

PLANNING OUTLINE AS OF SEPTEMBER 8, 2026

EAST MOUNTAIN HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATIONAL COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT

BALSAM GLADE DONATION FIREWOOD – OCTOBER 7, 2026

by Lou Romero, FOSM Volunteer Youth Programs Coordinator

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE – Stacy Sesnie, East Mountain School, Community Liaison, visited FOSM’S website in search of a suitable outdoor project for Juniors/Seniors, ages 16-17. The school reserves 2 “Discovery Weeks, Spring and Fall, allowing students to explore topics/projects outside the normal curriculum. The objectives are to emphasize learning in six areas: **OUTDOOR STEWARDSHIP; NATURE; LEADERSHIP; TEAM BUILDING; COMMUNITY SERVICE AND ADVOCACY FOR PARTICULAR CAUSES.**

Stacy and I met Friday, August 28, to start planning how FOSM and East Mountain School might partner to provide a meaningful, one-day experience aimed at some of their objectives. We considered the following potential projects: **GRAFFITI REMOVAL; PAINTING; DONATION FIREWOOD; SLASH CHIPPING; ADOPT A HIGHWAY MILE; LOPPING BRUSH OFF TRAILS.**

We settled on **DONATION FIREWOOD** because it closely aligns with most of the school’s objectives and FOSM’S plans to remove hazard tree wood from a location at the top of the Balsam Glade picnic area nature trail.

PARTICIPANTS AND ROLES

- 16 Junior/Senior, 16-17 year old students ...
- 2 Adult, female/male faculty members will **distribute and collect signed Parent consent forms prior to October 7 project; provide signed copies to FOSM; provide direct supervision**
- Stacy Sesnie, E.Mtn. School, Community Liaison; **will provide school insurance; arrange transportation; insure students have appropriate clothing and hearing protection; select faculty to participate**
- Sam Beard – Overall Project Leader and decision maker
- Cliff Giles and Rene Archer, Planning Co-Leaders - know, communicate and coordinate the details of this plan; **Provide hardhats and parking passes for bus and private cars if necessary; communicate/coordinate with Mike Oliver about arrival time; loading and unloading at woodlot...**
- FOSM Wednesday Projects volunteers – sawyers & swampers
- Mike Oliver, Mountain Christian Church ministry-wood haul, woodlot stewardship

POLICIES

- East Mountain school provides necessary insurance; insures signed parental consent for each student; provides transportation; assures each student wears appropriate clothing – sturdy hiking shoes; jacket; gloves, long sleeve shirts; long pants; hardhats, etc...
- FOSM identifies potential hazards; provides Volunteer Agreement forms required for adults; parking passes as needed...

PROCESS/TASKS

8:45-9:00 - All arrive at Balsam Glade

Students and faculty will be transported in a school bus. Some students may drive themselves and FOSM will provide parking passes.

9:00 -Mike Oliver, Wood Lot owner, will back his trailer into the parking spot immediately next to the toilets and the gravel nature path.

Brief introductions and instruction by FOSM Leadership and school faculty

9:15 -Equipment (chainsaws; fuel; cant hook; 12-16 splitting wedges & 4 malls) will be loaded unto 4-5 wheelbarrows and everyone proceeds up the nature graveled path to the 2 large Ponderosa Pines already felled and bucked into 8ft. lengths at the top of the nature trail.

9:30 - FOSM sawyers will proceed to buck the 8ft. lengths and limbs into 12 inch rounds. The larger rounds will be scored 3-4 inches for splitting into quarters with steel wedges and malls. Experienced FOSM volunteers will demonstrate and help each student to safely split at least one round.

The split wood will be loaded on wheelbarrows and hauled down to the trailer by teams of 4 students per wheelbarrow taking turns. (approximately 300-400 hundred yards one-way) Mike Oliver will instruct students how to load the split wood neatly and efficiently. Limb wood 4+ inches will also be bucked and hauled.

11:30 – Complete loading all the bucked wood and collecting all tools and equipment at the picnic tables/parking lot.

11:30-12 noon – Lunch break

12:00 – Mike Oliver departs with trailer load for his woodlot **about 2 miles South of Frost Rd.**

(Optional if time available) - School bus and students follow Mike and unload the trailer per Mike's instructions. Mike provides an overview about how the wood is collected, processed and distributed to families that need it- **COMMUNITY SERVICE.**

2:00pm – School bus/students and faculty depart woodlot for school and debrief the experience.

PREWORK

- Faculty provides advance orientation for students and parents regarding objectives; date and time; weather contingencies; assignments for students to respond to, etc...
- Divide and assign the 16 students into 4 wheelbarrow teams.
- Monitor weather forecasts closely...Sam Beard, Cliff Giles and Stacy Sesnie will jointly discuss and decide a firm GO/NO GO signal to be communicated with parents, faculty and FOSM volunteers the evening before...
- Parent consent forms -
- Assign adult faculty
- Specify clothing –
- School Provide gloves
- FOSM provides hardhats
- School provides hearing protection
- Provide this plan to each participating faculty member and FOSM volunteer

Lou Romero 505-275-1570; Cliff Giles 505-250-8051; Rene Archer 505-401-3470; Stacy Sesnie 505-270-3549

(SEE PARENT CONSENT FORM BELOW)

Parental Consent Form for Volunteer Under Age 18

East Mountain High School Discovery Week Project

Your son/daughter has expressed an interest in volunteering to work on a firewood collection project led by the Friends of the Sandia Mountains (FOSM), a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization authorized by permit issued by the Sandia District Ranger. The firewood will be donated to families who rely on firewood for heating, etc.

Project date: _____ Primary East Mountain School purpose and objectives are to promote interest and educational concepts about Community Service; Nature; Leadership; and Teamwork among its Junior and Senior students.

East Mtn. School is responsible to provide transportation to and from the project.

Name of Student Volunteer: _____ Age _____ Birthdate _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Phone(optional): _____ Email(optional): _____

I affirm that I am the legal parent/guardian of the above named volunteer. I understand that the volunteer program does not provide compensation. I consent to the volunteer being photographed and to the release of any photographic/video images. I have read the above description of the service that the volunteer will perform and associated risks. I give my permission for him/her to participate in the specified volunteer activity.

Legal Parent/Guardian(print): _____ Relationship _____:

Emergency phone: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____