

FoNAF News

Friends of Northern Arizona Forests



Issue 2

Fall 2011

Ambassadors Hit the Trails



The Trail Ambassadors program got off to a good start this season with over forty outings spread throughout late spring and summer. Our Trail Ambassadors patrolled over a third of Flagstaff District's 70+ trails, ranging from easy going hikes on Campbell Mesa to knee-cracking climbs on the high trails of Mount Elden and the San Francisco Peaks. Several of our ambassadors patrolled long sections of the Arizona Trail as far south as Mormon Lake and as far north as Cedar Tank.

During their outings our ambassadors made contact with many forest visitors (over a hundred of them), providing trail information and hiking advice to those who asked. We also reported back to the Forest Service much-needed information on trail conditions. Ambassadors noted the locations of blow-downs (trees knocked down over the winter by snow and wind) for later removal, and they checked on trailhead sign-in sheets and signs to help keep our trail system safe.

Next year we are looking forward to hitting the trails early with a full season of experience to draw upon. If you are interested in becoming a TA, please visit the "Volunteer Opportunities" section of our website or contact me at dlaplander@gmail.com.

*Dave Laplander
Trails Ambassador Coordinator*

Bikers Become Ambassadors

Flagstaff Biking Organization (FBO) has embraced the FoNAF Trail Ambassador Program by enlisting the support of several mountain bikers and providing a cycling jersey uniform for mountain biking ambassadors. The use of bicycles will help to extend the range of the Trail Ambassador program as bicycles can cover a lot of ground in a day. In addition, mountain bike ambassadors will bring some peer-perspective of folks using bikes on the trails. Kip Moyer, one of the original board members of Flagstaff Biking Organization, will be heading up this initiative for FBO and FoNAF. He brings 20 years of enthusiasm for the trail system in and around Flagstaff.

Anyone interested in participating in the Mountain Bike Trail Ambassador Program will need to be a current paid member of either FBO or FoNAF. Volunteers must commit to at least 6 days of patrolling and will receive a custom Volunteer Trail Ambassador jersey to use while volunteering. After a day of training with Kip, or another Trail Ambassador, these individuals will be ready to assist trail users and to report on trail conditions. *Anthony Quintile, Manager, Absolute Bikes*



Kip Moyer

Anyone interested in participating in this program should contact Kip or Anthony at trails@flagstaffbiking.org.

Replanting Schultz Burn Area Begins



FoNAF volunteer Gaye Knight

life at 7000', and so the seedlings are suited for planting at 7000' (plus or minus several hundred feet) along Schultz Pass Road. To start the October planting, Chris Wareham, a professional tree planter and a resident of Timberline, ran a training session.

In late October, FoNAF volunteers and Forest Service staff began to replant the Schultz burn. Andy Stevenson, the silviculturist in charge of rehabilitation, found 2000 ponderosa pine seedlings at the NAU greenhouse. The seeds had been collected on campus. Thus the seeds were from pines adapted to

FoNAF members also have been preparing for a much bigger replanting effort in March and April of 2012. Andy will have 60,000 pine seedlings (raised by a nursery in California from cones collected at various elevations on the San Francisco Peaks). Together with Forest Service staff, FoNAF will coordinate efforts by many volunteer and school groups in the Flagstaff area. We will provide a free hot lunch for volunteers and show newcomers how to plant the seedlings.

If you can imagine the Schultz Pass Road as it once wound from the pass northeastward to Route 89, think of replanting a swath 100' wide on each side of that road. We may be at it for as many as seven years.

To be sure, the volunteer effort will be complemented by professional tree planters—but only to the extent that the Forest Service can find the money.

If you foresee having time to help, let me know at Ralph.Baierlein@nau.edu, and I'll keep you informed.

Ralph Baierlein

Update on the Aspen Fence Project

Patty Ringle, a silviculturist at the Flagstaff Ranger Station, is responsible for maintaining some 46 aspen exclosures within the district. FoNAF members are serving as stewards of most of these exclosures; a steward is obligated to check an exclosure several times each year to determine if it has been damaged or if there is evidence of elk or deer getting inside. Many of these exclosures were in various states of disrepair and were no longer effective in keeping out browsers. Working with Patty and other FS employees, FoNAF volunteers have spent more than 1600 hours over the past spring and summer rebuilding, repairing, and, in a few cases, expanding some 32 of these fenced exclosures. And in June, we even built two new ones at Navajo Spring, near Mormon Lake.

We used two models for organizing our volunteers to work on the aspen fences. We held four open workdays on Saturdays in May, June, July and September where we invited members of the public to join us. Attendance at these workdays varied from 15 to 35 and allowed us to complete major repairs/rebuilds/construction of five exclosures. The remaining work was done by The Aspen Team – ten FoNAF members who spend many Thursdays and Saturdays (37 to date) working on the fences. The team members are currently Bill Rahr, Curt Knight, Dave Downes, Dave Laplander, Ed Clark, Jim Hoyne, Ralph Baierlein, Scotty Scott, Tom Mackin and Tony DeCou.

In early fall, flood waters from a major thunderstorm damaged one of the new exclosures at Navajo Spring. On October 22nd we had our final workday of 2011 and rebuilt the exclosure in a new and sturdier configuration. Over the winter, we will monitor our exclosures and prepare for the 2012 outings, when we will probably have another five public workdays and many Aspen Team outings. If this type of activity interests you, please contact me at downes@haas.berkeley.edu or 928-522-9207.

Dave Downes
Aspen Fence Project Coordinator

The President's Perspective

How can you join us in the field? As you'll see, you can do that while sitting down, standing up, or riding a bike or horse.

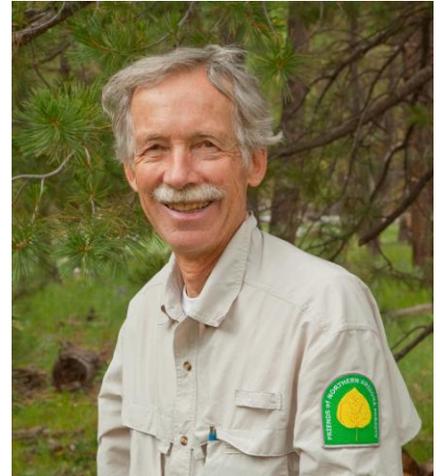
December through March: Backcountry Permits. Persons who want to ski or snowshoe into the backcountry behind Snowbowl need advice and a permit. FoNAF coordinates the volunteers who issue the permits from the warmth of Agassiz Lodge at Snowbowl.

March through November: Replanting the Schultz Burn. Join us to plant pine seedlings along the Schultz Pass Road.

May through October: Aspen Fences. (a) FoNAF repairs and improves the fences -- called exclosures -- that protect young aspen from browsing by elk, deer, and livestock. We also construct new fences. Join us on our public work days. It's a great way to meet new friends. (b) The Flagstaff Ranger District has 46 exclosures, and all of them need to be checked for damage several times a year. You can "adopt" an exclosure and report any work that needs to be done.

May through November: Trail Patrol. The Forest Service needs to know the current state of its trails, and some members of the public need advice or help on the trails. Become a Trail Ambassador, which takes only a two-hour certifying trip with an experienced Ambassador. Then you can choose among 75 trails (and trail segments) and patrol on foot, by bike, or by horseback—*whenever you'd be out anyway.*

Contact information and details appear in articles in this newsletter and on our website.



Ralph Baierlein, President

FoNAF Issues Backcountry Permits

"We who issue the permits may not know if we are responsible for saving a life or two, but we probably are."

Dave Downes



One activity of FoNAF volunteers that is explicitly aimed at protecting people from serious harm, and even death, is the issuance of backcountry permits. The Forest Service requires skiers and snowboarders who venture outside the bounds of Arizona Snowbowl to carry a backcountry permit. It contains info on whom to notify in case of injury (or worse). Permits are free and can be obtained at local Forest Service offices.

Also, on winter weekend mornings, 9:00-11:30, when Snowbowl is open, FoNAF volunteers give out permits at Agassiz Lodge. Before issuing a permit, we provide applicants with information on the dangers they face related to weather and avalanches and on the essential equipment they should carry. We who issue the permits may never know if we are responsible for saving a life or two, but we probably are.

If you are interested in becoming a backcountry permit issuer, please contact me at downes@haas.berkeley.edu or 928-522-9207. You do not need to be a skier or a snowboarder, nor does it matter if you have never been outside the boundaries of Snowbowl – you just need to be willing to commit a few weekend mornings to a rewarding activity.

Dave Downes
Backcountry Permits Coordinator

FoNAF Board Members

Ralph Baierlein, President
Bruce Belman
Ed Clark
David Downes, Treasurer
Keith Greenwalt
John Holmes
Dave Laplander
Marty Lee, Vice President
James Logan
Tom Mackin, Secretary
Mary Natali, Newsletter Editor
Anthony Quintile
Bill Rahr
Sheila Walsh

Justin Loxley is the Flagstaff Ranger District
Volunteer Coordinator

Coconino County Search & Rescue recommends these 13 essentials for backcountry outings in winter:

1. Water
2. Food
3. Extra clothing
4. Map, compass, GPS
5. Headlamp/flashlight
6. First aid kit
7. Shelter material/space blanket
8. Fire starting kit/matches
9. Pocket knife/multi-tool
10. Cell phone/whistle signal
11. Shovel
12. Avalanche beacon
13. Avalanche probe

*Information on the spring membership drive will be forthcoming. Prizes may be awarded!
Check out our website at www.friendsofnazforests.org.*



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