

LINCOLN NATIONAL FOREST

SURVEYING SUCCESS AND FORGING A FUTURE



United States
Department of
Agriculture

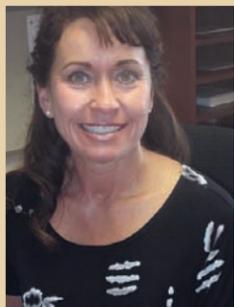


Forest Service

Southwestern
Region

MB-R3-08-2

FY2010 FOREST SUPERVISOR'S MESSAGE



Jacquie Buchanan

Recovery Act (originally known as the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act) generated valuable funding and jobs, resulting in the completion of long-needed forest projects, including: 60 miles of

What a year it has been for the Lincoln National Forest! All our wonderful work happened only through the combined efforts of our dedicated employees, enthusiastic partners, and supportive communities. On top of the forest's regular program of work, the

trail maintenance, trailhead restoration, a seminal Tribal Forest Protection Act stewardship forest treatment, and stabilization and interpretation of a historic railroad trestle.

With all the successes we've had, it is bittersweet for me that, after 5½ years on the Lincoln, I have accepted a new challenge. I leave, though, knowing that the Lincoln National Forest's future is in good hands with the employees and communities who cherish it. I, along with all Lincoln National Forest employees, extend a warm welcome to the new forest supervisor, Robert Trujillo, and to the Smokey Bear and Sacramento district rangers, David Warnack and James Duran. I know these additions

to the Lincoln team will provide great leadership for their districts and communities.

I am extremely proud of this past year's successes on the Lincoln National Forest. If you would like to learn more about past and future projects or about getting out and enjoying the forest, I encourage you to call your local Forest Service office.

Sincerely,

Jacquie Buchanan

RECOVERY ACT

Since many of the communities most affected by the economic downturn are located near national forests, the Lincoln National Forest used funding from the Recovery Act to create jobs. These jobs support our mission of sustaining the health, diversity, and productivity of Lincoln National Forest lands within Lincoln, Otero, and Eddy Counties to meet the needs of present and future generations.

16 SPRINGS STEWARDSHIP CONTRACT - \$3.2 MILLION

As the first stewardship contract to utilize Tribal Forest Protection Act (TFPA) authorities, the 16 Springs Stewardship Project is improving forest health, reducing hazardous fuels and associated fire risk to tribal lands, the community of 16 Springs, the Village of Ruidoso (rated the most at risk community in New Mexico and number two on the list of most at risk communities in the Nation), and National Forest System lands. The project strategically thins identified forest stands, thereby providing specialized employment in the harvesting, transporting, and processing of commercial saw logs and small diameter biomass. Currently, the commercial saw logs provide and maintain jobs at small local sawmills and a pallet mill in El Paso, Texas. The small diameter biomass

generated by the project has provided a new wood pellet mill, currently under construction north of Alamogordo, and critical material for facility development and testing. In the future, the biomass will provide the Mescalero Apache Tribe material to operate a six megawatt power generation facility. Along with benefiting local and regional wood dependent industries, the project has a cascading affect on maintaining and creating jobs within local tribal communities and area municipalities. Working together on a common goal, this project is enhancing the Mescalero Apache Tribe and Lincoln National Forest relationship.

MEXICAN CANYON TRESTLE - \$2.95 MILLION

For more than 20 years, people in Cloudcroft, New Mexico, have watched a beloved local icon on the outskirts of town—the Mexican Canyon Trestle—slowly deteriorate. Over the years, the Forest Service, the community, and many visitors have expressed their desires to see a first-class scenic overlook which would remind them of their proud railroad logging history. Volunteers were recruited, funds requested, and grant applications submitted, but the turning point came when Recovery Act funds were designated for the project. During the summer of 2009,

about half of the 112-year-old structure was stabilized, much of it with Recovery Act funds. Construction of an interpretive area will begin in 2011 once trestle stabilization is finalized. Just as it once linked communities, this restored trestle represents the linkage for the community's very special heritage and its promising future.

FOREST-WIDE TRAILS MAINTENANCE - \$350,000

The forest received Recovery Act dollars to conduct trail and trailhead maintenance and improve signage. The Lincoln National Forest trails system provides access to a wide diversity of users. The benefits of maintaining the trails system includes protecting soils and reducing erosion, clearing vegetation and downed trees, controlling invasive species, and improving access and visitor safety. All of this labor-intensive work required hiring skilled workers under the Recovery Act. One component of the forest's trail work included working with the Southwest Conservation Corps to hire a team of 8 individuals, ages 18-25, to do trails' maintenance conservation work on the Guadalupe Ranger District in Carlsbad. The eight team members created potential future natural resource conservation leaders.

FIRE MANAGEMENT

The Lincoln National Forest goal of developing properly functioning, fire-adapted ecosystems in the face of climate change, interface issues, and shrinking budgets is of paramount importance in our fire management program.

Fire management officials continue the process of reintroducing fire to fire-adapted ecosystems and allowing natural fire to burn when it is safe to do so. Weather will always be a consideration. The properly identified conditions will allow specialists to monitor the fire and landscapes and restore health to our forests. Complementary efforts from our Federal, State, tribal, and local partners will be instrumental in achieving our mutually desired goals of reducing the threat of catastrophic wildfires in our mountain communities.

The Lincoln National Forest's fire management approaches continue to evolve. Safety always is our key objective for communities and firefighters. This includes protection of property and natural resources.

FIRE SUPPRESSION

Following one of the wettest and snowiest seasons in almost 15 years, the 2010 fire season was less active on the Lincoln National Forest than most years. We are happy to report there were fewer human-caused fires than in previous years. We believe that is a direct result of efforts by our fire prevention specialists who were out in the forest meeting with recreationists about the proper use of fire and delivering the fire prevention message: Never Leave a Fire Abandoned in the Lincoln National Forest. They also maintained a strong presence in communities with fire prevention programs designed to communicate the use of fire as a tool to treat landscapes.

FUELS TREATMENT

The forest continues to implement and treat landscapes using prescribed fire. Broadcast burning, thinning, and pile project burning are methods leading to better forest health adjacent to private lands. These practices reduce the threat of crown fire and the amount of fuel that can burn within certain vegetation sites. Wildland-urban interface (WUI) refers to the transition zone between unoccupied land and development.



2010 LINCOLN NF WILDFIRE SUMMARY

| Smokey Bear RD | | | Sacramento RD | | | Guadalupe RD | | | LNF Forest Total | | |
|----------------|--------------|------------|---------------|--------------|-----------|---------------|--------------|------------|------------------|--------------|------------|
| Cause | No. of Fires | Acres | Cause | No. of Fires | Acres | Cause | No. of Fires | Acres | Cause | No. of Fires | Acres |
| Human | 6 | 267 | Human | 5 | 20 | Human | 1 | 125 | Human | 12 | 412 |
| Lightning | 2 | 102 | Lightning | 15 | 60 | Lightning | 8 | 337 | Lightning | 25 | 500 |
| Totals | 8 | 369 | Totals | 20 | 80 | Totals | 9 | 462 | Totals | 37 | 912 |



Never Leave a Fire Abandoned in the Lincoln National Forest.

2010 LINCOLN NF FUEL TREATMENTS SUMMARY

| Smokey Bear RD | | Sacramento RD | | Guadalupe RD | | LNF Forest Total | |
|----------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|------------------|---------------|
| Location | Acres | Location | Acres | Location | Acres | Location | Acres |
| WUI | 6,169 | WUI | 7,634 | WUI | 0 | WUI | 13,803 |
| Non-WUI | 1,360 | Non-WUI | 536 | Non-WUI | 1,100 | Non-WUI | 2,996 |
| Totals | 7,529 | Totals | 8,170 | Totals | 1,100 | Totals | 16,799 |

The Lincoln Forest Reserve was created by Proclamation of July 26, 1902, and included the Capitan and White Mountains in Lincoln County.



EDUCATION

Peg Crim in the field with students

EXCITING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS FROM ACROSS THE NATION



STEP/SCEP students came from 10 states to be part of this unique opportunity.

Lincoln National Forest Supervisor Jacque Buchanan has taken the Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP) and Student Career Experience Program (SCEP) to new heights by offering more than 40 students hands-on experience working in the outdoors of our scenic national forests.

“The program is a huge success,” said Buchanan. “STEP and SCEP provide opportunities for students to widen their horizons. At the same time they earn money, continue their education, train with professionals,

and combine academic study with on-the-job experience.”

SCEP and STEP are primary recruitment sources for Forest Service entry level positions. The programs train students for the complexity of managing a national forest for multiple uses while enhancing their academic studies and promoting their career goals.

Last summer seasonal students worked in a variety of areas including:

- Archaeology, as part of survey crews recording sites;
- Fire prevention, on engine crews and in the dispatch office;

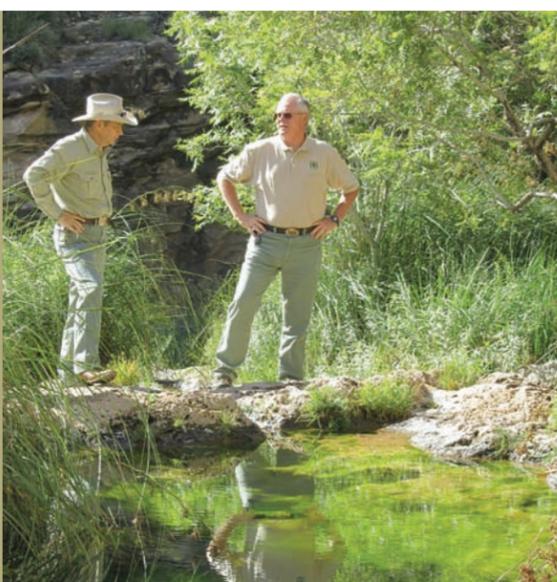
- Wildlife, participating in Mexican spotted owl surveys;
- Recreation, in maintenance and rehabilitation;
- And, in budget and finance, assisting in administrative responsibilities.

“This is a great tool to support our Agency efforts while building solid employees for the future of the Forest Service,” said Buchanan. “When they look back over the years, they will remember their times as working students and the experience of being part of the Lincoln National Forest, one of America’s true treasures.”

GIFFORD PINCHOT EXCELLENCE IN INTERPRETATION AND CONSERVATION EDUCATION AWARD

Lincoln National Forest Partnership Coordinator Peg Crim has started something contagious. Because of her far-reaching collaborative environmental education awareness efforts, Crim has received the Gifford Pinchot Excellent in Interpretation and Conservation Education Award for the U.S. Forest Service, Southwestern Region.

Currently, the Lincoln National Forest, along with the South Central New Mexico Soil and Water Conservation District, is developing a “Children’s Forest” plan. With Crim as co-leader, this project is aimed at empowering, cultivating, and building natural resource connections in tomorrow’s stewards in communities bordering national forests. Crim’s environmental education groundwork, collaborative activities, and community programs will continue to have an impact for decades to come.



CORBIN NEWMAN

Southwestern Regional Forester Corbin Newman (facing front) wants to hear what Forest Service employees think about the direction of the Agency. Newman conducted a 3-day visit to the Lincoln National Forest in August with stops at the Supervisor’s Office and Smokey Bear, Sacramento and Guadalupe Ranger Districts. He also met with Mescalero Apache Tribe President Mark Chino to discuss the tribe’s and forest’s joint successes. Corbin and his team toured the Mescalero Apache Forest Products Sawmill and viewed workers busily preparing for the mill’s startup.

COLLABORATION



COLLABORATION AND OUR PARTNERS

The Lincoln National Forest supervisor and staff strive to maintain a collaborative working relationship with all elected officials, cooperators, and the public across the four counties that border the forest in southeastern New Mexico. We do this by disseminating up-to-date information on forest projects and community activities. This includes fuels reduction, watershed restoration, grazing permits, timber sales contracts, and Smokey Bear fire prevention programs. These initiatives bring us all together to share ideas, enhance our understanding, and ultimately implement the best land management practices.



PARTNERSHIP WITH THE MESCALERO APACHE TRIBE

Seeking to be more than neighbors, the Lincoln National Forest has teamed up with the Mescalero Apache Tribe in a myriad of ways.

The forest and tribe have successfully implemented the large-scale 16 Springs Stewardship Contract during seriously declining timber markets. This contract has resulted in improved planning, coordination, and implementation of timber harvest activities and hazardous fuels reduction treatments to reduce the threat of wildfire to surrounding communities and improve forest and ecosystem health in the Sacramento Mountains. In addition, the project has increased the supply of timber to Mescalero Forest Products and created jobs, bolstering the local economy.

Additionally, a Tribal-Forest Service grant has been awarded for a youth vocational education and mentoring internship program. Agency funded tribal interns will work seasonally with the tribe's forestry and fire personnel. Interns will be able to develop their leadership skills, build on their natural resource education, and expand their understanding of resource contracting. This intern program will help train the next generation of natural resource leaders from the Mescalero Apache Tribe.

GREATER RUIDOSO AREA WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE WORKING GROUP

The Greater Ruidoso Area Wildland-Urban Interface Working Group has made great strides in reducing the risk of wildfire to the community. Through strategic planning efforts and the best available science, the group has implemented fire mitigation measures on public, private, and tribal lands.

Goals include restoring and monitoring forest ecosystems and watersheds in order to maintain forest health and protect communities, engage private enterprise, and maintain the high quality of life in forest areas. Entities involved include Federal, State and local agencies, businesses, non-profit organizations, and community leaders interested in collaborating on land management issues and economic development opportunities.

The Village of Ruidoso and its partners have obtained more than \$3 million in Federal grant money to thin properties. Since its inception, this collaboration has developed a number of green jobs supporting the local economy. New markets have opened up for thinning contractors, chain saw shops, mulch and composting operations, and landscapers.

The project is hailed as a national success as more than 30 partnerships have formed in an effort to

reduce the risk of wildfire. The Village of Ruidoso has treated 500 acres, more than half the private properties in the area. That while the Forest Service, Mescalero Tribe, and Bureau of Land Management have treated a substantial number of acres within the wildland-urban interface.

The working group is exploring expanding its efforts with adjacent counties through the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration and Watersheds/Job Stabilization Program.



The Greater Ruidoso Area Wildland-Urban Interface Working Group with more than 30 partnerships was formed to reduce the risk of wildfire and is hailed as a national success.

CONSERVATION

CONSERVING OUR NATURAL HERITAGE

The Lincoln National Forest staff is proud to be part of the conservation and management of the natural resources on our public lands. These natural resources are an integral component of the rich natural heritage shared with and enjoyed by our forest visitors. There is a wealth of plant diversity on the forest, ranging from subalpine mountaintops, cool mixed-conifer forests, pinon-juniper woodlands, and high desert chaparral.

The Lincoln National Forest is home to many threatened, endangered and sensitive plant and animal species. The forest works to maintain a diversity of plant and animal populations and to provide the habitat and unique ecological communities in which they live. Monitoring these species is critical to determine the status and health of their populations.

PARTNERS IN WILDLIFE

The Lincoln National Forest wildlife program is an umbrella for a multitude of partnering organizations that contribute time, money, and resources to projects directly on the ground. Ranging from working with rare species to improving habitat, projects benefit both wildlife and forest visitors.

Our partners volunteered more than 1,000 hours in 2010, with as many as 40 volunteers showing up on any given workday! The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish is a major partner with the forest. Others include the National Wild Turkey Federation, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Quail Unlimited, Mule Deer Foundation, New Mexico State University, Southwest Consolidated Sportsmen, University of New Mexico, Audubon Society, Bat Conservation International, Safari Club International, and Boy Scouts of America.

In addition, the Lincoln National Forest thanks hunters, fishermen, and wildlife watchers who contribute to the New Mexico Habitat Stamp Program, which funds habitat improvement projects on public lands.

New Mexico has been recognized for hosting the best habitat stamp program in the Nation. The Lincoln National Forest Habitat Stamp Program is acknowledged as the top program in the State. Thus, the forest takes great pride in working with organizations and volunteers to implement the most effective on-the-ground habitat program in the Nation!



Mexican Spotted Owl
Strix occidentalis lucida

The Lincoln National Forest has identified 145 Mexican spotted owl protected activity centers or PACs across the three ranger districts. In 2010, teams of Forest Service and Rocky Mountain Research Station biologists monitored 85 of these areas and identified 2 potential new sites.

Information about Mexican spotted owl activity helps land managers assess impacts and propose actions to maintain this critical habitat.



Kuenzler's Hedgehog Cactus
Echinocereus fendleri var. *kuenzleri*

Surveys were conducted on all units for the Kuenzler's hedgehog cactus, a federally listed threatened or endangered species.

On the Smokey Bear Ranger District seasonal crews and volunteers surveyed more than 2,000 acres. They found several new sites where this rare cactus is growing!

Of equal importance, the Sacramento Ranger District's cactus reintroduction sites have been successful and are maintaining healthy populations.



Sacramento Prickly Poppy
Argemone pleiacantha ssp. *pinnatisecta*

The Sacramento prickly poppy is a federally listed subspecies historically found in only eight canyons on the western face of southern New Mexico's Sacramento Mountains.

Recent intensive systematic surveys have confirmed or rediscovered the presence of this plant in seven of those canyons. Surveyors also discovered a population in a canyon not previously included. Initial results indicate a stable population of this cactus.

Working closely with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the forest established a recovery garden for the prickly poppy in 2009. At last count, the Sacramento prickly poppy garden had 4 established adult plants and 38 newly established young plants, marking a successful growing season for the forest!



New Mexico Jumping Mouse
Zapus hudsonicus luteus

In 2010, Lincoln National Forest specialists completed surveys for the New Mexico jumping mouse, a rare animal being considered for Federal listing under the Endangered Species Act.

The surveys were expanded from known jumping mouse sites to areas with similar characteristics. Wildlife managers were delighted to find a female jumping mouse at a new site. As a result, actions have been taken to protect this wet meadow.



BAT WORKSHOPS AND WETLAND RESTORATION WORKSHOPS

In partnership with Bat Conservation International, the Lincoln National Forest offered three major workshops: Bat Identification; Improvement of Range and Wildlife Waters for Bats; and Creating and Restoring Wetland Habitats for Bats and Other Wildlife Species.

With nearly two dozen kinds of bats, including several designated as sensitive species, the forest benefited by having more people trained to gather data, construct bat improvement structures, and provide consistent conservation measures across the landscape.

EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT

The North Bluewater trick tank has been constructed and placed on the Sacramento Ranger District with help from the Boy Scouts. Eagle Scout candidate David McRae worked with the Forest Service to coordinate the project. More than 40 volunteers pitched in from two local chapters of the National Wild Turkey Federation, Safari Club International, the Southwest Consolidated Sportsmen, and New Mexico State University.



What a fantastic year it has been for the Smokey Bear Ranger District and employees!

We experienced a very strong winter with more snow than we've seen in 15 years. We have been planning and implementing projects as complex as the 16 Springs Stewardship Contract and as rewarding as the Annual Diversity Day, attended by 200 forest employees.

Perhaps one of the most notable events occurred in June with the start of an exceptionally wet summer. As a result, no fire restrictions or closures were needed! Considering Ruidoso had been identified as one of the two most susceptible communities to wildfire in the United States, this certainly was cause for celebration!

One of the truly rewarding projects was restoration of the Mesa Barn from the old Smokey Bear Ranger Station. This treasured piece of Forest Service history was refurbished with the help of a local Youth Conservation Corps team.

In addition, through the generous support of businesses and individuals, the district was able to construct a community garden.

Another exciting project came about when the Village of Ruidoso approached the district with a conceptual plan for mountain bike trails, recognizing requests from mountain bike enthusiasts to create and expand the outdoor experience. Together we have moved forward from a plan, to grant writing, to implementing these bike trails in 2011!

The annual District Fishing Clinic and Wildlife Bonanza are just a few more examples of projects and work accomplished by our employees. As the new acting district ranger, I would like to invite you to stop by and visit our office, and take the time to get to know us!

Sincerely,

George Douds

George Douds
Acting District Ranger

HOME OF SMOKEY BEAR

On May 9, 1950, the Capitan Fire was raging through the mountains just north of Capitan, New Mexico, when a fire crew battling the blaze brought home with them a very scared and burned bear cub that had been clinging fearfully and tenaciously to a burned tree. They dubbed the tiny cub "Hot Foot Teddy" and brought him to the local Flatley Ranch for care and later to Game Warden Ray Bell.

Hot Foot Teddy was adopted by the U.S. Forest Service and became the living symbol of the world-famous Smokey Bear. His home was moved from New Mexico to the National Zoo in Washington, DC, and was finally brought home to rest in Capitan, NM, in 1976 after his passing. You can visit the Capitan State Park all year round where the remains of Smokey Bear now lay in rest.

There are three vistas that you can visit along U.S. 380 and NM 48 and view the mountains where Smokey's real life journey began.

Above: Smokey Bear sitting on airtanker, Alamogordo Airport, New Mexico.



The world-famous Smokey Bear began as an animated symbol and in 1950 became a real symbol when a tiny, burned and frightened bear cub found clinging to a tree in the Capitan Mountains on the Lincoln National Forest was rescued.



MESA BARN

Thanks to the collaborative efforts of New Mexico State Forestry, Region 9 Education Cooperation, Lincoln National Forest, and the Youth Conservation Corp Mesa Barn has been restored.

MESA BARN - NOGAL MESA RANGER STATION HISTORIC STRUCTURE

With the establishment of the Lincoln National Forest on July 26, 1902, and before New Mexico received statehood in 1912, the U.S. Forest Service was creating a system to manage our national forests. Nogal Mesa Ranger Station, operational from 1908 to 1971, was part of this system.

Mesa Barn is the only remaining structure of the original ranger station, part of which still exists in Lincoln County on the eastern slopes of the Sacramento Mountains on Nogal Mesa.

The barn was built in 1934 by Civilian Conservation Corps youth, who also

constructed many rock check dams in the area. In 1976, the Forest Service closed the station and operations were moved to Ruidoso leaving the barn as the lone reminder of an era when rangers did most of their work on horseback.

Lincoln National Forest Heritage Resource Staff Officer Diane Prather, Youth Conservation Corp Crew Leader Randall Robbins, and the YCC crew began restoration work on the historic barn during the summer.

Prather, Robbins, and crewmembers Kiley Gaines, Nicole Apodoca, and Dakota Lovelace,

along with district employees Dan Ray, Roy Hough, and Aaron Mendonca, custom built and installed 11 doors on the north side of the barn. On July 29, the last door was installed.

New Mexico State Forestry and Region 9 Education Cooperative were also involved in this project. The refurbished barn stands today as a testament to the will of the citizens to hold onto and maintain their heritage, and the ability of Federal and state governments to make that will a reality.



Smokey Bear Ranger District's Community Garden

SMOKEY'S GARDEN

Rising to a challenge from Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack to establish People's Gardens worldwide, the Smokey Bear Ranger District broke ground for its community garden on April 28.

Community gardens unite neighborhoods and inspire solutions to issues plaguing our country, such as hunger and pollution, and by providing fresh produce to local families. The vegetables harvested from Smokey's Garden were donated to the local Lincoln County Food Bank. To help beautify the area, several flowerbeds were planted and the district also installed a rainwater harvesting system.

Future plans call for the establishment of native plants, grasses, trees, bat boxes, and bird houses along an interpretive trail for visitors to learn about southern Rocky Mountain ecosystems.

District employees and community partners are responsible for the success of the community garden. Special thanks to Foxworth-Galbraith, Home Depot, City Bank New Mexico, Lincoln County Food Bank, Bio-Grind, Lincoln County Garden Club, and South Central Mountain Resource Conservation and Development Council!

MAVERICK & MADDEN HABITAT IMPROVEMENTS

More than 2,800 acres on the Smokey Bear Ranger District have been improved to benefit wildlife and create an aesthetically pleasing forest for visitors.

With the help of the National Wild Turkey Federation and Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, the district worked to mimic the natural distribution of trees and open areas, and create buffers along roads and drainages. The results include a higher diversity of vegetation and wildlife species, and a more resilient ecosystem.

The year 2010 was an extraordinary one for the Sacramento Ranger District! We are proud to say the district did not experience any large wildland wildfires. We attribute this to our successful fuels reduction treatments, and continued promotion of fire prevention programs in our communities.

Meantime, we are thrilled with the success of the Walker Prescribed Burn. This project increased wildlife habitat and protection of communities and resources from wildfire.

The district met its zoned timber target and successfully implemented several Recovery Act projects. We completed planning for the Jim Lewis Landscape Project and accomplished installation of the Burlson Water Storage Collection Project on Burlson Ridge.

After an eventful December 2009, the district was happy to be able to assist Otero County Electric Coop by removing trees from downed power lines blown over during a fierce winter storm.

As Sacramento district ranger from June 2008 to October 2010, it has been my privilege to lead such a great team. The Sacramento Ranger District will continue to provide leadership, planning, and project initiatives on forest lands surrounding Sacramento Mountain communities.

Sincerely,

Donna Owens

Donna Owens
Sacramento District Ranger

ECHOS OF A TIME PAST



Imagine it is 1899 and a steam engine carrying passengers to a small new community called Cloudcroft is about to make its first commercial run. Now, listen for the whispers of history echoing through the canyons of the Sacramento Mountains as trains chug across a spectacular wooden trestle upward toward the tall pines of the mountains.

The Mexican Canyon Trestle saw huge timbers brought down for construction and commercial use. It is the largest and last standing railroad bridge of the Alamogordo and Sacramento Railroad.

During its 40-year working period, the history of the steam logging railroad was very brief by most measures; however, it brought about many changes to the land. The railroad fed a local mill to produce railroad ties and delivered timbers for mines across the Southwest.

The Mexican Canyon Trestle is approximately 323 feet long and 59 feet high and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. But since it

was abandoned in 1947, it has remained frozen in time with few changes and no maintenance.

In the early 1990s, the Forest Service recognized that the Mexican Canyon Trestle could collapse from years of deterioration. Two engineering studies were completed in February 1990 and November 1999 to assess the trestle's condition and determine what it would cost to stabilize the structure.

In early 2000, the Forest Service and New Mexico Rails-to-Trails Association joined together to seek funding through grants, donations, and allocations for stabilization work. Eventually, the partnership acquired the necessary seed money.

In the last year, the forest received \$2,940,000 in Recovery Act funds for the trestle's stabilization and vista design. The vista parking lot, interpretation work, trails, and viewing area are expected to be completed in 2011.

Out of decayed beams, a collaborative partnership has been constructed between the

New Mexico Rails-to-Trails Association and the Lincoln National Forest to renovate, preserve, and protect the historic rail trail system in the Sacramento Mountains.

Thus, years of commitment and persistence have guaranteed that this colorful piece of history will not fade away, but instead, will be visible for generations to come.



Osmose Railroad Service employees positioning replacement timbers during Mexican Canyon Trestle stabilization process.



SACRAMENTO CHECKERSPOT BUTTERFLY REINTRODUCTION EFFORTS

New Mexico State University's Rachel Ryan is hoping to bring back the Sacramento Checkerspot butterfly. Together with the Lincoln National Forest and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ryan is reintroducing the butterfly to five wet meadow canyons on the Sacramento Ranger District.



The Lincoln National Forest celebrated its centennial on July 26, 2002.

DRY CANYON RESTORATION PROJECT

What had been overrun by vehicles and buried in trash is now a revitalized recreation area. Thanks to \$50,000 in funding from the Recovery Act, Dry Canyon on the western edge of the Sacramento Ranger District has received much needed reconstructive and restorative attention.

Local Alamogordo contractor, Southwest Landscape, implemented the redesign of the area. Bollards were installed for better identification of the trailhead roads and parking areas. Forest Service Road 5574 was reconditioned, and a new metal gate and signs were added.

Throughout the years, the Dry Canyon area has been used for a variety of purposes such as recreational shooting, picnicking, camping, hang gliding, hiking, livestock grazing, and off-road driving. Unfortunately, overuse took its toll on the area. Large amounts of trash piled up, and motorized traffic damaged the vegetation.

Now that the area has been cleaned up, the Lincoln National Forest encourages visitors to keep it that way by packing out what they pack in.



NEW MEXICO RAILS-TO-TRAILS ASSOCIATION AND THE LINCOLN NATIONAL FOREST

Out of decayed beams, a collaborative partnership has been constructed to renovate, preserve, and protect the historic rail trail system in the Sacramento Mountains.

The foundation of a partnership between the Forest Service and the New Mexico Rails-to-Trails Association was built on a shared interest to create a trail system as an extension of the Trestle Recreation Area in Cloudcroft.

The association has worked to preserve the Alamogordo and Sacramento Mountain Railroad by converting abandoned rail grades into multi-use, multi-access trails for use by local residents and visitors. At the Trestle Recreation Area, Rails-to-Trails provided the volunteers while the Lincoln National Forest provided the tools and technical assistance.

The total rail system covers some 18 miles.

WALKER PRESCRIBED BURN

It's a difference you can see. Sacramento Ranger District employees have improved the health of nearly 1,300 forested acres next to the community of Weed in the Sacramento Mountains.

Favorable spring weather allowed for the final phase of the multiyear Walker Burn Project. The primary objective was to clean up woody debris generated by thinning and cutting components of the project. This allowed for increased vigor and diversity of plants, and decreased risk of wildfire.

Today you can take Highway 24 to see the amazing results of a rejuvenated forest! You may be surprised at the abundance of wildlife attracted by the new vegetative growth.

We'll be out there too, monitoring the long-term effects and bringing fire back into the ecosystem.



Firefighters conduct prescribed burns during cooler fall and winter months to reduce fuel build up (leaf/debris/grass/timber litter) which reduces the risk and effects of future uncontrolled fires.

www.fs.usda.gov/lincoln



Greetings from the Guadalupe Ranger District in southeastern New Mexico, where more than 280,000 acres in Eddy County offer a vast array of recreational opportunities!

As district ranger, I take the responsibility of “caring for the land and serving people” not only as a professional pledge, but also as a personal one.

The Guadalupe Ranger District staff and I are dedicated to using the best science to ensure the sustainability of healthy ecosystems. One way we demonstrate this is through our stewardship of watershed health. We also manage a popular and unique cave system.

The Guadalupe Ranger District enjoys establishing and maintaining strong relationships with various Federal, State, county and private organizations to provide quality service to the public. We are especially proud of the recreational experience provided at Sitting Bull Falls Recreation Area. This emerald of the desert features majestic rock cliffs, cascading waterfalls, lush riparian vegetation, and historic structures built by the Civilian Conservation Corps.

Sitting Bull Falls attracts thousands of visitors each year. But recently we were honored to host more than a thousand children from Eddy County Public Schools during the 14th Annual National Environmental Education Week. What a joy it is to share this national treasure!

All of us at the Guadalupe Ranger District invite you and your family to explore and enjoy New Mexico’s southeastern forest!

Sincerely,

Cherie Edwards

Cherie Edwards
District Ranger



14th Annual National Environmental Education Week

More than one thousand 5th grade students from Eddy County Public Schools (Artesia, Carlsbad, and Loving, New Mexico) attended the 14th Annual National Environmental Education Week at Sitting Bull Falls in April.

Guadalupe Ranger District Fire Prevention Officer Michael Salmon and the event coordinator for this annual program hosted teams of educators who took the opportunity to interact with the students and help them understand and experience the excitement of learning about the ever-changing landscape.

The children also had the opportunity to learn about diverse natural resource jobs, along with their complexities and challenges. “This event is successful because of the multiple agencies that team up and work together to involve our youth with the wonders of nature,” said Salmon.

These groups provided hands-on projects for the students. “It is kids teaching kids, which makes it more interesting to the 5th graders because most of the MESA students are just 2 or 3 years older than they are,” said Salmon.

Every year this program continues to grow and become more exciting with the support of our cooperating agencies and schools.

Collaborating agencies included:

- The Guadalupe Ranger District
- Soil and Water Conservation, Carlsbad District
- Carlsbad Caverns National Park
- New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
- U.S. Geological Survey
- Wildlife Rescue Inc. of Albuquerque
- Bureau of Land Management
- Waste Isolation Pilot Plant
- Oxy Indian Basic Gas Plant
- Albuquerque Biological Park (Zoo to You)
- Green and MESA Team from P. R. Leyva Middle School, Carlsbad, NM

SITTING BULL FALLS RECREATION AREA



Most of us would not expect cascading waterfalls in the middle of the desert, but at Sitting Bull Falls Recreation Area on the Guadalupe Ranger District that's what you'll find—crystal clear water and riparian vegetation in a natural rock cliff setting.

The recreation area is in the Guadalupe Mountains, 42 miles southwest of Carlsbad, at an elevation of 4,662 feet. It is surrounded by steep, rocky, and abundant limestone outcrops. Vegetation is predominately scrub oak, Texas madrone, agave, ocotillo, soap tree yucca, and prickly pear cactus. A 150-foot-high limestone cliff supports the waterfall, and a variety of mosses and ferns grow in the immediate area. There are many natural pools above and below the falls.

Sitting Bull Falls was originally part of a large ranch owned by Albert Knott from the early 1900s to 1924. At that time, the area was isolated and had a very natural setting. The Forest Service purchased Sitting Bull Falls in the 1920s. By 1931 visitors could reach the falls by hiking 1 mile from the end of a graveled Forest Service road.

To accommodate increased visitation, Forest Service Road 276 was constructed during the 1930s, which led to a parking area on the north end of the falls. Visitors travel long distances to see Sitting Bull Falls, swim in the pools, and hike in the canyon.

The original main Civilian Conservation Corps structure built in the 1930s and one picnic shelter continue to stand as excellent examples of historic construction.



Sitting Bull Falls during winter months.

MOTORIZED VEHICLE USAGE REMINDER

When you travel onto a Forest Service road you will see a sign such as the one below. This is meant to remind us that all motorized vehicles are to remain on designated roads and trails. For all legal motorized roads and trails, please obtain a motor vehicle use map (free) at one of our district offices.



TRAIL AND TRAILHEAD SIGNS

New trailhead and trail signs and motorized usage reminder signs can be seen throughout the Lincoln. These beautiful new signs clearly mark the location of a trailhead (where the trail meets the road) as well as the trail number and new symbols showing the proper use.

Follow the Lincoln National Forest on [@twitter](https://twitter.com/lincolnsmokey)
[@lincolnsmokey](https://twitter.com/lincolnsmokey)

TRAVEL MANAGEMENT

In keeping with the Forest Service multiple-use mandate, and to better protect our natural resources, the Lincoln National Forest has finalized its travel management process.

Public meetings from Ruidoso to El Paso provided a valuable exchange of information between forest managers and recreationists, and popular areas were evaluated.

More than 22 years ago, the Lincoln National Forest was a leader in natural resource management by establishing a motor vehicle use policy. The current forest policy coincides with today's Forest Service off-highway vehicle use rule.

One of the most successful components of the Travel Management Rule was the design of two motor vehicle use maps. Paper and electronic Web site versions were created to help identify roads, trails, and areas designated for motorized use on the Smokey Bear, Sacramento, and Guadalupe Ranger Districts.

To continue with this strategy, a plan of work and accountability was identified. It includes an annual program of work outlining signing, road and trail maintenance schedules, review of designated travel routes and exemptions, identification of needs to make changes to the system or exemptions, and annual distribution of the motor vehicle use maps.



TRAILS

The Lincoln National Forest has approximately 466 miles of designated trails, 177 miles of motorized trails (38 percent) and 289 miles of nonmotorized trails (62 percent). The majority of the nonmotorized trails are located in the White Mountain and Capitan Mountain Wilderness areas. Mileage of the forest trail system (motorized and nonmotorized) is displayed below.

HIKE/PEDESTRIAN

Trail accessible to pedestrian traffic (hiking only)
6 miles

PACK AND SADDLE

Trail accessible to horses and other pack animals
270 miles

BICYCLE

Trail accessible to bicycles
13 miles

MOTORCYCLE

Trail accessible to motorcycles
97 miles

ATV

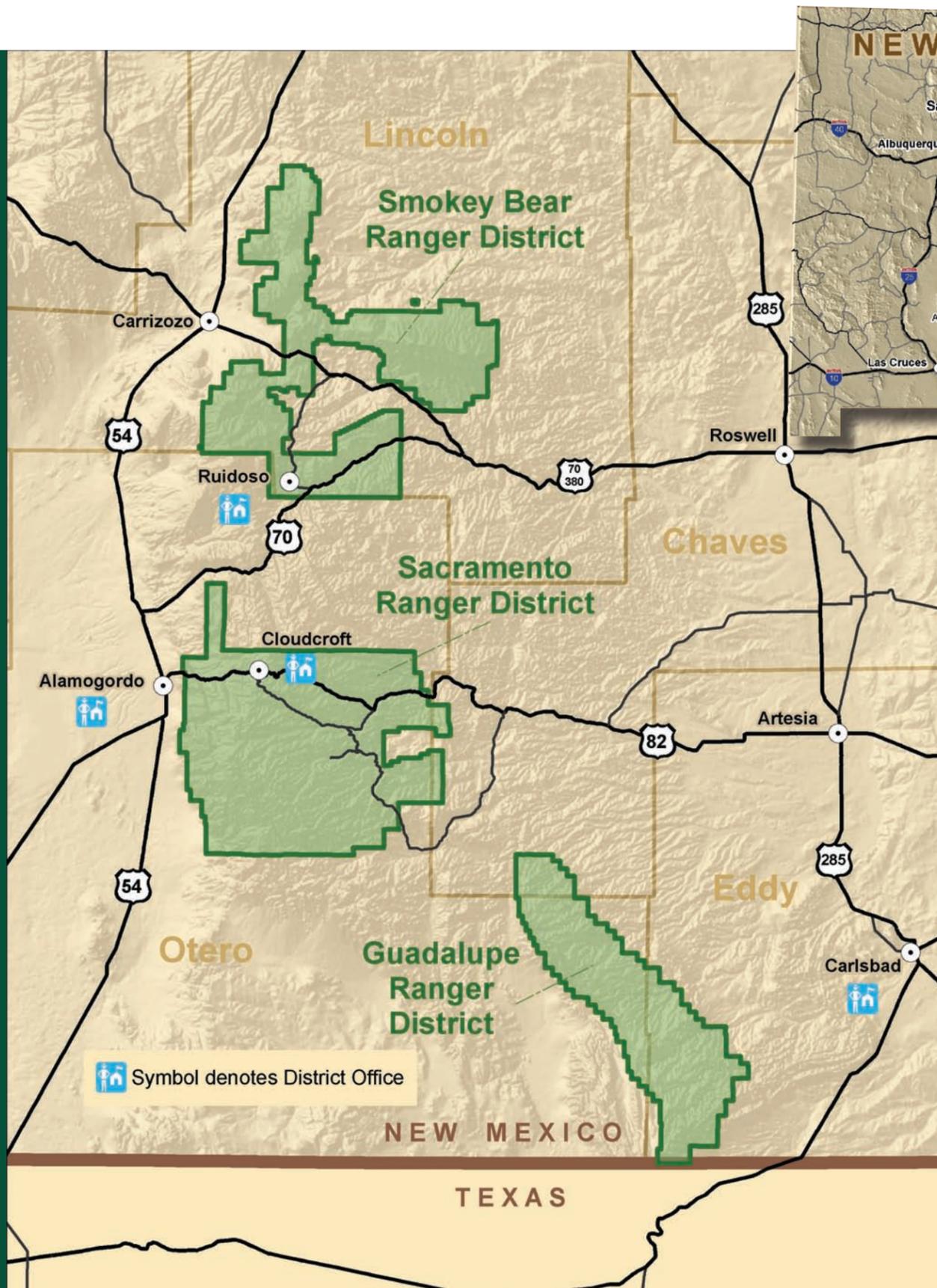
Trail accessible for all-terrain vehicles <50" in width
80 miles

4WD

Trail accessible for 4-wheel drive vehicles
0 miles

TOTAL TRAILS

466 miles
Total Motorized 177



CONTACT US . . .

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3463 Las Palomas
Alamogordo, NM 88310
(575) 434-7200

Smokey Bear Ranger District
901 Mechem Drive
Ruidoso, NM 88345
(575) 257-4095

Sacramento Ranger District
4 Lost Lodge Road (physical)
P.O. Box 288 (mailing)
Cloudcroft, NM 88317
(575) 682-2551

Guadalupe Ranger District
114 S. Halagueno
Carlsbad, NM 88220
(575) 885-4181

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TRAILS \$160,000

TIMBER MANAGEMENT \$289,000

RANGE GRAZING MANAGEMENT \$406,000

LANDS and MINERALS \$415,000

LAND MANAGEMENT PLANNING \$420,000

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT \$568,000

RECREATION, HERITAGE and WILDERNESS \$705,000

FACILITIES \$716,000

ROADS \$746,000

OTHER \$776,000

VEGETATIVE TREATMENT \$881,000

ADMINISTRATION 2.8 million

FUELS 3.4 million

FIRE 4.1 million

RECOVERY ACT 5.2 million

LINCOLN NATIONAL FOREST FY2010 BUDGET

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