest, Tram, and Kiwanis Meadow areas. Maintenance, such as graffiti removal, was performed as required throughout the year.

The sign inventory for the District is continuing to be updated as changes occur such as the new highway signs installed at the picnic areas along the Crest Highway. Those signs were designed, purchased and installed by the Forest Supervisor's Office and the NM Department of Transportation.

We will continue to look at other signage issues as the need arises. (Don Carnicom)

### **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 twice a year. A duplicate set of files are kept on another flash drive and on a hard drive. Any director issuing a document they wish to have retained can copy it to the email address, [fosmrecords@friendsofthesandias.org](mailto:fosmrecords@friendsofthesandias.org), and it will end up on the flash drive. All of the hard copy records will eventually be scanned and added to the other electronic records. (Don Carnicom)

### **Programs at Monthly Meetings**

This year we had the following presentations at our first-Tuesday monthly meetings:

- Oct. - Linda McDowell told us about her visit to Kyrgyzstan last summer, where she helped build housing for needy people.
- Nov. - No program due to election day.
- Mar. - Pauline Ho talked about her trip to Madagascar and the unusual wildlife they saw.
- Apr. - Sandra Arazi-Coombs gave a program about the archaeology of the Sandias.
- May - Mike Butterfield told us about his forthcoming book on the High Mountains of N.M.
- June - Joan Mathien presented a program about Chaco and the origins of the turquoise found there.
- July - Bob Julyan recounted the summer hike that he and his wife made on the Dale's Way Trail in England.

Aug - David Ryan told us about his new book and how to become more aware of seeing things as we hike.

Sept - Pauline Ho's program was about her visit with her husband, Richard, to Morocco and their hiking in the High Atlas Mountains. (Gerry Sussman)



Kerry Wood (L), Advance Sawyer/Certifier, observing Sam Beard making a cut during chain saw certification. Photo by Carl Smith

### **Membership Report**

We now have 118 memberships compared with 113 last year at this time. We added 27 new memberships this year. New members are: Alan Mickelson, Susan Smith, Shari Soltis, Ray and Sara Kassow, Eddie Leonard, Marsha Dunlap, David Dunlap, Helen Arenholz, Ryan and Melinda Camacho, Robert Julyan, Marian Rodee, Gordon Eatman, Katrina Garci, Gretchen Moede, Vic Matricardi, Matt Ladd, Regis McCafferty, Edward Sams, Doug Thiesen, Dawn Reed, Steven Graham, Russell and Ellie Parker, Larry Cotter, Mark Hyman, Thomas and Mary Stuart, Mary Diamond,

Edward DiBello, and Rikki Barrett.  
Welcome aboard everyone! (Timothy Brown)

### **Treasurer's Report**

We began FY 2013 on October 1, 2012, with a checking account balance of \$26,781.30, and on September 10, 2013 the balance was \$22,850.85, we have two CDs which total \$31,194.48 and rollover every six months. The largest expenses were \$2,144.30 for tools and supplies for weekly projects and \$2,581.09 for fundraising/publicity that included \$2003.52 for Snowshoe Race expenses. The largest incomes were \$3,083.41 from donations, \$4,248.50 (net of \$2,244.48 after expenses) from the Snowshoe Race, and \$2,550.00 from memberships. (Timothy Brown)

### **Annual Audit**

In October, Art Arenholz completed an audit of the FOSM financial records. He reported the records to be accurate and in good shape. In October, Tim Brown completed an audit of all of the FOSM physical assets that are mostly tools and books. (Timothy Brown)

### **Pipe Fence at Car Camping Site**

Volunteers Jim Lunn and Sam Beard assisted Kerry Wood and Ryan Reineke, Sandia Ranger District Recreation Department, construct a welded steel pipe fence around three sides of a car camping site on the south side of Forest Road 242 (Juan Tomas Road) east of NM-337. The fence was designed to provide a place for visitors to car camp and discourage them from driving and camping on the adjacent forest land. The fence is 120 feet long on each side and 300 feet across the south side with a post every 10 feet. Corner posts and two additional

posts on the south side were set in concrete. The Sandia RD power auger was used to dig the post holes. Posts were aligned with heavy wire pulled tight with a manual winch. The pipe used in the fence was donated 33-foot long used drill stems from southeastern New Mexico. Post tops were notched with a plasma cutter. Corner braces and top pipe rails were arc welded in place. (Jim Lunn and Sam Beard)

### **FOSM Outreach**

**New Mexico Outdoor Expo 2013** – The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMG&F) sponsors a free outdoor family event each year that they call the New Mexico Outdoor Expo. Among the various activities offered at the Expo at the Albuquerque Shooting Range Park on the west mesa are archery, shooting (small bore rifles/pistols and air rifles), skeet shooting, muzzle loaders, rock climbing, kayaking, spin fishing and fly casting instruction, a fish pond for youngsters, Atl-Atl (prehistoric spear throwing device) and numerous other displays and information booths. It is aimed at people and families who have an interest in any number of outdoor activities. I asked one mid-school girl what her favorite event was, and the answer was “shotguns.” FOSM has had a booth at this event for about seven years. This has been a good venue for FOSM, and we have been able to disseminate a lot of information to the public about our group and being fire wise. Our FOSM digital projector, with its looping photo presentation about our activities on the District did a great job of getting the attention of passersby. We also had on display a crosscut saw, small pruning saw, Pulaski, cant hook and helmets. The large crosscut saw draws lots of comments. Once again, Expo broke all attendance records this year with well over 4000 attendees over the weekend. We were especially pleased by

the many folks who stopped by our table and said, “Hey, we’ve heard about your group!” We sold two flower books and three auto tour booklets this year. We shared an area with the Santa Fe National Forest. One of our former Sandia Ranger District employees, Phyllis Martinez, was there. It is always fun to reconnect with old friends and meet new friends. It is a great event to reach out to people and tell them about FOSM and our wonderful Sandia Mountains. (Sally and Bob Lowder)

### **Sandia Mountain Natural History Center**

This center hosted a combined program of the annual “Bioblitz” and the regular public open house event. While Larry Littlefield led two wildflower walks at 11:30 and 2:00, Julie Littlefield manned the FOSM table. The weather was not cooperative, and the wind became an issue. It was felt that this event is not suited to FOSM presentations as it is primarily an outside event. It was difficult to keep brochures and other literature from blowing away. (Larry and Julie Littlefield)

### **Celebrate Wildlife Event at Wildlife West**

Don Carnicom manned the FOSM booth at Wildlife West on June 15<sup>th</sup> for about 7 hours. Approximately 200 people passed by our exhibit. We only sold one auto tour guide but passed out quite a few Recreation Guides, FOSM applications, SRD Trail Maps, and other literature. Many more people know more about FOSM than they did before. It is felt this is a good event for FOSM as it reaches out to a variety of people. (Don Carnicom)

### **Bird Walks in the Sandia Mountains**

The Tuesday Bird Walks are now in their eighth or ninth year. A small group of dedicated birders and congenial companions meet at the Ranger Station at 8:00 am every

Tuesday between Memorial Day and Balloon Fiesta.

This year we had four walks in June and resumed when the forest reopened. The leaders are members of Central New Mexico Audubon Society. We go to Otero Canyon, the picnic grounds and trailheads on the Crest Highway, and the Crest. Melissa Howard, FOSM member, has also been a part of the hikes and has helped coordinate the announcements through FOSM. (Melissa Howard)

### **New Certified Chainsaw Sawyers**

FOSM trained five new chainsaw sawyers over a 12-month period. Kerry Wood, USFS, provided classroom training and FOSM’s senior sawyers provided hands-on field practicum and mentoring at the Talking Talons Meadow Restoration site. In December, 2012, our 5 new chain sawyers met their final goal--- certification for 3 99years. New sawyers are Dennis Crowther, Bill White, Diana Filliman, Jim Lunn and Linda McDowell. Congratulations!! (Sally Lowder)

### **Recertification of Senior Chainsaw Operators**

FOSM’S chain sawyers recertified in April, 2013 with Kerry Wood, C-advanced chain sawyer for USFS. Kerry is the Trails and Program Manager for Cibola National Forest, Sandia Ranger District. Chainsaw operators recertifying for a 3-year period were Bob Lowder, Sam Beard, Dan Benton, Carl Smith, and Paul Torno. Bill Savage was out of town when the certifications were conducted. He will complete his certification with Kerry this fall. (Sally Lowder)



Paul Torno felling hang-up using Kerry Wood's wedging and cutting technique.  
Photo by Carl Smith

### **CPR and Bloodborne Pathogens Training**

Eighteen certified crosscut saw and chainsaw sawyers fulfilled their class room obligations for CPR and Bloodborne Pathogens (BBP) trainings for 2013. Every two years we must recertify for CPR, and BBP is good for 1 year. In 2014, First Aid and BBP will be on the agenda. Thanks to FOSM member and long time Red Cross instructor Kitsie Hilaire Smiset for her tireless devotion to keeping us certified. FOSM members participating were Bob Lowder, Sam Beard, Dan Benton, Bill Savage, Carl Smith, Paul Torno, Larry Littlefield, Diana Filliman, Rav Nicholson, Sally Lowder, Linda McDowell, Jerry Pekarek, Dave Gabel, Pete Rhyins, Bill White, Dennis Crowther, Jim Lunn and Chris Fritzsche. (Sally Lowder)

### **Summer Wildflower Hikes**

FOSM and the Forest Service co-sponsored Wildflower Walks on Saturdays this summer (after the forest reopened) that have gone well. So far, we have led three walks -- July 27 by Chris Husted at the Crest with 12 folks; Aug. 3 at the Cedro Nature Trail in Otero Canyon by Jean Payne with 7 folks; and Aug. 10 in the Tree Springs area using parts of three trails -- Tree Springs, Oso Corredor, and Pearl's Trail -- a nice lollipop route by Jean Payne with 6 folks.

Three more walks were scheduled for the next three Saturdays in August. All leaders have volunteered, and all have been checking in with Antonio Garcia Saturday mornings before leaving for the field. The **Mountain View Telegraph** has been running a weekly notice on the walks. E-mails to the volunteer e-group and to the Garden Club, plus word of mouth are bringing out the folks. Larry Littlefield has also led some plant hikes with various groups. Other volunteers who have led hikes are Dick Frederikson, Vicki Farrar, Mari Draper, and Marj Patrick. (Jean Payne and Sally Lowder)

### **Paint Crew Report**

FY2013 started with our redoing six large multi-colored Smokey signs. All the signs had to be wire brushed and then the painting began. Colors were turquoise, black, gold, green, red, and brown, and the lettering was done with white paint. Many of the plywood backs on these signs had decayed. These were replaced by Sam Beard and Jim Lunn and then painted with our lovely BBQ brown paint.

Early in the season the paint crew took time out to work with Karen Takai, Public Affairs

Officer. The storage room containing fire signs was reorganized and categorized according to the three fire restrictions stages.

Our next big project was the making of the tall, singular figure of Smokey. Linda McDowell designed a template with the outline of Smokey. Primer paint was used, and then BBQ brown paint was applied. Colors being used on this Smokey are turquoise, white, black, gray and beige. This project will be continued as time allows.

The crew made one trip to the Crest to paint a few more guard rails with the cream-colored paint. On the way down the mountain, graffiti was removed from three of the restrooms and two signs.

The parking stripes at the Sandia Ranger Station were repainted with yellow and white paint, and handicap signs were painted with turquoise paint.

Our next project was redoing parking stripes in two lots at Oak Flats. This was done with white paint for the parking stripes and yellow paint for the No Parking areas. A large NO PARKING sign was done in white paint. The handicap signs were done with turquoise paint.

Volunteers worked an average of 7 hours each day for 19 days. Paint crew members were Anne Hickman, Kerry Harmon, Joy Bosquez, Jane Harrison, Rikki Barnett, Gordon Eatman, Sara Morlan, Jane Payne, and Linda McDowell. (Jane Harrison, Paint Crew Leader)



Smokey observing Anne Hickman (L), Joy Bosquez, and Gordon Eatman painting at the SRD shop. Photo by Jane Harrison

### **Kiosks For Wilderness Trailheads**

Jim Lunn was asked by Kerry Wood, Sandia Ranger District Trails and Wilderness Manager, to design new kiosks to be placed at each wilderness trailhead. The design was intended to be more rustic than current trailhead signage. The design was to include a single four foot wide sign plus a double wide eight foot sign. Kerry approved the designs and then asked for complete parts lists. After I finished the material lists and returned them to Kerry, I heard nothing for several months. Then one day, I was informed that the material had arrived, and I was asked if I was ready to start building. With the help of two Forest Service interns, I began the process of building 13 kiosks, six singles and seven doubles. The single kiosks were eight feet tall by four feet wide, and the double kiosks were eight foot tall and eight foot wide. All kiosks were built with 6" x 6" timbers, had Lexan windows, and a 3/4" plywood door with hasps and locks. It took more than 60 hours to finish the building all 16 kiosks. The first kiosk was placed at the Embudito Trailhead and seemed to fit the simple rustic design requirements. (Jim Lunn)



Embudito Trailhead Wilderness Kiosk

### **Refreshments at Monthly FOSM Meetings**

The following members provided refreshments at the monthly FOSM meetings: January and February, No meetings; March, Joy and Matt Bosquez; April, Lou Romero; May, Pat and Dan Benton; June, Anne Hickman and Gerry Sussman; July, Tim Brown; August, Sally Lowder; September, Anne Hickman; October, Bet Gendron; and November, Anne Hickman. (Anne Hickman)

### **Adopt-A-Trail Coordination**

We have sixteen groups/individuals with current Adopt-A-Trail agreements with the USFS on the Sandia Ranger District. Through the end of August 2013, six of those groups have reported a total of 395.5 work hours on the trails. One additional group has a major work day scheduled before the end of the fiscal year. Kudos to Lou Romero and the Southwest Forest Service Amigos for reporting 173 hours on 12 outings (and they still have a month to go!). The Amigos maintain Oso Corredor and the North Crest Trail. The lengthy closure we experienced during the early summer no doubt cut into the trail work, but with the forest now open and moderating

temperatures, we look for a surge of activity before the fiscal year ends on September 30. (Dan Benton)

### **Adopt-A-Trail Report for Tecolote and Cienega Nature Trail**

FOSM has adopted both Cienega Nature Trail and the Tecolote Trail located at Dry Camp Trailhead. In October, 2012, Chris Fritzsche and Bob and Sally Lowder worked two hours cleaning up Tecolote Trail. It was in excellent condition at that time with little or no need for any trail work. Trash was picked up along the trail and in the parking lot. A fire ring was also broken up as it was set under some trees.

Don Carnicom led a FOSM project to maintain Cienega Nature Trail on April 17. Five people cut grass and branches and removed one small 3-inch oak hanging over the trail. The group picnic table area was cleared of all winter debris. Five people worked 2.5 hours in this area.

As the forest was closed in early June due to extreme fire danger, little or no work was done on the adopted trails. On August 21 the large FOSM Stihl 450 clearing saw as used to cut grass that had been encroaching on the trails and the benches along the pathways. It is beautiful in this area now. Using rakes, shovels and a Stihl power blower, all the areas were cleaned. The usual time with 3 to 5 people was about 2 to 3 hours to do all this work. (Sally Lowder)

### **National Trails Day Projects**

**Elena Gallegos Picnic Area --** On Saturday, June 1, eight volunteers completed the FOSM National Trails Day (NTD) project to replace a gate in the wilderness fence with a simple opening at Domingo Baca Trailhead northeast of Elena Gallegos



Picnic Area. The crew dug out five posts and removed wire to completely dismantle the existing pedestrian and horse gates. They then installed a post in a new hole to form a 45-inch opening in the fence for all users including horseback riders. After installing wire at the new gate, the crew hiked to the Kiwanis Shelter where they enjoyed lunch sandwiches and drinks. During the drawing for donated prizes, four of the eight crew members won prizes. (Sam Beard)

### **Oak Flat Group Reservation Picnic Area**

The East Mountain NTD Project was led by Kerry Wood and Ryan Reineke, SRD Trails and Wilderness Department. About 40 volunteers met at Oak Flat Group Picnic Area where they constructed the new Oak Flat Connector Trail. This trail starts at the southern-most picnic area of the Oak Flat Group, goes west then north, then east, and hits a two-track trail that goes south to the northern most picnic area of the Oak Flat Group.

Some of the volunteers were members of FooMtb, the local mountain bike group associated with IMBA, International Mountain Bike Association. The FooMTB folks catered the post session lunch that included grilled BBQ and water melon. They had also obtained prizes from local bike merchants and conducted a drawing during lunch. (Carl Smith)

### **Trailhead Limiter Modifications**

Volunteers increased the widths of openings in eight trailhead limiters in the Cedro Group Campground and Juan Tomas Road areas east of NM-337 and south of the Ranger Station in March. A limiter is a welded steel pipe Y-shaped structure installed at a trailhead to limit the width of vehicles that can access the trail. In this

project, the width of the limiters at the ground was increased from 24 inches to 32 inches. The limiters were on single track trails open to bicycles, motorbikes, hikers, and horses.

The width increase required that one side of the limiter be dug out of the ground, a 24-inch pipe removed, a 32-inch long pipe inserted between the two structures, and the hole around the limiter leg filled with rocks and dirt.

### **Fence Construction and Maintenance**

**1. Tree Spring Trailhead Fence –** In October volunteers completed construction of a fence at Tree Spring Trailhead parking lot to reduce (1) the number of visitors who take a shortcut up the slope from the parking lot to the restroom and the trail, and (2) the number of visitors in the winter who sled down an old downhill ski area slope and sometimes go out into the highway.

The zig-zag fence built with 10-foot long 4-inch diameter pressure-treated poles is reminiscent of the split-rail fences built in the early years of this country. The fence, with an angle of 150 degrees between sections, is five poles high and supported by a concrete block on the ground. The poles are attached to 6-foot steel T-posts with smooth twisted-pair wire. The T-posts were driven into the ground about 24 inches, and fortunately no post had to be relocated due to hitting a large underground rock. The height of the fence is approximately 4 feet, and the total length of the two sections along the zig-zags is 198 feet. All the fence materials were purchased by the Friends of the Sandia Mountains. (Sam Beard)

**2. Cienega Canyon Picnic Area Fence Maintenance --** Seven volunteers repaired

the picnic area fence at five locations in August. Two poles and one post were replaced on the road to the Group Reservation Area. One post was replaced in the first parking lot on the left as you go up the road, and a post was also replaced at the host site.

Pole replacement involves removing the rusty 0.5-inch threaded steel rod, washers, and nuts securing the pole to the post, drilling holes in the new pole, aligning the pole and post holes, and bolting the new pole to the post. The poorly treated posts decay just below the ground surface and eventually break at this point. Post replacement requires unbolting two or four poles from the post, digging out the part of the broken post that is in the ground, installing a new post, drilling four holes, and bolting the poles to the new post. (Sam Beard)

### **Other Projects**

**Project to Replace Smokey Sign Plywood Back Boards** – In February Sam Beard and Jim Lunn replaced the deteriorated half-inch plywood backing on two recently painted Smokey sign with ¾-inch plywood at the request of Jane Harrison, Paint Crew Leader. In order to remove the backing, about 100 ring-shank nails were pulled and the old glued plywood was pried from the sign back. The new plywood was attached to the sign backs with about 100 two-inch deck screws. Three vertical 1 x 2 inch strips were then screwed to the new plywood.

In March, Bill White, Paul Torno, and Jim Lunn replaced the back on the last Smokey sign which was number 5. They also helped Manny Chavez move two recently completed signs to storage in Oak Flat Picnic Area. Jim Lunn and Ryan Reineke tested the motorized post-hole auger for an upcoming project. Jim also assembled,

configured, added oil, started, and tested a new SRD brush cutter. (Jim Lunn)

**Chain Saw Maintenance** – Volunteers clean and maintain chain saws and sharpen chains year-round. For example, on one day in June four volunteers cleaned and lubricated nine chain saws, and sharpened six chains. Jim Lunn and Sam Beard showed Paul Torno and Bill White how to break (disassemble) a chain loop by pushing out rivets and also how to form a joint using presets, tie straps, and the spinner. (Sam Beard)

### **FOSM Project Participants**

A total of 40 volunteers worked on at least one project in FY2013. About two dozen members frequently volunteer to work on the weekly Wednesday projects, and 10 to 20 members typically work each week. Ten members are on Jane Harrison's paint crew.

The FOSM officers, Board Members, and the Sandia Ranger District Staff appreciate very much the support of all the FOSM members. The volunteers who worked on FOSM projects in FY2013 were Bob and Sally Lowder, Dan and Pat Benton, Tim Brown, Don Carnicom, Beth Corwin, Larry Cotter, Dennis Crowther, Gordon Eatman, Diana Filliman, Chris Fritzsche, Katrina Garcia, Bet Gendron, Steve Graham, Jane Harrison, Anne Hickman, Jim Levesque, Larry Littlefield, Jim Lunn, Vic Matricardi, David McCreery, Linda McDowell, Bob Moore, Rav Nicholson, Russ and Ellie Parker, Jerry Pekarek, Pete Rhyins, Lou Romero, Rodger Sack, Bill Savage, Carl Smith, Gerry Sussman, Paul Torno, Bill White, Kerry Harmon, Matt and Joy Bosquez, Rikki Barrett, Sara Morlan, Jean Payne, and Sam Beard. (Sam Beard)



Smiling crew after increasing width of trailhead limiter from 24 inches to 32 inches. L to R: Larry Littlefield, Bob Lowder, Sally Lowder, Dennis Crowther, Katrina Garcia, and Gretchen Moede. Photo by Carl Smith

### Publication of the FY2013 Newsletter

A huge thank you to the following people who contributed to the publication of the FY2013 Friends of the Sandia Mountains Annual Newsletter: Jim Lunn for producing the final version in two-column format, authors who contributed articles, photographers who made informative and interesting pictures, reviewers who found errors in the early versions, and FOSM volunteers who completed the many projects for us to report. This is our year-end historical review that is available to all members, volunteers, and visitors to our meetings. (Sam Beard, Editor)



Volunteers at Tree Spring Trailhead attaching poles to the posts with wire and Larry Littlefield, L, and Jim Lunn placing the fifth pole on a fence section. Photo by Bet Gendron

**Officers**

- \* President – Bob Lowder
- \* Vice-President – Gerry Sussman
- \* Treasurer – Tim Brown
- \* Secretary – Linda McDowell

**Board Members**

- \* Sam Beard
- \* Dan Benton
- \* Don Carnicom
- \* Mike Coltrin
- \* Jane Harrison
- \* Anne Hickman
- \* Sally Lowder
- \* Jim Lunn
- \* Lou Romero

Officers are also Board Members.

## 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  
Danger Tree Removal  
Sponsor Annual Snowshoe Race  
Trail Construction & Maintenance  
Junior Ranger Program  
Visitor Services  
Published "Recreation Guide to Sandias"  
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
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