

FRIENDS OF NORTHERN **ARIZONA FORESTS**



Photo courtesy Bill Waters

NEWSLETTER

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FoNAF Partners with NAU Staff and Faculty Volunteers on Two Fence Removal Projects

In June and July members of FoNAF and about 15 volunteers from the ranks of the staff and faculty at NAU worked together to remove nearly a mile of abandoned barbed-wire fencing. FoNAF Vice President Tom Mackin and NAU Professor Ben Carver got together and organized two days of fence removal. In June, the groups removed a stretch of fence from the Water Treatment Plant on Lake Mary Road to the Pine Glade residential area and another surrounding Kellam Tank. Then in July we undertook fence removal in the Skunk Canyon area near Pine Canyon. In these two trips, over a ton of wire and fence posts were taken out of the forest to be recycled.



NAU and FoNAF volunteers after a successful day at Kellam Tank.



FoNAF and NAU volunteer rolling barbed wire near the water treatment facility on Lake Mary Road



NAU and FoNAF volunteers removing a stretch of fence in the Skunk Canyon area on a hot day in July.

Photo courtesy Bob Dyer

Trail Ambassadors Update

By Bill Waters

Many FoNAF members are probably not familiar with all the work that the Trail Ambassadors/Preventative Search & Rescue volunteers do. But you should know that the season is half over and thousands of visitors have already passed through the Snow Bowl located trail heads for the Humphreys Peak, Aspen Loop and Kachina trails. And as you can imagine, the hotter it gets south of Flagstaff the more people want to spend cooler time up in the High Country. It's clear that the volunteers, in conjunction with the Flagstaff Ranger District staff do a fine job even during the growing hot days we have begun to encounter. We have US Forest Service volunteers as well as FoNAF volunteers that each Saturday and Sunday working to engage and help the visitors. That help effort is certainly rewarding but the deep reward is engaging and interacting with such a variety of people who want to see, hear and experience the Coconino National Forest. The San Francisco Peaks certainly are the biggest prize. The Coco is a magnet for people from all over the world. Yes, the fact that our forest has the tallest point in Arizona is a draw, but also the stunning vastness of ponderosa pines, aspens, the high peaks, the variety of flora as well as the wonder of the wildlife that just in not found everywhere. They are fascinated while being a little afraid. Awed but wanting to learn. Respectful of nature's gifts but eager to hike. Our visitors are the inspiration for us.

They were neither young nor old but they were nervous as they approached the Trail Head tent and information tables. The parents wore some of the cultural garb of the Middle East but in fact had been living and working in Phoenix for almost two decades. When they were asked where they were from they said Phoenix, but originally from Bosnia-Herzegovina. They were glad that we knew of Bosnia but did not wish to talk about its dark past. They were only interested in the amazing forests of the Coconino and were eager to walk the Aspen Loop Trail. Amazing that we would have visitors from Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Caroline, not her real name, is a recent, and now a frequent visitor who is so very eager to hike to the 12,633' peak that she just bubbles with enthusiasm. She talks to everyone, welcomes discussions about her goals on the mountains, has eyes that beam with delight at being around the Trail Ambassadors/PSAR volunteers as well as those that have already peaked during the earlier part of the day. She has a goal, for which we all so deeply support, to making it to the peak soon. She will not have an easy time of it. She plans on departing at night, camping out below the 11,200' elevation and continuing on the peak in the morning for sunrise. And it will be five or six hour descent back to her beat up van. Her courage, determination and pride are amazing as she does not have much, if any use of the left side of her body. She relies on us to provide her with the best, latest weather info, trail conditions and encouragement. She makes it worthwhile and rewarding to be a Trail Ambassador and PSAR Volunteer.

So I'm sure that you FoNAF members can tell, the group that you support are so very supportive of what the forest gives back to every visitor.

Fence Removal and Scrap Metal

By Dave Downes

More than 600,000 miles of fences crisscross the Western US States and many of those fences are no longer needed. They represent hazards to both people and wildlife and spoil views and scenery. All types of animals, large and small, can become trapped in a fence, causing them to die a very painful death. Hikers and joggers can trip over a downed fence and be injured or worse. Many pasture fences were built with four, five and even six strands of barbed wire and no consideration was given to the need of smaller wildlife to pass through them. There are many organizations throughout the West whose purpose is to remove unneeded fences or to modify them so they are wildlife friendly. FoNAF is one of those organizations.

As of the end of July (FY began October 1st), our efforts to remove or modify existing fences has been remarkable. FoNAF volunteers have expended 1,722 hours removing barbed wire fences and another 282 hours modifying existing fences to make them wildlife friendly. This latter effort entails replacing the bottom strand of barbed with smooth and raising it to a minimum height of 18 inches. We take all of the old wire, from both the fence modification and removal of old fences, to be recycled and thus far, that has been more than 14 tons. Using a rough estimate of 2400 pounds of scrap per mile of fence, we have removed from the forest almost 12 miles of old fence. And we still have two months to go in our fiscal year!

Unfortunately, our arrangement with U-Pick-It is done, as they no longer want old fence material. We are now taking all fencing to the City of Flagstaff Landfill. The good news is that they do recycle the material, so it is still going to be reused.



One of our largest ever loads of wire at over 2500 lbs, taken from Enclosure #5 off of FR 794 in July. This was also one of the last loads FoNAF was able to take to U-Pick-It.

FoNAF Display at Flagstaff Ranger Station Updated

Dave Downes and Bob Dyer completed a re-do of FoNAF's display at the Flagstaff Range Station. Our portion of "The Wall" had not been reconfigured and updated with new awards and recognition plaques for many years. Dave and Bob thought we should have a little more pride in our display of accomplishments and not be so casual about displaying them to the bus loads of people visiting the lobby. Besides reorganizing items, they added a large sign with our logo, our "Who We Are" statement, and our mission. A business card holder has been attached to the wall next to the sign for our business cards. Below is a photo of the new display.



Photo courtesy Bob Dyer

FoNAF Members Know Which Tool to Use and When

On our last day at Skunk Canyon, we were treated to an example of selecting the correct tool for the job. The photos below show three seasoned Aspen Team volunteers successfully (not) using an appropriate wire cutter for cutting this section of wire. Experience in the field is invaluable and always makes every task easier.



Photos and text courtesy Bob Dyer

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Coconino National Forest information:

District Rangers: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/coconino/about-forest/offices>

Website address: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/coconino/>

Friends of Northern Arizona Forests

Website: <http://www.friendsofnorthernarizonaforests.org/>