



## TRACKS TRAIL CREW (TC) - Tools and New Trail Signs Are Ready and Waiting!

By Cathy Purvis

In February, a small group of TRACKS volunteers met at TRACKS President, Jim Snitzer's, cabin for the annual trail crew tool sharpening event. Jim has a shed full of amazing tools, so in no time, we were assigned our different tasks with power tools in hand. A few of us worked on sharpening the numerous axes, hoes and McLeods in an assembling line process, while others used router tools to make new trail signs. We even cleaned and organized the trailer, so when the entire Trail Crew is able to get back on the trails again, the tools will be ready.

However, during the COVID-19 restrictions, Jerry Good and Ron Miller will monitor feedback from the Trail Stewards on reported hazard conditions. And as necessary, Jerry will convene a small group to work on a trail that is deemed unsafe for users while practicing current COVID-19 precautions. ❗



## WHITE MOUNTAIN NATURE CENTER

The White Mountain Nature Center is now temporarily closed while we all weather the effects of COVID-19. We still are receiving injured raptors, call 928-358-3069.

For more information, call (928) 358-3069. Visit our website at: <https://whitemountainnaturecenter.org/> or Facebook page at:

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

## SPOTLIGHT – TRACKS White Mountain Trail System Maintenance and Use

By Ron Miller

As most of you are probably aware, TRACKS has had to make major adjustments in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We are all anxious to enjoy each other's company, but have to do so with proper precautions to ensure that we are not endangering the health and well being of each other. Currently, all TRACKS group activities for the Months of April and May are cancelled so we will not be conducting group hikes or TRACKS meetings. However, as stated in TRACKS' President, Jim Snitzer's, recent email:

*"We continue to encourage TRACKS members and members of the public to enjoy our great White Mountain Trail System as individuals. Getting out of the house and onto a trail is a good way to promote physical and mental health. We all need to exercise reasonable caution as directed, including distancing and, if advised, safety equipment like masks. We are all in this together."*

As an organization, we do have TRACKS members with specific responsibilities and would like to use this newsletter to provide guidance on where we can continue to provide services that keep the White Mountain Trail System functioning:

**Trailhead Adopters** – Please continue to keep the trailheads and kiosks clean and replace or replenish trail maps and information. Continue to coordinate with Joan Patrick ([joanpatrick9333@gmail.com](mailto:joanpatrick9333@gmail.com)) for any questions you many have. You can also call Joan at (928) 242-7220.

**Trail Stewards** – Please continue to monitor your trails as normal. Fix any small problems that you can, but report major needs or concerns to Ron Miller at [tracks\\_ts@yahoo.com](mailto:tracks_ts@yahoo.com). Ron will coordinate with Jerry Good, Trail Crew Foreman, who will then schedule small groups of volunteers to work on particular sections of trail.

**Trail Crew Volunteers** – Please coordinate with Jerry Good at (520) 275-2418 if you would like to volunteer

**SPOTLIGHT – TRACKS White Mountain Trail System Maintenance and Use -- continued**

at this time. Jerry will ensure that safety is the first priority, and will determine the number of individuals he might need on a given day. No more than ten individuals, per Forest Service regulations, may work on any project at this time.

**Organized Hikes** – TRACKS will not offer organized hikes at this time, but small groups of individuals may want to hike together. Please follow all Forest Service regulations (please see Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest – Lakeside Ranger District News on page three for more information) and take all necessary COVID-19 precautions. We want you to stay healthy so that your hiking/ biking/horseback riding/skiing days long endure. ❗

**TRACKS BIKING**

*By Nick Lund*

TRACKS mountain bike rides continue to be on hold due to the pandemic. If riding as individuals, riders are strongly encouraged to limit groups to no more than 10 and to maintain social distance. Please stay safe, healthy and cautious. ❗

*Joy and Don Miller biking in Scottsdale March 2020. Photo courtesy of Heather Steiner.*



**UP THE HILL GANG (UTHG)**

*By Jim Meeker*

The Corona Virus has cancelled The Up The Hill Gang hikes for May. There is just no way to group hike and maintain the social distance our medical leaders recommend. But an important part of maintaining our general health is getting some regular exercise – and personal/family hiking is one good way to do that.

Having a good map is a key part of successful personal/family hiking, and the Tracks website ([www.trackswhitemountains.org](http://www.trackswhitemountains.org)) has a great collection of maps full of useful information to help you plan your hike. If some of the close-in trails get crowded and make it difficult to maintain social distance, try some of the trails a little farther away because they are likely to be less crowded.

The Tracks maps contain information on access, distance and elevation, so that you can plan a hike that fits your abilities and interests. These trails each present multiple ways of executing a hike, so you can adjust your plans to fit. Many trails cross forest roads, which offer locations that can be used as turn-arounds or starting points.

If you have some questions after looking at a trail map, we will try to find answers to questions emailed to [upthehillgang@gmail.com](mailto:upthehillgang@gmail.com). We will review the status of group hiking again, in time to plan hikes for the month of June. In the meantime, Happy Hiking. ❗

**White Mountain Happenings**

**MAY**

2nd

50<sup>th</sup> Annual White Mountain Sheriff’s Posse Ride – Pinetop/Lakeside  
8<sup>th</sup> Annual Show Low BBQ Throwdown – Show Low

16th

Sue’s Crew 7<sup>th</sup> Annual 30-Mile Walk – Show Low/Pinetop/Lakeside

22<sup>nd</sup> – 24th

“An Art Affair” Fine Art Show – Pinetop

23<sup>rd</sup>

Hogs & Hot Rods @MMRC – Pinetop/Lakeside

Pintail Lake – White Mountain Audubon Society - please contact Rob Bettaso at (928) 368-8481 to confirm

22<sup>nd</sup>- 25th

Memorial Day Softball Tournament – Show Low

Due to current changing COVID-19 circumstances, events may be cancelled and/or delayed. Please call or contact the respective organization or town websites to confirm that events are still being held in May as scheduled.

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/](http://www.showlowchamber.com/).

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

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

## Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest – Lakeside Ranger District News

By Lorna McNeil-Cox

In response to the rapidly changing circumstances related to the COVID-19 pandemic, most developed campgrounds and campground restrooms Forest-wide and throughout the Region are closed to maintain the health and safety of the public and our employees reflecting federal, state and local Pandemic Guidelines (Order #03-00-00-20-002, <https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/r3/home>).

Currently the campgrounds at Fool Hollow Lake Recreation Area remain open to self-contained recreational vehicles only and the campground restrooms are closed.

Other restrictions include group size limitations in Order #03-00-00-20-001, reflecting Pandemic Guidelines (<https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/r3/home>). Visitors to national forests are urged to take the precautions recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), such as practicing social distancing and limiting group sizes. For additional tips from the CDC on preventing illnesses like the coronavirus, go to: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/prevention.html>.

The Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests recognizes the importance of outdoor recreation opportunities. Here are some tips for your visit:

- \* The vast majority of the National Forest remains open to dispersed uses. This includes trails, trailheads and day use areas with group size limited to federal, state and local Pandemic Guidelines.
- \* Please avoid crowded locations. When you arrive a trail or recreation site, if it's crowded, please search for a less occupied location or consider avoiding the forest during high-use periods.
- \* Many restroom facilities have been closed and trash collection has been postponed at many recreation areas. Please pack all your trash out with you all the way home and dispose of it there. Trash left on-site can easily become litter and be harmful for area wildlife.
- \* Use common courtesy and "Leave No Trace" principles <https://lnt.org/why/7-principles/>.

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>. ❗

## Arizona Game and Fish (AZGF) NEWS

By Jamie Van Kirk

The Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) is committed to staying connected with its customers and continuing to provide exceptional service. As updates related to the COVID-19 situation become available, AZGFD will share any new developments or changes to processes. Some frequently asked questions and answers are listed below and more questions and answers can be found at the AZGF website at: <https://www.azgfd.com/agency/covid-19-related-updates/>.

**Q: Are Game and Fish offices open?** Until further notice, front counter service will be available by appointment only. To make an appointment, call (602) 942-3000 (select option "4" to contact a regional office). Customer service representatives will be available to assist customers who call between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Customers are reminded most department business (see "Utilize online services" below) can be conducted at [www.azgfd.gov](http://www.azgfd.gov).

**Q: Is the Ben Avery Shooting Facility open?** All rifle and pistol ranges, as well as the Clay Target Center, are closed to the public until further notice (this includes clay-target shooters with preloaded Gold Cards). The rifle and pistol ranges are only available for law enforcement officers and user groups. The archery range is open to the public from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday on a cash-only basis, however. Archers can deposit their \$7 daily fee into a dropbox at the archery range. **NOTE: Effective April 3, all public restroom facilities at BASF will remain closed.**

**Q: Is Arizona's outdoors still open to hunting and fishing?** Absolutely. As always, hunters and anglers must be in possession of a valid Arizona hunting, fishing or combo license. Check with appropriate local municipalities and land-management agencies for any restriction or closure notices of campsites, parks, lakes or boat docks.

**Q: Speaking of hunting, is the harvesting of big game for sustenance during this national emergency OK?** No. All license and hunt permit-tag requirements, season dates, legal methods of take and bag limits are to be observed and will be strictly enforced. Poaching is a crime. Any wildlife violations can be reported to the department's Operation Game Thief hotline at (800) 352-0700.

**Q: Are fish stockings going to be impacted?** At this time, all waters are expected to receive their full allotment of trout stockings through the season. In addition, AZGFD has begun bi-weekly stockings of channel catfish in the Community Fishing Program waters.

Also, 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/>. ❗

**TRACKS MONTHLY SCHEDULE – May**

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

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION / DETAILS
CANCELLED for May	<b>Trail Crew (TC): Beautify the Trails</b>	To volunteer please check box on website for “Trail Crew” on “Join” form and/or email Jerry Good at: <a href="mailto:jgood6@cox.net">jgood6@cox.net</a> . See page one of newsletter for more information about trail crew news.
CANCELLED for May	<b>Biking:</b>	To get biking information please check box on the website for “Biking” on “Join” form and/or email Nick Lund at <a href="mailto:lundaz@cablone.net">lundaz@cablone.net</a> . See page two of newsletter for more biking news.
CANCELLED for May	<b>Up the Hill Gang (UTHG) Hiking:</b>	To get UTHG information please check box on the website for “Hiking” on “Join” form and/or email Jim Meeker at <a href="mailto:jmeeker@azsunshine.us">jmeeker@azsunshine.us</a> .  See page two for specific hiking schedule information.
<b>CANCELLED FOR May</b> Exception: June meets on National Trails Day	<b>TRACKS General Meeting (visitors welcome)</b>	
<b>CANCELLED For May</b> Exception: June meets week of National Trails Day	<b>TRACKS Board Meeting (members and visitors welcome)</b>	<b>White Mountain Nature Center 425 Woodland Lake Rd, Lakeside</b>

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