

Friends of the Sandia Mountains Annual Newsletter, September 2016



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

From the President

You no doubt know the old saying – “Time goes by fast when you’re having fun”. Well, we sure must be having a lot of fun, because this past year has certainly gone by rapidly. There are probably those who might have a difficult time in understanding how it is that our dedicated volunteers define the word “fun”. I mean dragging around large cut tree branches in the hot sun, digging boulders out of trails using big heavy rock bars or hiking all day to remove a single fallen tree from a trail may not sound like a lot of fun to most folks, our volunteers do all of these things willingly, happily and without complaint. I seriously doubt that any of our crew members would ever even remotely consider doing this kind of stuff for pay. We are truly fortunate to have a cadre of volunteers of this caliber.

This past year was also a time of doing some new stuff. While we have done some minor

October Monthly Meeting

**7:00 pm at Sandia Ranger Station
Tuesday, October 4**

**Priorities and Partnerships:
Expanding Our Work Together**

**C. Powell, SRD; E. Kohrman, CNF;
Cliff Dils, Regional Office**

Nov. through March, No Meetings

trail work in the past, this year brought us some heavy-duty construction experience during the relocation of Faulty Trail. Some new skills were learned there and some old skills perfected. We can be justifiably proud of the quality of work done there as the finished trail sections look great.

How about honing carpentry skills by constructing large support stands for massive rainwater collection tanks at the Ranger Station shop? Don’t recall us doing that sort of thing before. Using chainsaws and an Alaskan Sawmill to build a new wooden water trough out of a huge tree trunk for the bird log site at Capulin Spring PA is another first. While I guess some of us might be considered “old dogs” (I certainly count myself in that number), learning new tricks does not seem to be a problem for FOSM volunteers.

There are many, many additional activities reported in the pages that follow, and I

encourage you to take time to read about them.

My sincere thanks and appreciation go to all our dedicated volunteers for their hard work and for all they do on behalf of our organization, which, in so doing, greatly enhances the quality of experience for visitors to our mountain. Thanks also to the FOSM Officers and Board of Directors 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

Paint Crew Report

Our FOSM paint crew started their painting projects on April 14 and will continue into the fall, as weather permits. Our crew consists of Jane Harrison, who doubles as our authorized Forest Service truck driver, Jean Payne, Gordon Eatman, Rikki Barrett, Sara Morlan, Ellie and Russ Parker, Dianna Helgeson, and Anne Hickman, Paint Crew Leader. Joy Bosquez was with us early in the summer, but she and her husband, Matt, moved to Colorado. Joy is missed as she was an integral part of our crew. We did send Joy and Matt off at a luncheon with our crew and an appropriate southwestern gift.

Areas where we painted include the interior of restrooms at Ellis and 10K North, picnic tables at Pine Flat PA, trash bins at Cienega and Sulphur picnic areas, kiosks at Doc Long PA, exterior of restrooms at 10K, Ellis, Doc Long and Cienega. We also touched up Braille signs, bridge rails and information signs in Cienega PA. A

special project was done at one restroom in Doc Long PA and at four restrooms in Cienega PA. Moisture had rotted boards along the bottom of the restrooms exterior walls. Gordon and other FOSM members removed the weather beaten boards, made necessary repairs and applied metal Poly-Pro roofing panels to the restrooms instead of wooden boards. Sam Beard instructed us on using a generator-driven palm sander to lightly sand the glossy panels, and then we painted the panels with primer and BBQ brown paint. We also painted the kiosk at Ellis Trailhead and striped the parking lots. Signs were painted and parking lots were striped at both 10K Trailheads. Another special project was assisting other members of FOSM in scraping and painting the large Triangle sign at the junction of NM-14 and the Crest Highway. (Anne Hickman)



Tecolote Trail crew – L to R: Saybell Taylor-Aboy, Conrad Velasquez, Jim Carroll, Larry Littlefield, Lou Romero, Conrad Greaves, and Hannah Perry. Photo by Carl Smith

Major Trail Construction and Maintenance

The scope of FOSM activities has expanded to include the construction of new trails and maintenance of existing trails under the direction of Kerry Wood, Sandia Ranger District (SRD) Trails and Wilderness Program Manager. The trail projects help advance the SRD goals for expanding and improving trail networks on the district. Trail projects supported by FOSM during this reporting period include work on the Piedra Lisa Trail, Placitas area trails, and on Faulty Trail. Significant progress was made, allowing resources to be shifted toward other trail improvements. Often over a dozen FOSM volunteers supported these trail projects. A number of these volunteers already had considerable trail building experience working on other SRD trail projects or on Albuquerque Open Space trails. The projects completed expanded the core group of FOSM members with trail-building skills.

The trail work activities are highly variable, requiring a range of skills, abilities, and tools. These include cutting or widening the trail corridor by pruning branches, removing deadfall, and low-stumping small trees too close to the trail. In some cases chainsaws are needed for felling larger trees, branches, or bucking large deadfall. Cutting the trail tread includes scraping off plant material or other organic debris, removing loose rocks, cutting large roots, digging out stumps, building rock cribbing to support erosion-prone areas, filling low areas, moving significant amounts of soil on steep-sloped hillsides, and ensuring adequate drainage from the tread. The soil encountered ranged from frozen, to dry and sandy, to rock-hard clay, to almost saturated conditions. The work environment varied from near-freezing temperatures on the open western slopes

early in the year, to deep shade and quite humid conditions on the eastern side during the summer. Work on the reroutes typically involved building the middle section, then opening the ends, and finally obliterating the bypassed trail starting from each end to avoid impacting trail users.

1. **Piedra Lisa Trail** – The southern end of the Piedra Lisa Trail followed a dirt road from the trailhead parking to a badly eroded trail leading to the wilderness boundary in Juan Tabo Canyon. To move trail users off the road and unsustainable trail and farther from the Evergreen Hills subdivision, Kerry Wood mapped a new trail connecting the trailhead to the wilderness boundary. On three separate outings in December and January, FOSM volunteers, on two occasions supporting New Mexico Volunteers for the Outdoors (NMVFO), helped complete a sustainable and more scenic reroute.
2. **Placitas Area Trails** – Improving the trail network near Placitas has been a top priority for SRD. New signage clearly defined the wilderness boundary in the foothills, and a few trails needed rerouting to provide bypasses for non-motorized wheeled users and/or eliminate some badly eroded sections. The projects included bypasses on the Strip Mine and Del Agua Access Trails and improving sustainability of the Fence Line Trail. On six occasions in February and March, supporting the Placitas Area Trails Association (PATA) efforts, FOSM volunteers completed the identified reroutes and closed the bypassed sections. Tim Garner, PATA Secretary, worked with the FOSM volunteers on most of these outings.
3. **Faulty Trail** – Three trail construction projects were identified and completed on Faulty Trail, No. 195. The first project rerouted a section of trail just

above the junction with Armijo Trail. This reroute required two outings to complete, including obliterating the old section of trail. The other two projects focused on moving sections of the trail north of the Canoncito Trail junction out of the wilderness to continue allowing non-motorized wheeled access. The rerouted sections are more sustainable and bypass severely eroded areas less friendly to trail users. Maintenance tasks in the same area included repairing a few eroded sections of trail, removing rocks lining the trail, cutting small trees intruding on the corridor, and scraping bermed edges off the tread. The reroutes and maintenance on Faulty Trail were completed during outings in the months of May, June, July, August, and September. (Bob Galloway)

Adopt-A-Trail Report for Tecolote Trail

Tecolote Trail is one of two trails adopted by FOSM, and work was completed on four outings.

1. **Trail Maintenance on May 12** -- Six volunteers hiked this trail and did 2 hours of easy trimming of some weeds and branches. Very little work needed to be done on this trip. On July 8, two volunteers hiked the trail and assessed the trail conditions while looking for trail degradation in preparation for future trail maintenance outings.
2. **Trail Maintenance on August 10** -- Lou Romero led volunteers who repaired the trail tread below the mine adit which had been subject to excessive erosion from recent rains. Pruning to widen the trail corridor was completed above the mine adit, and three drain outfalls were cleaned out on the lower end of the trail.
3. **Trail Maintenance on August 24** -- Bob Galloway led volunteers who improved drainage on the steeper

sections, opening new or widening existing outfall locations, removing branches and debris from the drainages, cutting back bermed edges, reestablishing the tread in a few locations, and removing rocks lining the trail or loose rock in the tread. Part of the crew pruned many low-hanging branches with a pole saw to heighten the trail corridor for improved equestrian access. Numerous oak saplings intruding on the trail were removed to improve line of sight and widen the trail corridor.

4. **Adopt-A-Trail Sign** - On August 24, Sam Beard sanded and applied redwood color Penofin wood preservative to the FOSM Adopt-A-Trail sign. (Bob Galloway, Sally Lowder, and Sam Beard)



Digging trail tread on Piedra Lisa South Trail. L to R: John Wee, Jim Levesque, and Byron Garner. Photo by Carl Smith

Cienega Nature Trail Maintenance

On July 13, four FOSM volunteers and three Talking Talons Conservation Crew (TTCC) members worked on four tasks at

the Cienega Nature Trail that has been adopted by FOSM. The needed maintenance was reported by two volunteers who hiked the trail on July 8.

1. Replacing Sign Posts – Two decayed posts at a large plywood sign board at the group reservation area were replaced. Volunteers disassembled the old sign, dug two new holes, attached the sign board to two recycled pressure-treated posts, and placed the completed sign and posts in the ground.

2. Pruning along the Nature Trail – Volunteers pruned branches and cut brush along and above the nature trail. They also bucked a down oak tree that was lying beside the paved trail.

3. Bridge and Railing Repairs -- Don Carnicom replaced a cracked board in the deck of one of the bridges with a 2x8 pressure-treated board. He also stabilized a short piece of railing with a loose post by attaching 2x6 and 2x4 boards between the loose railing and an adjacent stable railing.

4. Cutting Tall Grass along Trail – Volunteers used the FOSM Stihl Model 450 large clearing saw with the poly-cutter attachment with three plastic 4-inch blades to cut the 5-foot tall grass along the pavement and around the three benches. (Sam Beard and Sally Lowder)

Audit of Financial Records

In October 2015, Art Arenholz completed an audit of the FOSM financial records. He reported the records to be accurate and in good shape. Also in November 2015, Tim Brown completed an audit of the FOSM physical assets. (Timothy Brown)

Membership Report

We now have 106 memberships compared with 109 memberships at this time last year. We added 11 new memberships this year.

New members are Mike Anderson, Susan Gregory, Patrick Petracca, Mike Wismer, Lois Herrera, Craig Clark, Michelle Albus, Chris Kelleher, Donna Segarra, Leif Arvidson, Lewis Hurt, Jim and Mary Rosel. Welcome everyone! (Timothy Brown)

Treasurer's Report

We began FY 2016 on October 1, 2015 with a checking account balance of \$19,559.30 and on August 31, 2016 the balance was \$23,190.80. We also have two CD's which total \$41,319.56. The largest expenses were \$6,189.64 for projects and \$3,333.00 for the Snowshoe Race. The largest revenues were \$6,245.90 from donations, \$1,876.70 from the Snowshoe Race, after expenses, and \$1,835.00 from memberships. (Timothy Brown)

Crest Visitor Center Report

The 2016 summer season kicked off just before Memorial Day weekend with a team meeting on May 25 at the Crest House. This year's returning volunteers included Fran Lusso, Dave Weaver, Tim Brown, Don Hoke, and Kitsie and Don Smiset. Through community outreach efforts and referrals from FOSM members, we added five new regular volunteers Donna Segarra, Chris Kelleher, Ken Nicholson, Sue Keil, and Jim Patrick plus two others as alternates Judy Levesque and Charles Demos. Signs were placed outside of the building including the plywood cutout of Smokey Bear to encourage visitors to come into the Gift Shop and stop by our information desk. The team was successful in covering every day of the week with plans to stay open through the end of Balloon Fiesta. (Don Smiset)

Rotten Restroom Wooden Siding Replaced

While painting the restrooms in Cienega Picnic Area, volunteer Gordon Eatman noticed that the bottom two wood siding boards were rotten on all four restrooms. Some of the chipboard sheathing under the siding and some vertical 2x6 boards had also decayed due to moisture being wicked up from the concrete pad.

After consulting Manny Chavez, Sandia Ranger District (SRD) Maintenance Supervisor, and District Ranger Crystal Powell, Gordon and a few other volunteers removed the rotten wood, installed new sheathing and 2x6s and applied caulking around the edges. The exterior wooden siding was replaced with approximately 12-inch wide pieces of steel Pro-Panel roofing. One restroom in Doc Long PA was also repaired. Later the paint crew lightly sanded the gloss paint on the panels and applied a primer and BBQ brown paint. FOSM reimbursed Gordon for the cost of the building materials. (Gordon Eatman)

Wildflower Identification Walks

Wildflower Identification Walks on the Sandia Ranger District and surrounding public areas continued again for the summer of 2016 led by a team of eight volunteers. The outings, co-sponsored by the Sandia Ranger District and FOSM, were held Saturday mornings from the beginning of June to the last Saturday in August. Leaders were Mari Draper, Vicki Farrar, Dick Fredrickson, Chris Husted, Larry Littlefield, Kathy Lord, Marj Patrick and Jean Payne. Wildflower Walks have been ongoing in the Sandia Ranger District for at least 25 years and were begun by Peal Burns who then taught most of the present volunteers. (Jean Payne)



Don Smiset and Smokey Bear at the Crest House. Photo by Kitsie Smiset

Restoration of La Cueva and Juan Tabo Picnic Areas

The USFS is working on plans for restoration of the historic CCC/WPA facilities in La Cueva and Juan Tabo Picnic Areas. Volunteer Joelle Hertel, a retired engineer, has done considerable planning using a 1958 map of the La Cueva PA.

On three outings in FY2016, FOSM completed projects related to the restoration of La Cueva PA. On September 25, Joelle requested that three picnic tables be modified so that they could be used by visitors in wheel chairs. All of these tables were installed in the 1950s, and their designs were not consistent with the original designs of the tables installed by the CCC/WPA in the 1930s. On Table 20, no bench was present on the west side of the table, but four bolts in the concrete were removed. On Table 19, the bench on the west side was removed. On Table 29, the north bench was

removed and was used to replace the decayed bench on the east side of Table 19.

On November 18, volunteers limbed and bucked two 12-inch gray oak trunks that had fallen at a picnic table at the end of the La Cueva PA road. The large pieces of this heavy wood were split so that the wood would be easier to handle. About one-half cord of fuelwood was hauled to the hazmat building on a USFS truck. This wood was later donated to a needy family.

On December 21, volunteers hauled four piles of broken concrete from La Cueva PA to the Bernalillo County Tijeras Transfer Station. The Rocky Mountain Youth Corps had demolished several 1950s concrete picnic tables at the request of the USFS. Most of the remaining tables were installed in the 1930s when the picnic area was constructed.

In April 2016, at the request of Joelle, FOSM donated \$8000 towards a subcontract with a rock work expert for restoration near the hanging table. The work included soil stabilization to reduce erosion and making improvements in the paths and steps to some other tables. (Sam Beard and Dan Benton)

Painting the Triangle Scenic Byway Sign

On June 7 eleven volunteers painted both sides of the large 5-foot by 25-foot Scenic Byway sign at the intersection of NM-14 and the Crest Highway that was designed and constructed in 1991 by Ross Ward, the Tinkertown artist and craftsman. In April 2004 volunteers repaired the sign and painted it, and in 2009 FOSM repainted the sign.

Carla Ward, Ross's widow and the owner of Tinkertown, emailed me this summer that PNM donated and set the poles for the sign.

Ross carved the sign and Carla held the boards as he nailed the planks to the poles. He used a plasma cutter/welder to cut out the big horn sheep and buffalo in the large steel plate on the west end of the sign.

After seeing the painted sign this summer, Carla emailed that "You all did a great job, and the sign looks good as new! Ross would be proud! Thank you! Carla Ward". (Sam Beard)

Work with Talking Talons Conservation Crew

Laurie Werne, Director of Talking Talons Youth Leadership, received a grant to support five members of the Talking Talons Conservation Crew (TTCC) this summer. In addition to working with other conservation organizations, the Crew worked with FOSM several Wednesdays and also other days. The Crew members were Hannah Perry, Matthew Hopkins, Conrad Greaves, Saybell Taylor-Aboy, and Roman Velasquez. The ages ranged from 18 to 25 years old. The Crew members were excellent workers and learned to use such tools as pole saws, pruning saws, brush cutter with poly-cut blades, sledge hammers and steel splitting wedges, and carpentry tools. Their favor work was splitting large rounds of ponderosa pine donation wood at Capulin Snow Play Area.

They helped remove down trees and two hang-ups from Capulin Peak Trail. On June 29 and July 1, they dragged slash to the road during the FOSM project to restore the area around the bird log in lower Capulin Picnic Area. Other projects that they worked on were constructing six rain barrel pedestals at the SRD shop, cutting tall grass on the Cienega Nature Trail with the brush cutter, and dragged slash to the chipper in Capulin PA. FOSM volunteers appreciated their

contributions to many projects and enjoyed working with them. (Sam Beard)

Sign Installations at Kiwanis Meadow and Kiwanis Cabin

On Wednesday, July 20, 2016, five FOSM volunteers and four Talking Talons Conservation Crew members worked with Kerry Wood, SRD Trails and Wilderness Program Manager, installing five signs in the Kiwanis Meadow area. The crew dug post holes and installed signs in the rocky soil at the following locations:

1. Upper trailhead of the new Kiwanis Cabin Trail
2. Junction of Kiwanis Cabin Trail and South Crest Trail
3. Upper trailhead of the new Kiwanis Meadow Trail on the South Crest Trail
4. Junction of Kiwanis Meadow Trail and the Service Road
5. Junction of South Crest Trail and Crest Nature Trail.
6. Challenge Upper Trailhead Sign was moved several feet to the new opening in the line of boulders.



New interpretive sign in Doc Long Picnic Area. Photo by Don Carnicom

FOSM Publications

Recreation Guide to the Sandia and Manzanita Mountains - This year we continued to distribute this free visitors guide that includes information about sport activities, 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 - UNMPress reports that sales to date are approximately 12,600 copies. We are currently selling 250 to 300 copies each year. (Gerry Sussman)

Sandia Ranger District Signage Program

A number of years ago the FOSM Signage Committee undertook a project 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 and complete sign replacement was performed as required throughout the year.

This year one sign was replaced on the Crest Observation Deck, five signs around the Kiwanis Meadow and Cabin areas, and one in the lower Crest Parking lot. All seven of the signs along the Balsam Glade Nature Trail were also replaced. In addition, seven left over Balsam Glade Nature Trail signs are being mounted to an exhibit board to be placed in the northwest corner of the picnic

area for the benefit of the folks that never make it to the nature trail. Of the seven trail map signs in Doc Long, Sulphur, and Cienega picnic grounds, and the Cienega Horse Bypass parking lot, two we replaced in Sulphur with temporary signs until we order new permanent replacements.

We are not maintaining a supply of back-up signs any longer as we can have a temporary sign in place in a few days and a permanent replacement in 3-4 weeks.

The sign inventory for the District was updated again this year as changes occurred and electronic files were supplied to the SRD staff. (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, and it will end up on the flash drive. All of the records were transferred to 16 GB flash drives as we were running out of unused space on the old drives. (Don Carnicom)

FOSM Outreach

Celebrate Wildlife Event at Wildlife West

– On June 18th the Wildlife West Nature Park celebrated wildlife with their “Wildlife Festival”. Many wildlife orientated organizations such as FOSM, US Forest service, NM Game and Fish, NM Herpetological Society, Sandia Mountain Bear Watch, NM Wilderness Alliance, The

Peregrine Foundation and a number of others participated. On the order of 50 people passed through the Bean Barn where each organization had a table displaying their handouts, literature, photos, and in some cases live animals. Don Carnicom manned the FOSM table for about 7 hours. We passed out a number of Recreation Guides, FOSM membership applications, SRD Trail Maps and other literature. It is felt this is a good event for FOSM as it reaches out to a variety of people and many more now know about FOSM than did before. (Don Carnicom)

Eleven Cords of Fuelwood Donated to Needy Families

When hazard trees are felled in areas that are behind locked gates and the wood is not available to homeowners with wood hauling permits, the volunteers buck the logs into stove/fireplace lengths, split the very large rounds manually, and the wood is usually donated to the Mountain Christian Church Wood Ministry. The MCCWM then donates the wood to needy East Mountain families. Over the past several years, wood has also been collected as part of several Eagle Scout Projects, and that wood has also been donated to needy families. During FY2016, eleven cords of wood were donated to charitable organizations. This wood was collected from several sites – Capulin Snow Play Area, lower part of Capulin Picnic Area, Cienega Picnic Area before it was open to the public in the spring, and the YMCA site near Balsam Glade Picnic Area. (Sam Beard)

Donated Fuelwood in FY2016		
Date	No. of Cords	Wood Donated to
10/06/15	1.5	MCCWM*
10/17/15	1.5	MCCWM
01/31/16	2.0	MCCWM
04/16/16	2.0	MCCWM
07/29/16	2.0	MCCWM
08/13/16	2.0	Eagle Scout Proj.
Total	11.0	
* Mtn. Christian Church Wood Ministry		



Saybell Taylor-Aboy beside Doc Long restroom where she and Gordon Eatman have replaced rotten wood with steel panels.
Photo by Gordon Eatman

Other Projects

*** Cutting Brush near Sulphur Canyon Picnic Area** – Near the entrance to Sulphur Canyon Picnic Area and at the intersection of Cienega Road and the Crest Highway, the volunteers cut willow brush with brush cutters and chain saws on October 17.

*** Cutting Brush at Capulin Picnic Area** – On August 31, locust brush at the entrance to Capulin Picnic Area below the shoulder

was cut in order for drivers leaving the picnic area to have longer sight distances.

*** Maintenance of Upper La Luz Trail** – A large crew of volunteers cut brush along the upper part of La Luz Trail from the junction with the Crest Spur Trail to the upper tram terminal.

*** Maintenance of Hawk Watch Trail** – Last fall volunteers cut brush along this trail.

*** New Groomed Ski Trail** – Last fall volunteers helped clear parts of a new groomed cross country ski trail between the 10K South Trailhead and Ellis Trailhead.

*** Reset Embudo Trailhead Sign** – Volunteers dug a hole and reset this steel trailhead sign in concrete after vandals had pull it out of the ground. (Sam Beard)

Volunteers Felled 219 Danger Trees

Volunteers continued felling danger trees in picnic areas and at trailheads during FY2016. Ryan Reineke, SRD Trails Foreman, 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 October 2015 through August 2016 is given in the table below. The total number of felled trees was 219 in these outings. The maximum diameter was 34 inches. The slash (branches) of the felled trees was chipped with the large Sandia Ranger District chipper. (Sam Beard)

Site	Trees Felled
Cienega Can. PA	9
Doc Long PA	6
Sulphur Can. PA	6
Tree Spring TH	2
Dry Camp TH	3
Ski Area OF Parking	3
Balsam Glade PA	32
Capulin Spring PA	35
Snow Play Area	61
Nine Mile PA	9
Dan's Loop	11
Ellis Trailhead	1
Las Huertas PA	34
Oak Flat PA	6
Pine Flat PA	1
Total	219

Report of the FOSM Trails Crew

The FOSM Trails Crew consists of a rotating group of volunteers who hike Sandia Ranger District trails to remove fallen trees or other hazards that have been reported via the Cibola Trail Rangers e-mail system or by other means. Monday is usually the scheduled day for these hikes, but they may be done on other days as the work or weather might dictate. A chainsaw is employed where such use is permitted, and crosscut saws and other hand tools are used in the designated wilderness area.

Records indicate that the crew hiked the following 26 District trails during this reporting period to remove trees: Crest Trail 130 north and south, Survey, Osha Loop, Osha Spring, Penasco Blanco, 10K north and south, Challenge, Switchback, Buried Cable, Gravel Pit, Rocky Point, Faulty, Upper Faulty, Embudito, Pino, Armijo, Cienega, Sulphur, Tree Spring, Tecolote, Bill Spring, Pearl's flower trail, La Luz and Oso Corredor.

There was a total of 24 hikes undertaken with 156 trees removed. (Bob Lowder)

Down Trees Reported to the CTR E-group and Removed from Trails

To give you all a good perspective of the number of down trees FOSM removed from trails in FY2016, I have combined all the work done by Adopt-A-Trail groups, FOSM Trails Crew, individuals, and the Forest Gnome into this report that is based on information received from the Cibola Trail Rangers (CTR) e-group. It also includes hold-over trees reported in the previous year but never cleared until 2016. There were 17 trees removed from the previous fiscal year reporting period. Eight trees were removed by Forest Gnome. (He was fairly active this year). Three hundred and ninety-five (395) additional trees were reported removed in FY2016. That is an impressive 420 trees removed from the Sandia Mountain Trail System. Way to go everyone!!

Trees are removed by either chain saw (outside the wilderness) or crosscut saw (in the wilderness). Occasionally, small pruning saws, axes and just brute strength are used. I must add here that much additional work is done on the trails by the crews employing loppers and other hand tools to keep the trails safe and more enjoyable for our visitors. Branches of trees are pruned and other hazards are removed. This work is rarely reported. We could not begin to count the number of small aspens removed in the middle of trails or encroaching onto the ski trails that would make skiing/snowshoeing hazardous. Countless hours are spent out there, and at the end of the day, our crews are still smiling. What a dedicated group of hard working people. (Sally Lowder)

Restoration of Bird Log Area in Lower Capulin Picnic Area

On Wednesday, June 29, and Friday, July 1, FOSM volunteers and four Talking Talons Conservation Crew (TTCC) members worked to restore the Bird Log area in the lower part of the Capulin Picnic Area to conditions there in 2010. Much brush had grown, and hazard tree removal debris had collected to restrict the view of the log. The TTCC members were Hannah Perry, Bell Taylor-Aboy, Matt Hopkins, and Conrad Greaves.

On Wednesday, Sam Beard and the TTCC cut brush and small trees near the fence surrounding the pump that sends water to the Ski Area and a little to the Bird Log. About half of a very large clump of box elder was also removed and piled at the road to be chipped.

On Friday, Melissa Howard, Central N. M. Audubon Society, joined us at the Bird Log and showed us the additional work that needed to be done. We removed most of the old logs and some brush between the benches and the meadow at the log. We put brush over the trail from the traffic circle and filled in the large cut in the large log below the Bird Log. Audubon does not want hikers coming to the log on that trail, because they get too close to the log. We also cleared a wildlife route just above that lower barrier log for deer and bear to use to get water.

A few weeks later, Sam Beard sanded and applied two coats of redwood Penofin wood preservative to the two wooden benches. (Sam Beard)

Reconstruction of Signs in Doc Long and Cienega Picnic Areas

In May one large sign board in Doc Long PA and two signs in Cienega PA became big hazards as the large posts rotted out and allowed the signs to lean. Reconstruction involved removing the rotted remains of the posts, removing the signs from the old posts, digging post holes, installing pressure-treated posts in concrete and attaching the boards to the new posts. (Don Carnicom)



Dan Benton beside the large white fir hazard tree he felled in Lower Capulin Picnic Area. Photo by Sam Beard

14th Annual Sandia Mountain Snowshoe Race

The 14th Annual Sandia Mountain Snowshoe Race, hosted by the Friends of the Sandia Mountains, was held January 23, 2016. Three other prime sponsors partnered to make this a stellar event -- **REI, Heart & Sole Sports and Sandia Crest House.** The

race began promptly at 10:00 am on a spectacular winter day at the lower level parking lot at Sandia Crest. 150 participants (course and permit capacity) assembled for the “*fun family event*”. Some ran, others walked or simply sauntered and enjoyed the 5-km trek through beautiful trails in the Cibola National Forest. Eleven volunteer Marshals were stationed along the course to cheer and keep racers on track.

This race is the Friends of the Sandia Mountains main fund-raising event and all proceeds (approximately \$3900 from this race) support the work of the group in ongoing care and maintenance of trails, picnic areas and other facilities enjoyed by users. Participants were treated to pre-and-post race refreshments donated by 35 local businesses, merchants and individuals in addition to the four Prime Sponsors/Hosts. Gifts and prizes were also presented to the winners in seven age categories of female and male winners. The 2016 best overall female time was posted by Emily Clarke at 0:40:41. The male with the best time and overall winner was Joe Augustine with a time of 0:33:28. The youngest female racer was Emily Clarke, age 15, and the youngest male was Jaxon Powell, age 13. Otto Appenzeller, age 88, was again the sole racer and winner of the over 80 category.

Race Organizational Committee members were Lou Romero, Race Director, Bob and Sally Lowder, Anne Hickman, Linda McDowell, Elle Parker, Mike Coltrin, Jim Lunn, and Beth Corwin. The ten **Course Marshals** were Jerry Pekarek, Steve Roholt, Dave McCreery, Pete Rhyins, Jim Levesque, Tim Brown, Chris Fritzsche, Bob Lowder, Anne Hickman, and Dan Benton. Volunteers also served in other supporting roles -- Don and Kitsie Smiset, Ken and Rav Nicholson, Russ Parker, Jean Payne, Pauline Ho, and Rick Buss. (Lou Romero, Race Director)

Adopt-A-Trail Program

Since October 1, 2015, eight Adopt-A-Trail groups have performed 1043 hours of trail work. This figure represents almost double what was reported last year. A significant part of that increase came from the decision by Kerry Wood to re-route the Piedra Lisa South trail, the adopted trail of the Friends of Piedra Lisa South (AKA, Bill and Debbie Velasquez) that became a multi-day project of the New Mexico Volunteers for the Outdoors. In addition, the Southwest Forest Service Amigos significantly increased their hours (North Crest trail and Oso Corredor trail). Other groups reporting hours were the Friends of the Sandia Mountains (Tecolote trail and Cienega Nature trail), Linda McDowell (10K North trail), the New Mexico Mountain Club (South Crest trail from Tram terminal to Canyon Estates), New Mexico Cross Country Ski Club (various cross country ski trails in the Crest area), Rav and Ken Nicholson (10K South trail), and the Happy Hoofers (South Crest trail from Crest House to Tram terminal).

The Southwest Forest Service Amigos had the record again this year for the most site visits (twelve) and the most hours (302). As this is being written, more than two more weeks remain in the federal fiscal year and the weather is favorable, so the numbers could increase. (Dan Benton)

Medical and Saw Certifications

FOSM always has someone in training or certification renewal during the year. The best plans fall apart when one tries to get everyone on the same page at the same time -- won't happen in my life time! I have been doing this scheduling for a long time and with Kerry Wood's help, we now have USFS personnel doing the medical trainings at no cost to FOSM. Shelly Pacheco has been doing the CPR/AED and First Aid

training for two years. Blood Borne Pathogens (BBP) training is done by her for volunteers having the training for the first time. Scheduling is done through the Environmental Safety Engineer for the USFS, Venus Jensen. First Aid is now a 3-year certification through the USFS (2 years through the Red Cross), and CPR/AED is always done every two years, no matter the venue. Blood Borne Pathogens (BBP) is done on a yearly basis. We now have a very easy and convenient way to schedule the BBP training -- a PowerPoint presentation is sent to everyone to review and they in turn send an email back saying that they have done the review. We have a total of 12 chain saw operators and a total of 19 crosscut saw operators. This equates to 21 FOSM members having to seek renewals of their certifications every three years for saw work, and 1, 2 or 3 years for medical certifications. One of our members receives his training through the La Madera Volunteer Fire Department.

Six of our chain saw operators received their recertification this spring and four received their recertification last November. We had no new or renewing crosscut saw certifications this year. Next year will be a busy time for our sawyers' recertifications. (Sally Lowder)

Audiogram Testing

New for FOSM members this year was audiogram testing. This program is for all those exposed to noise levels above 85 dBA, which for FOSM will be those operating chainsaws, other noisy equipment, or running the Vermeer Chipper and all the other volunteers that work closely with this equipment. The testing was required to be performed without using hearing aids. This year was to establish the baseline information for the USFS Hearing

Conservation Program. A follow up will be done next year to see how effective the current hearing protection is that we are mandated to use. Twenty-two FOSM members participated in this effort. I think we all found we no longer have hearing like a 20-year old!!! (Sally Lowder)

Chipping Slash with the Vermeer Chipper

What fun it is to cut trees and watch them fall. Then comes the work of limbing and bucking the trees. The bucks are left for wood permittees to take. Some of the wood behind locked gates is donated to wood ministries for needy families. What then is left behind are the limbs from the trees or other tree debris that no one wants. This becomes an eyesore in picnic areas and a hazard for people walking around. It is also fuel for fires. In comes the Vermeer Chipper to clear the forest areas used by our visitors -- picnic areas and some trailheads that are accessible.

FOSM records indicate that the chipper was working hard on three different occasions with the volunteers. On March 30, nine volunteers chipped 19 piles of slash in Sulphur, Cienega, Doc Long PAs and Tree Spring Trailhead. On May 11, nine volunteers chipped slash at five sites along the Crest Highway -- 9-Mile PA, Upper Capulin PA, Upper & Lower portions of Balsam Glade PA, the ski overflow parking area and Dry Camp/Tecolote trailhead parking area. The last day of chipping was the most intense work we have done in quite some time. We saved the worst for June 8 when the volunteers worked two projects together in Lower Capulin PA. This is the area below the locked gate and in the area of the bird log. Thirteen volunteers started chipping massive amounts of slash from scores of felled danger trees from the fire

crews and FOSM. Some of the volunteers had to buck logs at that time to free the slash buried under the tree trunks. When those sawyers/helpers were done, they joined the tired 13. Twenty volunteers made the remaining chipping work in the afternoon go much faster.

We also had help from the Talking Talons Conservation Crew working that day. What a help young people are in dragging slash to the road edge so that the regular volunteers could form a human chain and feed the hungry chipper much more quickly. (Many hands make light work)!! That area looks much better. There is some additional work to be done in Lower Capulin, but the cooler fall weather is coming and makes for a better time to run the chipper. (Sally Lowder)

National Trails Day Project

On National Trails Day on June 4, ten FOSM members and two other volunteers worked on two projects at Pino Trailhead that had been requested by Kerry Wood, SRD Trails and Wilderness Program Manager. FOSM donated \$300 toward the purchase of T-shirts for the NTD volunteers.

One team of three volunteers replaced approximately 300 feet of wilderness boundary fence south of the trailhead portal. Two volunteers worked on a project to strengthen the existing metal trailhead sign. They excavated around the base of the post and put in 50 pounds of quick-setting concrete mix. Next they dug out an old sign post that as missing a sign. Finally, one volunteer hung four wilderness boundary signs along the replaced fence.

The other team of six volunteers removed brush along both sides of the north wilderness fence from Pino Trailhead to

about 100 feet past the large Pino Arroyo. They also tightened the old single strand wire past seven posts north of the portal.

At noon, the volunteers enjoyed a provided lunch of sandwiches, chips, cookies, and drinks at the Kiwanis Shelter. After lunch, six of the eight FOSM volunteers won door prizes donated by NTD sponsoring businesses. (Sam Beard and Dan Benton)



Lou Romero (L) and Bob Lowder bucking a log on a Sandia Mountain trail in snow.
Photo by Sally Lowder

Maintenance of Wildlife Water Facilities

On August 5, three volunteers planned to install a shutoff valve between the tank and the drinker box at the Oak Flat wildlife water site, but the valve size did not match the plastic pipe size. The fine mesh window screen on top the tank inlet was removed so that debris would not prevent the flow of rain into the tank. They thinned most of the area around the drinker out to a radius of 50 feet so that deer could see mountain lions better and the predation of the deer would be reduced. Later the volunteers returned with Dale Hall, retired N. M. Game and Fish

Wildlife Waters Coordinator, and installed the shutoff valve, reinstalled the coarse steel mesh on the tank top, and adjusted the float valve.

In July Sam Beard went to the Tablazon wildlife water tank with Amanda Rael and Esther Nelson to open the valve between the tank and the drinker. They took two bent steel rain collector wing struts back to the Ranger Station. Dan Benton later purchased two replacement struts from the Williams Windmill Company in Lemitar, NM. (Sam Beard and Dan Benton)

Equipment Maintenance

Jim Lunn and other volunteers continue to maintain the equipment used by FOSM members. This equipment includes 10 chain saws and the Stihl 450 Clearing Saw and the new Stihl 130 Brush Cutter. For example, on March 2 volunteers cleaned three chain saws and lubricated bearings, and put a new drive shaft bearing in the Stihl Model 025 saw. Ten steel splitting wedges were sharpened. (Sam Beard)

Programs at Monthly Meetings

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

- * October – Dr. Gary Morgan, Sandia Cave Research
- * April – Dwight Jennison, Mammal Evolution
- * May – Pauline Ho, Altiplano of Chile and Bolivia and a Atacoma Desert Trek
- * June – Mike Madden, Hiking the John Muir Trail
- * July – Bob Julyan, Hiking to History in New Mexico.
- * August – Sam and Edwina Beard, 80 Degrees North: Arctic Canada and Greenland.

* September – Otto Appenzeller, Medical Aspects of Life in the Mountains and at Sea Level, A World View (Gerry Sussman and Lou Romero)



L to R: Jerry Pekarek, Byron Garner, Bob Lowder, Jim Levesque and Dave McCreery after cutting a large log on Cienega Trail. Photo by Lou Romero

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 87 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 269 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 121 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)

Carving a New Capulin Spring Bird Log

In cooperation with Melissa Howard, Central New Mexico Audubon Society, and with the permission of Sandia District Ranger Crystal Powell, FOSM volunteers began a project to carve a new bird log for the Capulin Spring birding site in lower Capulin Picnic Area. In preparation for beginning the actual carving with chain saws and manual tools, volunteers studied Web videos on carving a dugout canoe with chain saws, purchased an Alaskan Sawmill (an attachment for a large chain saw to cut a slab off a log to obtain a flat side), a Beam Machine (to cut the grooves to form each

side of the trough), and ripping chain for 24-inch and 36-inch chain saw bars.

After two practice sessions beginning in mid-August, volunteers cut a flat on the side of a 17-foot long log with a diameter of about 18 inches above the restroom in lower Capulin Picnic Area on August 31. A week later, they dragged the log to the bench area at the spring overlooking the old bird log. Bark was peeled off the log, and 5-inch deep grooves were cut on both sides of the wood to be removed to form the 5-inch by 10-inch trough.

Finally on September 15, two additional full-length cuts were made, volunteers made 5-inch deep cross cuts every 4 inches along the trough with special small-bar carving chain saws, and a Pulaski with a sharpened mattock (a Jim Lunn innovation) to form a heavy-duty adze was used to chip out 5-inch by 4-inch by 3-inch blocks of wood to form the trough. The trough was completed by using Lou Romero's vintage adze to take out some rough places in the bottom. The new log was moved down to be adjacent to the old log using straps, rollers made from round posts, and Dennis Crowther's 2-wheel hand truck for moving small vehicle trailers.

Assuming that the volunteers obtain permission to remove the old log, the new log will soon be moved up into the stone and concrete base under the present log. (Sam Beard)



Digging trail tread on Fence Line Trail
Photo by Sally Lowder



L to R: Jerry Pekarek, Linda McDowell, and Ken Nicholson cutting
back slope on Faulty Trail. Photo by Dan Benton



Leaders of the Wildflower Identification Walks on the Sandia Ranger District. L to R: Chris Hustad, Marj Patrick, Larry Littlefield, Vicki Farrar, Kathy Lord, Jean Payne, Dick Frederiksen, and Mari Draper.



Crew at the bird log after brush has been cut. L to R: Sim Cook, Paul Torno, Hannah Perry, Jerry Carroll, Saybell Taylor-Aboy, Matt Hopkins, Conrad Greaves, and Larry Littlefield.
Photo by Sam Beard



Painting the north side of the Scenic Byway sign at the Triangle.
Photo by Don Carnicom



Old and new bird logs at Capulin Spring. L to R: Sam Beard, Larry Littlefield, Jerry Carroll, Dennis Crowther, Sim Cook, and Lou Romero. Photo by Carl Smith

FOSM Project Participants

A total of 81 volunteers worked on at least one project in FY2016. 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 Anne Hickman'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 FY2016 were Bob and Sally Lowder, Dan and Pat Benton, Rich Besser, Rikki Barrett, Tim Brown, Richard Buss, Merrill Calaway, Don Carnicom, Jerry Carroll, Sim Cook, Dennis Crowther, Charles Demos, Gordon Eatman, Chris Fritzsche, Dave Gabel, Bob and Betsy Galloway, Byron Garner, Bet Gendron, Jane Harrison, Diana Helgesen, Joelle Hertel, Anne Hickman, Pauline Ho, Don Hoke, Gay Huffman, Ken Jones, Sue Keil, Chris Kelleher, Karen Leach, Jim and Judy Levesque, Larry Littlefield, Jim Lunn, Fran Lusso, Jim Loner, Mike Madden, David McCreery, Zach McDonald, Linda McDowell, Sara Morlan, Rav and Ken Nicholson, Russ and Ellie Parker, Jim Patrick, Jean Payne, Dave Peterson, Jerry Pekarek, Pete Rhyins, Steve Roholt, Lou Romero, Eric Russell, Scott Russell, Rodger Sack, Bill Savage, Donna Segrarra, Kitsie and Don Smiset, Carl Smith, Susan Smith, Gerry Sussman, Diego Sarracino, Doug Thiesen, Mike Thomas, Paul Torno, Dave Weaver, Bill White, Roger Wrolstad, John Wee, Joy Bosquez, Angela Welford, Chris Hustad, Marj Patrick, Vicki Farrar, Kathy Lord, Dick Frederiksen, Mari Draper, and Sam Beard (Sam Beard)

Publication of the FY2016 Newsletter

A huge "Thank You" to the following people who contributed to the publication of the FY2016 Friends of the Sandia Mountains Annual Newsletter: 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)

FOSM Officers

- * President – Bob Lowder
- * Vice-President – Lou Romero
- * Treasurer – Tim Brown
- * Secretary – Rav Nicholson

Board Members

- * Sam Beard
- * Dan Benton

- * Don Carnicom
- * Mike Coltrin
- * Sally Lowder
- * Jim Lunn

Officers are also Board Members.

Ballot: October 4, 2016 Annual Meeting of the Membership

We appreciate the contributions of those board members whose terms are expiring at the end of September: Sam Beard and Jim Lunn. Continuing board members are: Dan Benton, Don Carnicom, Mike Coltrin and Sally Lowder. The one-year terms of officers are also expiring as follows: Bob Lowder, President; Lou Romero, Vice President; Tim Brown, Treasurer and Rav Nicholson, Secretary. The members listed below have been nominated for officer and board member positions. (Officers are also members of the board.)

Only current members of the Friends of the Sandia Mountains are eligible to vote in the annual election.

In accordance with Section 5.4.3 of the Bylaws, the Nominating Committee has put forth the following list of candidates for consideration by the General Membership:

President:

- 1. Bob Lowder _____
- 2. _____

Vice President:

- 1. Lou Romero _____
- 2. _____

Treasurer:

- 1. Tim Brown _____
- 2. _____

Secretary:

- 1. Rav Nicholson _____
- 2. _____

Board members: (Vote for two)

- 1. Sam Beard _____
- 2. Jim Lunn _____
- 3. _____

If you are unable to attend the Annual Meeting of the Membership to cast your vote in person, you may vote by mailing this ballot to:

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

Mailed ballots must be received by 5:00 pm, October 4, 2016