



Friends of the Sandia Mountains
friendsofthesandias.org

Friends of the Sandia Mountains

General Membership Meeting
July 1, 2025

Featured speaker:
Aryn LaBrake, Public Lands Interpretive Association





Agenda

- President's Remarks – Mike Madden
- Projects Report – Sam Beard
- Treasurer's Report – Jeff Young
- Future Programs – Cliff Giles
- PLIA – Aryn LaBrake
- Q&As
- Adjourn



July 1, 2025



President's Remarks, Mike Madden

- Notables since our meeting on June 3, 2025:
 - June 2-18 - Completed Kiwanis Meadow fence with Talking Talons YCC, Nice Job!!!
 - June 18 - Sandia Ranger District lowered fire restrictions from Stage 2 to Stage 1
 - Time to submit your June individual volunteer hours
 - Canyon's trail brushing initiative
 - Possible Little Free Library at the Ranger Station
 - Seeking a Paint Crew Leader



President's Remarks, Mike Madden

- Notables since our meeting on June 3, 2025:
 - Elections will take place at our Oct 7 Annual Meeting
 - Looking for a VP - Cliff Giles is stepping down in Oct
 - Looking for a Treasurer - Jeff Young is stepping down in Oct
 - Looking for an At-Large Director - Steve Roholt is stepping down in Oct.
 - Sam Beard Award will be presented at our Annual Meeting
 - Bylaws and Policy revisions are ready for Board review and approval, followed by membership vote at our Annual Meeting



President's Remarks, Mike Madden

Welcome, New Members!

Jon Cooper – June 2

Memberships by Level

Individual – 54

Family – 19

Sustaining – 7

Sponsor – 5

Benefactor – 2

Life Sponsor – 63

Total Memberships – 150

July 1, 2025



Projects Report, Sam Beard, Projects Chair

Projects	Since 6/3/25	FY2025 YTD
Trail Maintenance	4	22
Trail Construction	4	32
Painting and Graffiti Removal	4	18
Adopt-a-Highway	0	2
General Projects	7	36
Totals	19	110



June - Our fun month with Talking Talons Youth Leadership (TTYL) crew



Projects Report, Sam Beard, Projects Chair

- Trail Maintenance Led by Bob Lowder and Byron Garner (4 outings)
 - June 9 – Survey Trail
 - June 16 – Four Seasons Nature Trail
 - June 23 – Survey, Osha Loop, North Crest Trails
 - June 30 – Lower half of Challenge Trail

Note: This does not include trail maintenance performed by individuals and reported via Cibola Trail Rangers (CTR). We recognize and greatly appreciate these efforts!



Projects Report, Sam Beard, Projects Chair

- Trail Construction Led by Laura Leon (4 outings)
 - June 5 – Kiwanis Meadow Trail reroute (with TTYL)
 - June 12 – Wagon Trail extension (with TTYL)
 - June 19 – North Faulty Trail reroute
 - June 26 – Wagon Trail extension



Projects Report, Sam Beard, Projects Chair

- Painting and Graffiti Removal Projects Led by Sam Beard (4 outings)
 - June 2 – Removed graffiti from Juan Tabo PA CCC shelter
 - June 7 – Removed graffiti from Juan Tabo PA CCC shelter
 - June 7 – Removed graffiti from La Luz TH boulders
 - June 13 – Removed graffiti from Crest Plaza



Projects Report, Sam Beard, Projects Chair

- General Projects Led by Sam Beard (7 outings)
 - June 9 – Kiwanis Meadow fence replacement (with TTYL)
 - June 10 – Kiwanis Meadow fence replacement (with TTYL)
 - June 11 – Kiwanis Meadow fence replacement (with TTYL)
 - June 16 – Kiwanis Meadow fence replacement (with TTYL)
 - June 18 – Processing spruce tree at Kiwanis Meadow Road gate (with TTYL)
 - June 25 – Felling, limbing, and bucking ponderosa pine tree at Pine Flat
 - June 27 – Visited 2 swinging-fence-across-stream sites with archeologist



Future Programs, Cliff Giles, Vice–President

- August 5, 2025 – Quinn Mendelson, Rocky Mountain Youth Corps
- September 2, 2025 – Forest Health, Forest Service expert
- October 7, 2025 – FOSM year-end update and election results, Mike Madden;
Guest speaker – Stan Davis, “Earthcaches in the Sandias”



Future Programs, Cliff Giles, Vice-President

- Progress relative to 2022 poll of board of directors regarding organizations of interest
- Seeking new VP with fresh program ideas
 - **You don't have to become webmaster!**

Potential FOSM Program Speakers

Organization	Date	Speaker/Comments
La Madera Volunteer Fire Department	7/5/22	Jerry Carroll
NM Volunteers for the Outdoors	5/3/22	Ed DiBello
Southwest Coordination Center -- Dispatch	8/2/22	Elliott Herrera, Albuquerque Interagency Dispatch Center
Bernalillo County Open Space	7/11/23	Adam Splitek
City of Albuquerque Open Space	9/6/22	Jessica Sapunar-Jursich
Albuquerque Mountain Rescue Council	6/6/23	International Mountain Medicine Center, Jason Williams
	8/1/23	Gibola SAR, Shannon Braune
NM Forestry Division	8/6/24	Lawrence Crane, Bernalillo District
Sandia Mountain Natural History Center	9/5/23	Paul Mauermann
Albuquerque Mountain Bike Association	5/2/23	Hannah Russert
FS Kids in the Woods Program		Still active?
NM Cross Country Ski Club	9/3/24	Sam Beard
Sandia Collaborative*	6/1/21	Mike Madden
Talking Talons Youth Leadership	5/7/24	John Ross
Tijeras Creek Watershed Collaborative		Steven Glass, CNM, Sandia Collaborative
Central New Mexico Audubon Chapter		
Cuidad Soil and Water Conservation District		Steven Glass, CNM, Sandia Collaborative
Rocky Mountain Youth Corps	8/5/25	Quinn Mendelson, Conservation Program Director
Sandia Nordic Ski Club*	4/6/21	Scott Dietrich
Albuquerque Wildlife Federation		
The Nature Conservancy in New Mexico		
Think Trees New Mexico		
East Mountain Wildfire Preparedness Association		
East Mountain Regional Trails Council		
New Mexico Mountain Club		
Friends of the Tijeras Pueblo		
505 Cycling		
Albuquerque Road Runners Club		
Backcountry Horsemen of NM		
Boy Scouts of America, Great Southwest Council		
Bureau of Land Management		Jackie Leyba, BLM; participates in Sandia Collaborative
NM Wilderness Alliance		
NM Historic Preservation Division - Sitewatch		
*Presentation preceded ranked-choice poll.		



Program Introduction, Cliff Giles, Vice-President

- Public Lands Interpretive Association ([PLIA](#))
 - Educating and inspiring users of public lands in southwest since 1981
 - 501(c)(3) nonprofit based in Albuquerque, NM



PUBLIC LANDS
INTERPRETIVE
ASSOCIATION





Program Introduction, Cliff Giles, Vice-President

- Public Lands Interpretive Association ([PLIA](#))
 - Partners with federal agencies in New Mexico, Arizona, and Texas, including Sandia Ranger District
 - Enhance visitor experiences and foster stewardship.
 - Staffs visitor centers and campgrounds
 - Operates onsite bookstores
 - Answers visitor questions
 - Provides outreach on responsible recreation
 - Develops interpretive materials like maps, publications, kiosks, media, and educational programs for all ages
 - Ensures visitors receive tools, guidance, and experiences necessary for responsible recreation and conservation
 - Bridges gaps in agency resources and strengthens public engagement with Forest Service lands



Program Introduction, Cliff Giles, Vice-President

- Speaker: Aryn LaBrake, PLIA Interim Executive Director
 - Dedicated to advancing public lands stewardship and conservation (strategic leadership, nonprofit management, collaborative partnerships, fundraising)
 - Extensive experience in environmental and conservation organizations
 - Led initiatives that expand access, strengthen community engagement, and improve financial sustainability
 - Interim Executive Director of PLIA since January 2025
 - Led Friends of Valle de Oro National Wildlife Refuge (2016–2021)
 - Consulting work with the Public Lands Alliance (PLA) and other mission-driven organizations (nonprofit leadership, fundraising strategy, stakeholder engagement)