



May 2016

Ranger Roundup

John Pierson, Reserve District Ranger

This past winter and spring, we have been busy on the Reserve Ranger District working with our partners and adjacent district neighbors on the New Mexico State funded projects near Rancho Grande and Collins Park and supporting other units with prescribed burning as well as burning piles along Highways 12 and 180. We also held a two-day event for fourth-graders to learn about cultural resources.

In March, Reserve Ranger District archaeologists spent a day in the classroom with the Reserve fourth graders followed by a field trip to teach the kids about prehistoric



Flagging artifacts

artifacts and rock art in the Southwest. The archaeologists shared information on archaeological site preservation and ways to minimize our impact on the land by leaving what we find for future generations.

The field trip included visits to a Puebloan structural site and the Tularosa Petroglyphs where the students flagged artifacts they found - which to their excitement were in the hundreds. To top it off, the students got to see and learn about Chiricahua leopard frogs with the district biologist, Amanda Gehrt.

Fire season is here and we have responded to fires since the beginning of March. Current and expected fire activity across the district has been less than the past few years. Fortunately in the month of April, storm systems brought moisture; however, March was the driest month recorded in the past 122 years. Expected weather for this area is usually a drying period through May



Negrito Lookout

As our forest visitors come to the area, we ask them to be careful with campfires while they are enjoying their forest.

The field season is in full swing with the return of our temporary workforce. It is always a pleasure to see and welcome our long-term and new temporary employees to the district. A few priority projects for the District this season include over 4,000 acres of thinning by contracts, installation of four water solar systems, layout of one timber sale and construction/maintenance along the Continental Divide Trail utilizing volunteers.



Thinning on Moraga project

If you are traveling along Forest Road 141 from Reserve to Sheep Basin and beyond, please use caution while driving as we have active timber sales in progress east of Sheep Basin. State Highway 159 from Willow Creek to Mogollon is planned to be opened by NMDOT in late May.

Summer provides many opportunities on the Reserve Ranger District such as fishing at Snow Lake or hiking into the wilderness at Willow Creek. If visiting, make sure that you are prepared with the appropriate gear and also let someone know what your itinerary is in case of an emergency. As always we are here to serve and make your visit a pleasurable experience. Contact us at the Reserve Ranger District for updated details on travel and fire conditions. Please enjoy your Gila National Forest and let us know how we are doing.