



FRIENDS OF NORTHERN **ARIZONA FORESTS**

NEWSLETTER

November 2022

State of the Organization 2022

by Tom Makin, President

It has been another outstanding year for our group on many fronts. Once again, we efficiently and safely navigated around the Covid pandemic, with most members getting their vaccinations early and maintaining a common-sense approach to interpersonal activities. Unfortunately, several members did contract this virus but all recovered safely with only minor discomfort. We continued our support of the Forest Service with twice weekly outings throughout the work season, often teaming up with Forest Service staff, especially the Recreation and Wildlife folks. We made it through several short Forest closure restrictions due to two significant fires and then worked around a good Monsoon season with only one project date getting cancelled.

Our accomplishments were many and varied, just as we like them, with a major emphasis this year on resource protection through the construction of over several thousand linear feet of new wire fences on the district mainly to

minimize inappropriate OHV use. We completed construction on one large new aspen enclosure as well as monitoring and maintenance of over 70 existing enclosures mainly here on the Coconino NF but also over 50 on the Kaibab NF. While many of our efforts occurred on the FRD, we did have several team visits to the MRRD and continued our maintenance on several important enclosures on that District.

Never a group to leave old fencing on the ground, we again cleaned up and recycled over 12 tons of abandoned wire and T-posts, making those areas safer for wildlife, livestock and human visitors with their numerous canines or horses. Speaking about wildlife, partnering with the AZGFD, Mule Deer Foundation and the AZSFWC license plate fund we rebuilt two Forest Service trick tanks, providing a more dependable source of water in these two locations.

In summary, with over 5300 total organization hours this year, a 15% increase over last year's record-breaking numbers, it was easy to classify our efforts as both efficient and effective. Our organization is alive and well, active on many different tasks and our reputation and accomplishments are recognized not only locally but on a statewide basis as well.

Annual Meeting and Board of Directors' Meeting

Our combined Annual Meeting immediately followed by a Board of Directors' meeting occurred on October 26, 2022. Voting on board members and officer appointments proved to be the subjects of most interest. More details on the officer shift are explained later in the newsletter.

Tom Barberic, Secretary, reported approximately 50% of the FoNAF members voted and all were in favor of the slate of nominees put forward by the Nominating Committee. There were no write-in votes.

The newly and re-elected board members for three years are:

- Sue Priest (new)
- Rob Vane (new)
- Richard Coast (new)
- Bill Kluwin (returning)

Ed Clark, Tony DeCou, and Bill Waters resigned from the board in 2022.

The slate of officers presented to the board for next year's term are:

- Bob Dyer, President
- Tom Mackin, Vice President
- Dave Downes, Treasurer and Membership Chairman
- Tom Barberic, Secretary

By acclamation the board gave unanimous approval for the slate of officers as presented.

Leadership Shuffle for Executive Committee

You may have notice when reviewing the new officer roster above that Tom Mackin and Bob Dyer have switched titles. After nine years as FoNAF's president Tom felt it was time to direct most of his attention to our outdoor program, and more specifically managing the Aspen Team. Freeing him from administrative duties as president will allow focusing his energy on planning and prioritizing the Aspen Team's project calendar, coordinating with FS personnel on equipment and supplies, and assuring "boots on the ground" volunteers are trained and engaged for rewarding and safe experiences in the forest.

At the first meeting of the new board on October 26 special recognition was given for Tom's many, many contributions to FoNAF during his presidency. His leadership and dedication for accomplishing a multitude of projects, as well as working through other difficult challenges such as Covid-19 mitigation, has brought our organization's reputation many awards and much respect. One of the highlights was receiving the award for "Organization of the Year" from the Daily Sun in 2017.

As vice president for the past year and previously secretary for eight years, Bob Dyer slid into the presidency office with a solid knowledge of FoNAF's mission, goals, and internal functionality. Bob has pledged to continue and build on the momentum Tom has achieved during his presidency, recalling the poignant phrase "if it ain't broke, don't fix it."

At the board meeting Bob shared a brief list of the more significant FoNAF accomplishments while Tom was president. As Bob stated, it was very difficult to decide which items rose to the top. Following is that list:

Mackin Administration Retrospect

Highlights of FoNAF's accomplishments, contributions, and recognition under Tom's leadership as president from 2013 to 2022 in roughly chronological order:

- FoNAF assisted in building approximately 3 miles of new wildlife friendly fencing to encourage and facilitate pronghorn antelope migration on highway 180 at Kendrick Park.
- Newsletter went digital and sent via email to members.
- Partnered with the Forest Service to provide a new Preventative Search and Rescue (PSAR) program on the Kachina Peaks Wilderness (PSAR is now Trail Ambassadors).
- Expanded geographical coverage into MRD constructing new exclosures and assuming maintenance of Univ. of Montana exclosures.
- Planted almost 300 aspen suckers in the third and final propagation study to find browse resistant clones.
- Teamed with the FS and other wildlife organization crews to modify 50 miles of range and allotment fences to make them more wildlife friendly and easier to traverse.
- Expanded the Back Country Permit program established at the Snowbowl.
- Sustained the importance of the aspen exclosure stewardship plan implemented to monitor 60+ exclosures twice a year.
- "Organization of the Year" for 2017 presented by the Arizona Daily Sun.
- "Climate Action Hero Award" from the Arizona Wildlife Federation.
- Took strong and complete measures for mitigating the Covid-19 pandemic's impact on the Aspen Team and to honor the guidance of the Forest Service.
- Granted "Commission Commendation of Achievement" award from Arizona Game and Fish acknowledging the high standard of service FoNAF provides.
- Developed support relationship with Kaibab National Forest in maintaining exclosures.
- Arizona Wildlife Federation approved FoNAF for "Affiliate" relationship with them.

Tom deserves a special thank you from all the FoNAF membership for his many years of contributions, guidance, and sustained leadership. Fortunately, Tom will remain very much in a leadership role as vice president and continue contributing to our ongoing work keeping our forests healthy and wildlife safer.



Tom Mackin

A Special Volunteer Appreciation Gathering-with Pizza and a Plaque!

By Dave Downes

The Forest Service is on an October 1-September 30 fiscal year so we are asked to report our volunteer hours as of September 30th. Seeing another record number of volunteer hours by FoNAF for 2022, Matt Sommer, volunteer coordinator for the FS, decided we should have a party to celebrate.

Matt and Amy Madara, Wildlife Biologist, expressed their appreciation and gave FoNAF, and especially the Aspen Team regulars, tributes and accolades. Matt even made an attractive plaque, called the “Gold Barbed Wire Award” in recognition of all the old fencing that we removed in 2022.

The late afternoon event did not go without some drama. The original pizza party was scheduled for Monday October 3rd at one of the camp sites in Camp Elden at



Gold Barbed Wire Award

the Flagstaff Ranger Station. Mother Nature either disapproved of our plans or decided to celebrate in her own way by bringing on a huge rainstorm just before our starting time, causing those of us who braved the weather to move into one of the engine bays in the fire station. FoNAF bought lots more pizza than was needed so no one went home hungry, and a good time was had by all as we listened to the downpour on the bay's metal roof.

We want to reciprocate to Matt and Amy for their support with a special thank you to them. Clearly, without sustained cooperation and involvement with FoNAF and our mission, our achievements would be well below expectations.

Thousands of Hikers assisted by Trail Ambassadors

By Bill Waters



Every summer, including 2022's, somewhere between 30,000 and 35,000 visitors, "peakers," families, clubs, groups, and individuals visit the Kachina Wilderness and Coconino National Forest trails at the Snowbowl to enjoy the challenge of hiking the five miles up to the 12,633' Humphreys Peak. From these visitors there are lots of questions to be answered and guidance to be given. Those visitors are the largest number of citizens who can be directly "engaged" by the Coconino National Forest.

Instrumental in providing this important engagement service are Bill Waters and Curt Knight from FoNAF who offer their expertise in coordinating volunteers and providing the logistical support to make each season successful. 2022 was no exception. Matt Sommer, Volunteer Coordinator, Flagstaff Ranger District, and Jody St. Clair, PSAR Volunteer Coordinator, Flagstaff Ranger District oversee the effort from the FS's perspective.

189 volunteer hours were logged this year by FoNAF Bill and Curt, Dave Downes and the McGeorge's, Jim and Pat, among others. Seasonal "Camp Elden" volunteers Glenn Jones and Stacy Wall (both retired law enforcement officers) and Bob Siskonen from Flagstaff were faithfully at the trail head.

Trail Ambassador Volunteers



Bill Waters, Bob Siskonen. Stacy Wall, Glenn Jones, Curt Knight

The 2023 season will begin with recruitment and a training day in May 2023.

Winter Break for the Aspen Team

As winter approaches it is again allows time for the Aspen Team to rest and re-energize in anticipation of 2023. Emergency projects in the field may still be required by swat teams to remedy fallen trees or damaged fencing, but the larger planned outings will stop until early next spring.

In the meantime, the executive committee will focus on 2023 identifying Aspen Team field priorities and working with Forest Service representatives to explore

their needs and other opportunities for the membership. The break allows for us to assess accomplishments in 2022 and to explore goals, funding needs, equipment purchases, and potential recruitment of new members.

FoNAF Board of Directors

Bob Dyer, President	Barry Brenneman	Richard Coast
Tom Mackin, Vice President	Jim Hoyne	Bill Kluwin
Dave Downes, Treasurer	Curt Knight	Jim McGeorge
Tom Barberic, Secretary	Sue Priest	Doug Shepard
	Rob Vane	

Coconino National Forest informatin:

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/>