



From the President

May 2022

Spring has sprung. I love this time of year. It is a time for new beginnings and wonderful possibilities. Wildflowers are blooming and transforming the desert into a botanical wonderland. Who knew the desert could be so colorful! Our Trail Patrollers, with Chairperson Dale Evans are having a wonderful time learning about the flowers on their educational hikes thanks to Bob Beltz, our FOF wildflower enthusiast.

So, with spring in mind, it's a good time to think about our organization. It's time for spring cleaning and growing our membership and leadership. For the good of the organization, we have a chain of command with organized committees.

- Committee Chairperson is the team lead who works directly with their Forest Service Supervisor
- Committee Co-Chair learns from the Committee Chairperson and covers for the Chairperson
- Committee Members step up and work on the projects that are communicated out to them

We have awesome Committee Chair people right now and the only thing they knew before they took the position was that they willing to help. "Sure, I don't know what I'm doing, but I can try" is heard more often than you think. That's why being a Co-Chair, is a great stepping stone. It takes some of the load off the Chairperson while providing a learning opportunity.

We do need your help. The effort is worth your time and energy. Did you know that leading a team has great benefits? Some of the benefits include:

- A sense of accomplishment
- Comradery

- Learning new skills
- Having a voice in the decision-making process
- A sense of belonging
- Knowing you're valued
- Enjoying the great outdoors
- Respect and gratitude

Remember, the objective of this nonprofit, volunteer group is to work in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service in tasks it does not have the manpower or the funds to accomplish on its own. These are our current committees; if you can lend support to any of these committees, please let them know.

- Wildlife, Fish & Rare Plants
- Water Sampling & Air Quality Monitoring
- Visitor Information Services
- Trail Patrol
- Trail Maintenance & Construction
- Special Projects
- Interpretive & Educational Programs
- Graffiti Removal
- Cultural Resources & Protection

Aside from Committee Chair Positions, we have a critical need for more volunteers who like to help visitors. This could be in the Visitor Center, out at Palatki / Honanki, or even at some trailheads in the summertime. If you are a people person and can help with these opportunities, please let us know. Training is provided.

We hope you “spring” into action and “bloom” as a volunteer.

Annie Glickstein



Statistical Summary

Looks like our volunteers have been busy now that things have eased up a bit, and the weather has been cooperating. Once again, Cultural Resources, River Rangers, Special Projects, Trail Maintenance and Construction, VIS, and Wildlife/Fish/Rare Plants all had significant increases in volunteer hours compared to last year. Keep up the great work!

Here's the recap of the hours by committee for FY22 thru March, compared to the same period last year, showing that we are over 3,000 hours ahead of this time last year:

Committee	FY22 Thru Mar	FY21 Thru Mar	Change in Hours	Percent Change	FY22 % of Total
Air Quality	0	0	0		0.0%
Cultural Resources	3,891	2,184	+1,707	78.1%	25.4%
Graffiti Removal	771	871	-100	-11.5%	5.0%
Interpretive Program	28	68	-40	-58.5%	0.2%
River Rangers	315	60	+255	+424.7%	2.1%
Special Projects	269	196	+73	+37.4%	1.8%
Trail Maint&Const	1,368	666	+703	+105.6%	8.9%
Trail Patrol	5,680	6,377	-697	-10.9%	37.1%
VIS	513	0	+513		3.4%
Water Sampling	0	0	0		0.0%
Wildlife/Fish/Plants	1,371	1,085	+286	+26.3%	9.0%
Admin/Meetings	1,103	762	+341	+44.8%	7.2%
Total	15,308	12,267	+3,041	+24.8%	100.0%

NEON News:

Reminder that Alan Glickstein is now assisting with the NEON System Administration duties. Please feel free to reach out to either (or both) of us for any

questions on NEON, with a cc to the other as Alan is still learning the ins and outs of NEON administration. Alan's email address is alan.glickstein@fosedona.org.

Peg Kern

Membership

Our membership as of April 19, 2022, is 657. Since our last newsletter, the following new members have joined Friends of the Forest: **Mary Ann Carson, Sally Gebler, Mark Goldsmith, PJ Harrison, Stephanie Harrison, Holly Johnson, Robert Johnson, Camille LeFevre, Kevin Otto, Sharon Paddie, LaDonna Steiner, Bobbi Titter**

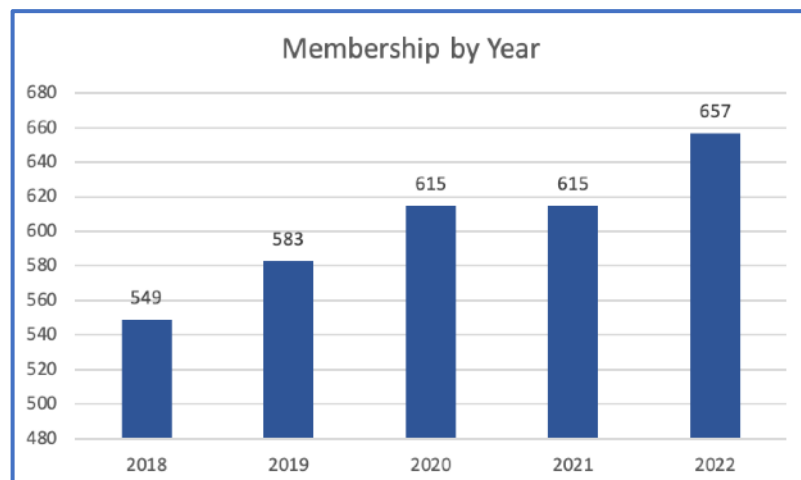
Our membership is again increasing. We remained steady during 2021, which was a credit to the

organization given the circumstances. Already in 2022, we've seen a 6.8% increase in our total membership.

We lost 60 members in 2021 who did not renew, but only 46 members chose not to renew for 2022. This means that retained 79% of our annual members between 2021 and 2022, a significant achievement for any non-profit/volunteer organization.

Craig Swanson

FOF Membership Data as of 04/19/2022 (using calendar years)				
		Annual	Life	Total
2022	New Members Added since our last newsletter	12		12
	Past Members not Renewing for 2022	46		
	Current Membership as of 4/19/2022	264	393	657
2021	New Members Added in 2021	46	14	60
	Past Members not Renewing for 2021	60		
	Membership at the end of 2021	224	391	615
2020	New Members Added in 2020	52	27	79
	Past Members not Renewing for 2020	47		47
	Membership at end of 2020			615



Trail Patrol

It has been a busy year so far for Trail Patrol with twenty-two new members. We have had six new member hikes on a variety of trails from Cornville to Jacks Canyon to Chimney Rock, reviewing expectations and modeling interactions with the public plus training on Appsheets. There has also been four Trail Patrol general hikes including one way out north of Dead Horse Ranch on Thumper trail and an “early bird” special at 5:30AM to Devils Bridge to clean up trash (6#) and work on graffiti (especially stickers and cairns) kudos to Susan Dunn, Jerry Checchia and Sharon Evans for braving the dark. Education for all TP members on all things Red Rock Ranger District and Friends of the Forest was a major focus since the beginning of the year with eight educational hikes/sessions including background on wildflowers, wildlife, birds and more.

Going forward – Trail Ambassadors. This year we are taking on “The Crack” again and adding Devils Bridge covering Saturdays and Sundays plus three holidays from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend. Brady VanDragt and the Forest Service have come through with two new 6’ tables, two Coconino FS banners, an additional tent and more. There will be an in-person training session for those interested in volunteering – RRRD Admin. Conference Room Tuesday, May 10 @ 9AM. For those who cannot make the in-person, there will be a Zoom session Monday, May 16 @ 4PM. A hike to the crack is also being offered on Wednesday, May 11 – 7 miles round trip/ easy to moderate. Trail Ambassadors is open to all FoF – please contact me at trailpatrol@fosedona.org. See you on the trails.

Dale Evans



Birdwatching Hike



Wildflower Hike



Thumper Hike

River Rangers

Our 2021-2022 season ended in February, but our mission has taken on a new dimension. As many of you know the fires and monsoons have caused considerable damage to the Fossil Creek area. The Forest Service is currently conducting missions to determine the extent and severity of that damage. The RRS team is being asked to shuttle FS teams into that area and pick them up some time later at various locations.

We have done one mission so far, with others expected to follow. This recent trip was a drop off at Strawberry and pick up at the Irving parking lot at Fossil Creek. Many thanks to Bob Beltz, Marilyn Painchaud, Warren Holm, Pat Quinn, and Dave Kennedy for transporting everyone.

As we are doing more than just transporting the River Rangers, perhaps a name change might be in order. Suggestions?

Lastly, we are losing a good Forest Service friend, Andrew Giralt, who is transferring back to Flagstaff to be part of their fire team. We all enjoyed working with you, Andrew. Best of luck in your new assignment. Hopefully you won't be needed in the Coconino...!

Many thanks to the entire team for a "continuing" successful season.

Jerry Piepiora



FS Pickup at Fossil, photo by Dave Kennedy

FOF Preparedness

When the Coconino National Forest was closed in the Spring/Summer of 2021 due to wild land fires, Friends of the Forest was willing to assist in any way possible. We did lend a hand via reopening trailheads, but we felt like we could have helped more. Once the National Forest reopened and a "post-mortem" was completed, it became clear that FOF could be better utilized across the Red Rock Ranger District if/when another emergency closure is declared.

Long before the Tunnel Fire in Flagstaff, a small group began actively working with USFS to determine exactly how we could help. One of the first public outcomes of those meetings was the electronic survey 65 FOFers completed...thank you!! See below for a quick synopsis of the survey results.

What's next? Based on a combination of the survey results, Forest Service anticipated needs and the understanding that all future scenarios will be fast-moving and fluid, here's what we know so far:

- Nothing is set in stone and many details are still being worked out!
- FOF anticipates providing manpower to close, function as Trail Ambassadors, and re-open specific trailheads along the 179 corridor (Little Horse, Yavapai Vista, Courthouse, Bell Rock, and Baldwin Trailheads)
- FOF may be asked to provide similar manpower for other locations across the RRRD but nothing has been established and such a request may be last minute

- All trail-related volunteer opportunities will be done in pairs and with some form of FOF identification (FOF volunteer shirt, name tag, etc)
- FOF may enhance their coverage at the Visitor Center to assist with answering questions, answering phones, etc
- USFS will be providing us with detailed information (as detailed as they can) and talking points so every member of FOF can share accurate information, even if not actively volunteering
- Framework for coordinating and scheduling volunteers is being created now; scheduling will be done via a centralized online location

Numerous times the USFS has reminded us that their plans WILL change due to unforeseen circumstances, and they request our patience and understanding. We're going to ask the same of our FOF volunteers. We'll do our best to provide timely and accurate information with the reality that we'll probably be making changes on the fly and learning as we go.

Let's hope all the prep work is a waste of time and our Forest stays open & fire-free!

Annie Glickstein, Bev Jackson, Dale Evans and Melissa Pontikes

Survey Results

- 85% of the respondents are agreeable and enthusiastic about supporting the FS in the event of a future closure
- Work preference(s):
 - 18 - "Staffing the Visitor Center"
 - 52 - "Physically closing trails"
 - 51 - "Physically re-opening trails"
 - 36 - "Functioning as Trail Ambassador"
 - 26 - "Open to other opportunities"

- Select comments from the survey
 - Pre-made signs reflecting the emergency
 - Methodist Church - ask them to put up barriers to their parking lot for emergency closures so people don't park there and walk to Little Horse
 - Have a Forest Service employee in the assigned area(s) and provide their phone number to the respective volunteer, this will ensure a quicker response if a problem arises
 - I will help in any way I can!

Melissa Pontikes

Trail Maintenance

The Trail Maintenance & Construction crew has been hard at work in 2022, contributing more than 835 volunteer hours (so far) to trail maintenance and special projects. After the past two years, it's been a nice change of pace to work our "standard" Friday mornings with minimal interruptions. We've even had crews doing work mid-week work on some of the wilderness trails we don't get to address on a regular basis.

There have been some consistent themes the past three months...

- Rock Cairns – out with old, broken and poorly located and in with the newer, bigger, sturdier, and better placed ones. In all, over 20 cairns have been removed and/or rebuilt.
- Trees – crews have been out removing trees from Loy, Parsons, North Wilson, Easy Breezy, Bear Sign, and Dry Creek. More trees to be removed on Vultee Arch and West Fork in the coming weeks.
- Rock Work – from the Cathedral rehab project to reinforcing existing armoring to fixing

"stairs," hundreds of pounds of rock have been carried, moved, hammered, chiseled, and fitted to improve the trails. Check out the pictures below to see some of the work.

- New Trails & Trail rehab – have you been to the new Mescal Trailhead? It is a beautiful, unrecognizable trailhead and our crew helped with some of the finishing touches by building a connector trail, repairing existing trail, and closing now-obsolete trails.
- General Trail Maintenance – fixing tread, opening drains, lopping, brushing and overall trail TLC is never ending and always part of our work.

A special thank you to Ernie DiMillo and his team of Rich Spinelli, Rod Cashin, and Jeff Maust for designing, creating, and installing the new trail-specific educational display at the Visitor Center. Hopefully the Sedona visitors will take a few minutes to familiarize themselves with the various markings used to denote trails.



New Education Display at Visitor Center

As we come into the warmer months, we will monitor the temperatures and temporarily suspend our Friday work when it gets too warm, too early in the day to safely do trail work.

However, the trails won't be neglected over the summer. We will still address issues that are a priority or a safety hazard.



Adrienne Pichette, Tony Schuit
and Mary (USFS) working on
Lower Chimney Rock



Kurt Starbuck and Pat Quinn
doing rock work on Soldiers Pass



Sam Serrill and Bob Wych
putting finishing touches on
rock cairn



Bill Logan, Jeff Maust, Annie Glickstein, Jim Manning and Ernie DiMillo

THANK YOU to all our incredible volunteers for the
time you give and your never-ending willingness

to sweat, get dirty, and work hard so our trails
remain fun and safe!!

Mike Boyd and Melissa Pontikes



Red Rock Pass

Red Rock Pass Request

Process for Friends of the Forest Members with a minimum 16 volunteer hours

The process for requesting a Courtesy Red Rock Pass is outlined below to give the Forest Service personnel (Rochelle) the opportunity to fulfill the requests in a streamlined manner.

If you already have the America the Beautiful Pass, then you do **not** need a Red Rock Pass.

Requirements	16 FOF volunteer hours for the fiscal year October 1 st through September 30th
How to Request a Red Rock Pass	If your current pass will expire at the end of the month, [or you never had one] then send an email to annie.glickstein@fosedona.org [see sample below]
What do I need to do when requesting a pass	Verify your mailing address and phone number in NEON (the FOF website that you log into to sign JHAs – choose “Update My Information” to view what is on file for you.
What will happen next	All hours will be verified and a request for the current month’s Red Rock Passes will be sent to the Forest Service on the 14 th of each month.
What if you never had a Pass	Same procedure as if your pass was expiring.
What if I request a Pass after the 14th of the month	Your request will be processed the following month along with that batch of requests
What do I HAVE to do when I receive my Red Rock Pass	You MUST sign and return the acknowledgment form that will be mailed to you along with the Red Rock Pass.
What if I requested the pass and I did not get it by the end of the month?	Email annie.glickstein@fosedona.org and there will be a review to track it down. It has happened that passes were mailed to incorrect addresses, they were received a little late due to postal delays, or just got missed. We’ll figure it out.

Here is a sample request:

Subject: Red Rock Pass Request

My Red Rock Pass is expiring this month, I have more than 16 hours and I checked my address and email in NEON. I promise to sign and return the acknowledgment form when I receive the Pass in the mail.

Thank you,

***Earl E. Bird
555-123-4567***

Annie Glickstein

Water/Air Quality

After 2 long years, the water monitoring program is finally resuming at the end of May. Recently, I spent the day locating new water sampling sites with Meghan Smart, Dr. Ron Tiller and Corinne Johnson who are from the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality. We are keeping the original locations, but adding a few more either upstream or downstream from

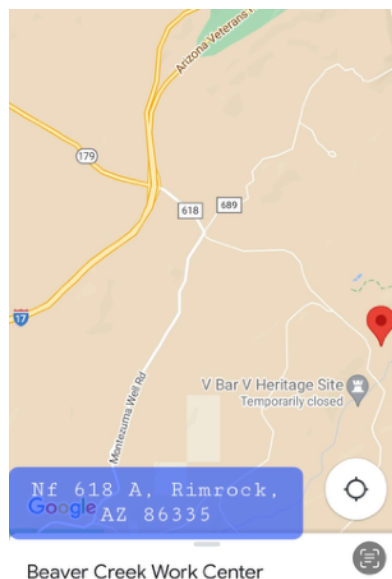
those sites. In addition to the regular water sampling, we will collect an additional sample on the 3rd Tuesday of the month for Dr Tiller's eDNA program. I will meet with each volunteer in the next few weeks and take them to their assigned water sampling locations.

The new lab has been set up at the Wet Beaver FS area (pictures

and map below). We will have in-person training there on May 9th at 9 am. We will possibly have virtual training with instructions on how to enter the data on a government portal. Meghan is still setting that up at this time.

Water sampling at Fossil Creek and the Air Quality program are on hold indefinitely.

Cynthia Malowitz



New Lab location and set up



Locating new water sampling sites



Graffiti Removal

Sedona is going to the dogs!

Hello fellow volunteers, for this months newsletter I thought I'd try something different and highlight one of our newer members and her amazing 4 legged friend Josie. Christine Nuez has been doing an outstanding job reporting and in most cases taking care of graffiti while she's out hiking with her trail patrol pup Josie. She has even trained Josie to knock over social cairns while out on the trails. They pick up trash, remove stickers and graffiti and try to educate the visitors while out enjoying this beautiful place we call home. I lost count of the reports she has submitted but it has to be several hundred. They mostly hike in the Bell Rock area so if you see them give them a big THANK YOU!

Enjoy the summer and stay hydrated,
Until next time.....

Happy Hiking



Photoshopped, Chase
didn't do it

Jerry & Chase



Josie working on removal
of social cairns on the
Red Rock Trails

Friends of the Forest Community Service Award

At the April 20 ceremony, Keep Sedona Beautiful made presentations to 6 awardees for their exemplary service and/or environmental accomplishments: Javier and Amy Franco of Layla's Bakery-Café for Sustainability, Richard and Monique Sidy for Landscaping, A Sunset Chateau for Sustainability, **The Friends of the Forest Graffiti Removal Team for Community Service**, The Science Vortex for Education and Verde Valley School for Sustainability.

Keep Sedona Beautiful honors businesses, organizations, and individuals in the Verde Valley who have helped to fulfill their mission. Over the years, KSB has given out more than 500 Awards of Excellence in various categories including landscaping, architecture, signage, dark sky lighting, education, environmental stewardship, cultural heritage, sustainability, and community service. It was a great honor receiving a beautiful metallic print of Cathedral.

KSB received the nomination from Doreen Dziepak, who provided them with the details of the phenomenal work done by the Graffiti Removal Team (GRT) under the leadership and commitment of Jerry Piepiora and now Jerry Checchia. KSB members were impressed by the over 2000 volunteer hours the GRT spends annually to remove, remediate, or camouflage the paint, scratches and rock stacks left behind by users of our public lands. Photos of some of the more egregious graffiti were shown to the audience with the final photo showing member Les Heffner teaching his grandchildren how to remove graffiti and why it's important to "leave no trace".

Jerry Checchia and Annie
Glickstein

Graffiti Removal Team



Jerry Piepiora



Cultural Resources

Cultural Site Photo Documentation Project

The “Fine Incised Petroglyph Study”, dust study, and site photography projects are continuing. The 2021 ARARA conference presentation related paper is being published in the June Conference proceeding this year. The follow-up paper which concentrates more on the Bear Alcove rock art panels has had our abstract accepted. Peter Anick and Walter van Roggan (co-authors who are also FOF members) will be here late May to assist in acquiring site data (petroglyph vs pictograph distribution and associations) such that we can prepare the 2022 presentation and paper.

If you are interested in helping with this project, or would like more information, please contact **Spence Gustav** at spencehg@yahoo.com.

Docent Program

V-Bar-V remains closed until mid-May to complete the final phase of the long-awaited viewing enclosure enlargement, level viewing tier, wheel chair ramp, and other grade and vegetation improvements.

We are always in need of new docents, particularly if you spend all or part of the summer months in the Verde Valley! Training is scheduled whenever we have members interested in the program.

If you are interested in helping protect our cultural heritage sites and learning more about the **Palatki, Honanki** and **V-Bar-V** sites, consider joining the Cultural Resource and Protection Committee. Please call or email (docents@fofsedona.org) for more information.

Honanki Ambassadors - NEW

With the ever-increasing visitation at Honanki by “drop-in” (non-Pink Jeep) visitors and ATV visitors, the frequency of off hour visitation and graffiti has increased at an alarming rate. As a “stop gap” (duration unknown) measure we are initiating a Honanki Ambassador program to provide some extra eyes at the site to discourage bad behavior and to provide some very basic information about Honanki and site etiquette to the drop-in visitors. We are providing on-site training and a copy of the Heritage Sites Guide to all new volunteers. If you live in West Sedona, Cornville, or Cottonwood this would be a good opportunity to help protect a very valuable and endangered cultural site. Please contact me if you are interested or want more information.

Jerry Walters (928) 284-1339 / docents@fofsedona.org

Jerry Walters

The Friends of the Forest, Inc. is dedicated to assisting the U. S. Forest Service in maintaining, protecting, and restoring the scenic beauty, and natural resources of forest lands for the enjoyment and use of present and future generations. The objective of this nonprofit, volunteer group is to work in partnership with the U. S. Forest Service in tasks it does not have the manpower or the funds to accomplish on its

Interpretative Programs

WE ARE BACK !

I am happy to say, we have started our educational walks/hikes for the general public again. Since the spring of 2020 we were not able to offer any hikes or walks, sponsored by the US Forest Service. In the fall of last year and beginning of this year, it was mentioned to start back up, but different strains of COVID popped up and we were not allowed to offer public events yet.

During the month of April, we offered three wildflower walks, two bird watching walks and a geology walk, lead by members of the Friends of the Forest. Since these walks/hikes were not offered for such a long time, I was very pleasantly surprised by the number of participants attending the events. The public is ready to learn more about the Sedona area.

Many thanks to Bob Beltz (wildflower walks), Kevin Harding (bird watching walks) and Barry Mallis (geology hike) for leading these events. **See photos.**

You can find more information on our website (www.FriendsoftheForestSedona.org) and click on EVENTS at the top of the page. No summer events have been scheduled as of this date.

If anyone reading this article would like to volunteer their knowledge and offer any walks/hikes or a classroom meeting, please contact me. We are always looking for more people, who have special expertise, that they would like to share with the public, either as an indoor presentation (talks / demonstrations) or as a guided walk/hike.

We are looking for great speakers, who present classroom talks on the first Friday of each month, do demonstrations, or lead guided walks throughout the year for both adults and youth to learn about the heritage, geology, plants and animals of this very special place, the Red Rock District (or any other subject supporting this natural beauty). First Friday Talks will be held at the Visitor's Center (either in the meeting room or outside on the patio, but Zoom meetings are also available, if needed). Please contact me, if interested, and I will discuss it with the RRRD visitor center. They will have the ultimate say-so.

"May the Forest be with you".

Bea Logan
Chair, Interpretive & Educational Programs Committee
interpretive@fosedona.org

Woods Canyon



Trash?

Bea Logan



No, Tufted Evening Primrose

Wildflower Walk



Bob Beltz

Birdwatching

Un-named flower



Ask Bob Beltz



Kevin Harding leading the walk

Exciting sighting



Great Blue Heron

Geology Hike



Barry Mallis sharing his knowledge

Geology Hike



To a rapt audience

Visitor Information

Serving at the Visitor's Center

I have had the privilege of serving at the Visitor's Center since I joined Friends of the Forest. Serving on a regular shift resulted in meeting new lifetime friends, both FOF members and Forest Service Staff.

In a typical day, we greet people from all over the U.S. and are beginning to see International visitors return. We share tips on trails to hike, hiking safety, sites to see, places to eat and stay. Forest Service staff members are available to assist with technical questions the visitors may have.

Families with children are encouraged to participate and earn the Junior Ranger Badge. Working with them is one of the newest additions to our day and is such fun! Recently, I swore in 9 Junior Rangers in one 3 hour shift.

If you enjoy interfacing with people and sharing the love of our Forest, we would love to have you join us

by shadowing a current volunteer and considering taking one of our 3 hour shifts. The visitor center is open daily for 6 1/2 hours with the center closed on Wednesday morning from 9 am to noon. Available regular (weekly) shifts are:

Thursday	12 - 3
Friday	9 - 12 and 12 - 3
Saturday	9 - 12 and 12 - 3
Monday	9 - 12

We also need substitutes who pick up random open shifts as their schedule allows.

Please email me at vis.volunteers@groupmail.com.

Bev Jackson

Save The Antelope Project



Antelope caught on game camera slipping under fence. Janie Agyagos (USFS) and FOF Wildlife volunteers have been replacing the bottom barbed wire with smooth. Don McClimans installed the game camera and retrieved this photo.

Dates to Remember

Wednesday, May 4, 2022 @ 9:00 AM Zoom Meeting

FOF Quarterly Board of Directors and Member
meeting

All Members welcome

Future Board of Directors Meetings:

September 7, 2022

Annual Meeting - November (to be announced)

December 7, 2022