



TRACKS TRAIL CREW (TC) - SUMMIT FOR ARIZONA TRAILS SYNOPSIS

By Jim Snitzer

The first state-wide meeting in 12 years brought over 100 members of dozens of trail and outdoor organizations together in Cottonwood, AZ on Feb 21 and 22 this year.

The well organized and fast-paced agenda was a mix of presentations and discussions by break-out groups to brainstorm ideas on wide-ranging subjects like recruiting volunteers, emerging trends, outreach, promotion, environmental issues, fundraising, trail construction and maintenance techniques, planning/permitting, and trail advocacy.

In what will likely turn out to be the most significant accomplishment of the Summit, attendees identified as the highest priority that we develop an “umbrella organization”. As individual organizations, we are fragmented and lack clout. An umbrella organization could help us share resources and information, and would have clout with the State legislature. It would also be good to give Legislators a place to turn to for all questions or issues about trails. 🙌

WHITE MOUNTAIN NATURE CENTER

The Nature Center, in cooperation with the Town of Pinetop-Lakeside, Arizona Game and Fish Department and other partners offers hands-on, outdoor presentations, hikes, and workshops to the public. Programs provide family-oriented fun with a discovery focus on increasing awareness, understanding and responsible action towards nature. Most programs are free of charge. Donations are gratefully accepted. For more information, call (928) 358-3069. Visit our website at:

<https://whitemountainnaturecenter.org/>

or Facebook page at:

<https://www.facebook.com/WhiteMountainNatureCenter/>

May

- 21-25 14th Annual White Mountain Spring Carnival
- 30 Sustainable Gardening

June

- 6 Walk for the Woods on National Trails Day
- 13 Our Solar System
- 20 BEES!
- 27 Avian Ambassadors

SPOTLIGHT – TRACKS Annual Report

By Jim Snitzer

In 2019, the TRACKS trail crew worked 1,759 hours on the White Mountains Trail System, valued at \$44,700. Members volunteered 21,827 hours, valued at \$555,050, at events and other community service activities. TRACKS members also serve in more than 100 local, regional and state organizations.

2019 highlights included:

- Provided major volunteer support to the 2019 Epic Rides 25th annual Tour of the White Mountains which had 900 registered bike riders, many supporters and 120+ volunteers, many who used local businesses. Epic Rides donated funds to community organizations (including TRACKS) who helped with the event.
- Significant increase in volunteer hours and membership
- TRACKS members participated in statewide and community events:
 - * serving as trash collectors on Lake Powell
 - * helped build/improve a mountain bike trail behind the Pinetop/Lakeside Jr. High School
 - * continued building the Moonridge trail along Billy Creek (in town limits)
 - * Fall Festival Parade, Trunk or Treat, etc.
 - * Sponsored and supported Walk for the Woods to raise funds to buy Woodland Lake Park which now it looks like that effort will come through. 🙌

ASCOT: Arizona State Committee on Trails is looking for new members -- For info see their webpage: <https://azstateparks.com/arizona-state-committee-on-trails-ascot> or contact Mickey Rogers at 602-542-6942.

This important 15-member committee advises the Arizona State Parks Board on the planning, development, funding, maintenance, and promotion of non-motorized recreation in Arizona. Members are appointed for three-year terms. In addition to attending quarterly meetings, ASCOT members advise on grants made with the Federal Recreational Trails Program, and oversee the Arizona Premier Trails System including working with land managers to help select the top 100 premier trails in Arizona. TRACKS Nick Lund was a **volunteer and President of ASCOT and can provide additional information.** 🙌

TRACKS BIKING

By Nick Lund

Following a wonderful presentation by TRACKS member and mountain bike rider, Julie Bradley (the one in the red jersey), at the Apache Junction Library about her two books, *Escape From the Ordinary* and *Crossing Pirate Waters*, 8 TRACKS mountain bike riders got together in February for a 20 mile ride in the Gold Canyon area desert east of Phoenix. The State Land Department developed a large area, Desert Wells, for non-motorized and motorized riding. Although a bit breezy, the highs were in the mid 60's for a really enjoyable ride. We look forward to resuming mountain rides once the White Mountains' weather warms and the trails dry. Riders are encouraged to get their bikes conditioned for riding and to get in practice rides wherever possible so that they are in shape to resume riding at altitude with the group.



Julie's books are well told and very descriptive stories about her and Glen's 8-year sailboat journey around the world. Both books are great reads and are number one sellers in their category on Amazon. 📖

UP THE HILL GANG (UTHG)

By Jim Meeker

The Up The Hill Gang hiking group is more than 20 years old, and has scheduled a hike every Wednesday, every Summer, with only a handful of misses due to fire or rain. We begin hiking in May, and the first few hikes are relatively low impact – meaning not as long and not as many big hills to climb.

We do these hikes so that the hikers who have spent the Winter elsewhere get accustomed to the climate and altitude of the mountains. Here's our May 2020 Schedule:

- 5/6 Lyman Lake -- Meet at KFC-7:45 AM
5 Miles (Rating 2) Rideshare \$5
- 5/13 Country Club # 632 Meet at KFC-7:45 AM
4.5 Miles (Rating 2) Rideshare \$2
- 5/20 Springs Trail #633 from Fish Hatchery
Meet at KFC-7:45 AM
5 Miles (Rating 2) Rideshare \$2
- 5/27 Panorama Trail Short Loop
Meet at KFC-7:45 a.m.
5 Miles (Rating 2) Rideshare \$2.

Remember to dress appropriately for the weather, bring a hat, sunscreen, water and a snack if desired. For longer hikes, it will be noted if you should plan on bringing a lunch and/or go out to lunch. 🍴

WHITE MOUNTAIN HAPPENINGS

APRIL

3

“Protect Arizona’s Water” Presentation by Dr Kevin Gibson -- White Mountain Audubon Society
Glow in the Dark Egghunt – Show Low

4

Bunny Dash 2K – Show Low
Tillman Honor Run – Pinetop/Lakeside

20

Field trip to Alchesay National Fish Hatchery -- White Mountain Audubon Society

For more information on the above events and other events that are happening in the White Mountains, please visit the respective website and/or Visitor Center for more information:

Pinetop/Lakeside Chamber of Commerce: <https://www.pinetoplakesidechamber.com/calendar/>

Show Low Chamber of Commerce: www.showlowchamber.com/.

Snowflake/Taylor Chamber of Commerce: <https://snowflaketaylorchamber.org/calendar/>

White Mountain Audubon Society: <http://www.whitemountainaudubon.org/>

Sunrise Ski Resort: <https://www.sunriseskisipark.com/>

Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest – Lakeside Ranger District News

By Lorna McNeil-Cox

Forestry Supervisor, M. Stephen Best, has announced that they “are proposing to develop a territory management plan for the wild horse management actions for the Heber Wild Horse Territory, consistent with laws, regulations and the Forest Plan.

The Heber Wild Horse Territory is approximately 19,700 acres in Navajo and Coconino Counties, Arizona. The territory is located in the Sitgreaves National Forest in the Black Canyon area of the Black Mesa Ranger District, southwest of the town of Heber, Arizona.

The Territory Management Plan is needed to ensure the herd is managed to maintain a self-sustaining population of healthy animals within the designated territory, in a thriving natural ecological balance with other uses and the productive capacity of their habitat.”

More information about the Heber Wild Horse Territory Management Plan and Mr. Best’s complete letter can be accessed via website at:

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=18916>.

The Lakeside forestry office has a new acting District Ranger, Josh Miller. Josh is the Apache-Sitgreaves Fuels Program Manager for the forest and is detailing to our vacant District Ranger position here on Lakeside for the next few months or until the position is filled.

Scotts Reservoir Notice: The restrooms at Scott Reservoir are closed at this time due to issues that prevent them from being in use. At this time, it appears that the restrooms will need to be replaced. As a result of the restrooms being closed, the campground is also closed until there are useable restrooms. Scott Reservoir Recreation Area is still open for day use only, but no overnight use is permitted. The Forest Order for Scotts Reservoir camping closure is Order Number: 03-01-20-0.

For more information and to see if there are any changes, please visit the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest website at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/asnf>.

NOTE: Most forest roads are primitive roads that are not plowed or maintained in the winter. Please avoid rutting and damaging wet roads and respect road closures. Visit our website for more information at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/asnf>. !

Arizona Game and Fish (AZGF) NEWS

By Jamie Van Kirk

Turkey Capture and Survey: For the past several years, Arizona Game and Fish Pinetop Region has been capturing and relocating turkeys to areas of the state where turkey numbers could use a boost.

This year, 17 turkeys were captured and translocated to unit 20A. The idea is to help increase the population and expand their range into suitable habitat. The excitement we experienced working with the Round Valley Schools students really made the day for us! Engagement with the community is always important, and to do it with the next generation is even better.

Lake updates: Fool Hollow Lake remains open year-round. Willow Springs Lakes gate has been opened to the main access point/visitor use area. The roads and the parking lot still have some snow, but it is avoidable. The lake is mostly free of ice and snow. The boat ramp is accessible, but partially covered by the dock. The dock is tied to high ground for winter. The lake is very full. Have fun and be safe! Woods Canyon Lake, Black Canyon Lake and Chevelon Canyon Lake are all still NOT accessible due to snow, ice and muddy road conditions. The Apache-Sitgreaves Forest is monitoring them closely and will open the gates when conditions improve, as a safety precaution.

Please check the Arizona Game and Fish Pinetop Region facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/azgfd/> or for more information or call (928) 367-4281. For more information about news and events, visit the AZGF website at: <https://www.azgfd.com/>. !

WHITE MOUNTAIN APACHE RESERVATION FIRE MANAGEMENT NEWS

The mission of the BIA and Tribal wildfire management program is to reduce the incidents of unwanted and useless human caused wildfires on the Fort Apache Indian Reservations and to provide leadership, training and guidance to develop strategies to reduce the number of human caused wildfires.

Current fire prevention, prescribed burns and other relevant information for the White Mountain Apache tribe can be found by visiting the WMA Facebook page at:

<https://www.facebook.com/BIAFAAFireMgt/> or by contacting Candy Lupe at (928) 338-5425.

TRACKS MONTHLY SCHEDULE – April 2020

Legend for calendar is as follows. **Blue** – Trail Crew (TC), **Green** - Up the Hill Gang (UTGH), **Purple** – Biking (Summer) and Cross Country Skiing (Winter), and **Red** – TRACKS meetings and events.

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION / DETAILS
Mondays -- on hold until later in the spring	Trail Crew (TC): Beautify the Trails	To volunteer please check box on website for “Trail Crew” on “Join” form and/or email Jerry Good at: jgood6@cox.net. See page one of newsletter for more information about trail crew news.
Monday through Friday (weather permitting)	Biking:	To get biking information please check box on the website for “Biking” on “Join” form and/or email Nick Lund at lundaz@cableone.net. See page two of newsletter for more biking news.
Wednesdays 9am (weather permitting)	Up the Hill Gang (UTHG) Hiking:	Contact Kay Alderman (928) 367-7003. See page two of newsletter for additional information.
April 11, 2020 2nd Saturdays of Month - 8am Exception: June meets on National Trails Day	TRACKS General Meeting (visitors welcome)	Darbi’s in Pinetop (October through May). If ordering arrive early Woodland Lake Park Ramada #2 (June through September). To setup arrive at 7:30am
April 9, 2020 Thursdays Before 2nd Saturday of Month -1pm	TRACKS Board Meeting (members and visitors welcome)	White Mountain Nature Center 425 Woodland Lake Rd, Lakeside



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