

# FoNAF News

## Friends of Northern Arizona Forests



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### *Reporting Trail Conditions*

Any FoNAF member who has traveled a trail on the Flagstaff Ranger District may file a report on trail conditions. As the Forest Service said last year, such reports help it to “quickly address issues such as downed trees, wash outs, and trash that we otherwise would not have known about for weeks.” Just go to our website, [www.FriendsofNAzForests.org](http://www.FriendsofNAzForests.org); click on *Volunteering*; and then—in the sidebar menu—click on *TA report (electronic filing)*.

To be sure, we encourage members to become Trail Ambassadors and to perform also the other part of being a TA: greeting, assisting, and educating the public. John Holmes has become FoNAF’s coordinator for the TA project. The photo shows John planting a pine seedling on the Schultz burn in October 2011. John’s contact information is on our website under *Trail Ambassadors*.

We recognize, however, that some members will be glad to file reports—but want to stop there. That’s fine with us. (Note, however, that—unless you’re a TA—the Forest Service neither encourages your trips nor takes any special responsibility for your safety.) Keep those reports coming. Our website will show you a tally of which trails have received a recent report and which are waiting for a report.

*--Ralph Baierlein, editor pro tem*



### *Adopting Historical Markers and Exclosures*

Collis Lovely has adopted the airplane crash memorial at Snowbowl, and Norman Mayes will take care of the historical marker at Dairy Spring, adjacent to Mormon Lake.

Dave Hall, John Holmes, Jim Hoyne, Maynard Keenan, and Curt Knight have taken on stewardship for 14 exclosures that protect young aspen from browsing by elk, deer, and livestock. We now have stewards for all 52 exclosures except one, which is so inaccessible that the Aspen Team will take responsibility for it. Once Patty Ringle’s replacement is on board, we will be able to tell him/her that monitoring the exclosures is in good hands.

Here’s “Thank You” to all of you.

*--Dave Downes and Ralph Baierlein*

## *The President's Perspective*

In April 2009—just four years ago—five volunteers answered a call from the Forest Service: organize a support group similar to the Friends of the Forest in Sedona.

As I look back over those four years, I'm struck by the *diversity* of things that FoNAF has done or that are on this year's agenda.

- Staff fire lookout towers (although no longer)
- Repair and build exclosures that protect young aspen
- Issue backcountry permits and coordinate that project
- Serve a hot lunch to those replanting the Schultz burn
- Plant seedlings on the burn and on the White Vulcan mine site
- Search for browse-resistant aspen and propagate promising clones
- Initiate and foster a Trail Ambassador project
- Rebuild a fence to protect a wetland from abuse by OHVs
- Repair and build exclosures that protect Bebb willows
- Improve wildlife habitat for pronghorns

All along, we have remained true to our initial principles. We provide *on the ground* support to the Forest Service. Advocacy is *not* part of our mission. Unless the Forest Service asks us to undertake something, we don't do it. Finally, we try to bring together a diverse collection of forest users on our Board of Directors—to improve understanding of points of view.

We'll continue to take on as many projects as we can do well.

--Ralph Baierlein



## *Aspen Exclosures and the Aspen Team*

Friends of the Forest in Sedona and FoNAF have completed their third cycle of reciprocal workdays. FOF comes north in the summer to work in Hart Prairie at 8000' and a cooler temperature. FoNAF goes to Sedona in mid-winter to enjoy the warmer weather. Eight of us worked on fences (our specialty) and trail re-construction on March 1<sup>st</sup>. Here's a photo of the combined crews.

As of the writing of this column, the Aspen Team is waiting for the FS to open the roads that will allow us to determine how our exclosures fared over the winter. Then we will begin making repairs as needed and will plan for the construction of some new exclosures. A preliminary check of a few exclosures accessible from US 180 found no winter damage; so we are optimistic that this will be the case with most exclosures, allowing us more time to construct new ones.



--Dave Downes, Aspen Fence Project Coordinator

## *Pronghorn Crossing*

True icons of the rural west, American Pronghorns (formerly called “pronghorn antelope”) are hampered in their efforts to roam at will: they face fences, highways, and housing developments. A cooperative effort between biologists at the Coconino National Forest and the Arizona Game and Fish Department will reduce some of these problems. At FoNAF’s January Board meeting, we learned that when pronghorn approach a highway right-of-way fence, they frequently just turn around and do not attempt to cross. Pronghorns on the two sides of a highway become genetically isolated. Inbreeding reduces the pronghorns’ ability to reproduce and to adapt to changing circumstances.

Experiments have demonstrated a remedy: relocate right-of-way fences back at least 100 yards from a highway, install smooth wire at the bottom, and raise that lowest wire to at least 18". As the photo shows, pronghorns normally go under fences instead of leaping over them.



By relocating the fences further back from the roadway, we’ll enable the pronghorn to pass the first fence, “regroup” in a wide grassy area, cross the road, regroup again, and finally pass the second fence. The highway has become “permeable” to the pronghorn. Relocation works.

FoNAF will play a major role in relocating approximately three miles of fence along Highway 180 in Kendrick Park. We will work with FS and AZGFD staff plus volunteers from the Arizona Antelope Foundation during the first two weeks of June.

*--Tom Mackin*

## *Restoring Bebb Willows*

Bebb willows lead a hard life. In the Hart Prairie area, the leaves are browsed by elk and deer. Rabbits nibble the young shoots, and both deer and grouse relish the flower buds. Moreover, as you might guess, Bebb willows need more water than, say, pinyon pines.

Both the Forest Service and The Nature Conservancy are working to restore Bebb willows in the Hart Prairie area. For its project area of approximately 25 acres, the Forest Service wrote, “Bebb willow stands will be enhanced by using cuttings, planting locally cultivated plants, and fencing existing or newly planted willows.” In 2012, FoNAF rebuilt two fences that protect willows and constructed one new fence. At the request of Debbie Crisp, botanist with the FS, FoNAF will build another new enclosure that will protect existing willows and young aspen.

Planting willow saplings is a major aspect of the restoration project. To provide access for planting, FoNAF builds “gates” into the enclosures. The photo shows Dave Downes holding up the flap of a gate while Curt Knight steps from inside to out.

When the gate is closed, the weight of a recycled 8' T-post holds down a 4'x8' flap over the much smaller hole. No locks or twisted wires are needed. The gate is inconspicuous, too.



## ***FoNAF Board Members***

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In the NAU Greenhouse, Phil Patterson displays aspen saplings that he raised from roots collected by FoNAF in 2012. We'll plant these potentially browse-resistant saplings in July in the Hart Prairie area.



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