



TRACKS TRAIL CREW (TC) – Trail Crew Spring Start and Trailhead Adopters Needed

By Jerry Good, Crew Chief and Joan Patrick, Adopter Coordinator

The Trail Crew plans to start their work this spring on April 5th. Check your email for details! If you are not yet signed up for Trail Crew please check box on website for “Trail Crew” on “Join” form and/or email Nick Lund at lundaz@cablone.net.

TRACKS is looking for volunteers as Trailhead Adopters. Trailhead Adopters help keep map boxes stocked and neat and pick up trash around each trailhead kiosk. We are currently in need of one for Ghost of the Coyote and there are a couple of other trailheads that could use additional adopters. If you are interested in Ghost of the Coyote or other possible trailheads, please contact Joan Patrick at: joanpatrick933@gmail.com for more information. ❗

WHITE MOUNTAIN NATURE CENTER

This past fall, the White Mountain Nature Center (WMNC) and TRACKS worked together on a joint project to create a memorial grove of native trees at the WMNC. The memorial is dedicated to TRACKS and WMNC members that contributed substantially going “above and beyond” in their participation as TRACKS and WMNC members and all their volunteer efforts.

Three pinon pines and three spruce trees were planted as an initial start for the garden. The pinon pines were incorporated into a Zia symbol which represents morning, noon, evening and night and the four directions; north, east, south and west. A kiosk, to be installed in 2021, will provide additional information about the memorial garden and the individuals honored there. The WMNC is open Monday, Wednesday and Fridays from 10am – 12pm. Please stop by and visit the center and the new memorial garden.

The WMNC is a non-profit organization and 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/>

SPOTLIGHT – Take a Hike Brochure

By Nick Lund, President

White Mountain Publishing and TRACKS partnered to update and revise the Take A Hike publication, which helps trail users better understand the many choices for outdoor recreation in the White Mountains.

TRACKS appreciates White Mountain Publishing, that produces a regional newspaper "The Independent", for this opportunity. Our forests are part of the largest Ponderosa Pine forests in the United States and contain not only a wide diversity of flora, but also are home to many wildlife species, including deer, elk, antelope, turkey, bear, javelina, and mountain lions.

TRACKS is a 400+ member volunteer group authorized by the Lakeside Ranger District of the US Forest Service to plan, build and maintain the White Mountains Trail System, a 200+ mile system of trails for non-motorized users (hikers, mountain bikers, equestrians, trail runners, bird watchers, etc.) in the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests. Major trails are loops, with connectors, so that users may go on short or long excursions and all trail maps are free on www.trackswhitmountains.org. All trailheads are accessible by automobiles without 4-wheel drive.

As an index of the popularity of the White Mountains Trail System, over 70,000 trail brochures were distributed over the past 4 years. If you join TRACKS, membership is free, you get a free newsletter with a calendar of events, and there are email lists for group hikes, mountain bike rides, cross country skiing, and trail crew work. I invite you to join a great group of outdoor enthusiasts whose efforts make a significant difference in the regional community. ❗

“Of all the paths you take in life, make sure a few of them are dirt.”

John Muir

TRACKS BIKING

By Nick Lund, President

Mountain bikers look forward to the 2021 season. Those on the Mail Chimp mountain bike list will get emails about when the group rides will resume and get weekly emails about scheduled rides.

If you wish to be on the list, send an email to Nick Lund at lundaz@cableone.net. Riders need to have their bike in good condition, wear helmets, bring ample water, wear masks in the parking area, and maintain social distance on the rides.

Most rides are on forest service roads, with some occasional single track. Rides are non-competitive, with stops at major turns so that all riders are with the group. ❗

TRACKS Apparel is Still Available!

It is first come, first serve! T-Shirts are available! A few short sleeve large, unfortunately the rest are XL and XXL. Hoodies are available in XL.

Short sleeve T-shirts \$15
Long sleeve T-shirts \$20
Hoodies \$40
Patches \$5

Contact Arlene Nelson at: (928) 368-6810 or (928) 242-4639.

UP THE HILL GANG (UTHG)

By Kay Alderton, Secretary and Nick Lund, President

TRACKS is excited to announce that the Up the Hill Gang hiking will start Wednesday, May 5, 2021 and continue through October 2021. Hikers will be emailed on a monthly basis by TRACKS using MailChimp. There will no complete schedule given out for the entire time – it will only be provided on a monthly basis. Since the hikes are now “official” hikes, affiliated directly through TRACKS, there will be a required signature on a waiver at each hike. The leaders will provide the waivers. If anyone chooses not to sign, that person will not be allowed to hike with the group.

Since summer hikes usually number thirty (30) or more, it would be preferred to leave dogs at home, or keep on leashes (which is a US Forest Service requirement). We are looking forward to many great summer hikes! Hikes start in May and here’s our **May 2021 Schedule** (note the Golden Dragon Express [GDE] is the old KFC location in Pinetop next to McDonalds):

- 5/5 Springs Trail (from AZGF)
Meet at GDE (Golden Dragon Express) 7:45 AM
5 Miles (Rating 1.5) Rideshare \$2
- 5/12 Country Club
Meet at (Golden Dragon Express) 7:45 AM
4.5 Miles (Rating 2) Rideshare \$2
- 5/19 Springer Mountain
Meet at (Golden Dragon Express) 7:45 AM
6 Miles (Rating 2.5) Rideshare \$0
- 5/26 Timber Mesa to Osprey Connector
Meet at (Golden Dragon Express) 7:45 AM
5 Miles (Rating 2.5) Rideshare \$5 ❗

WHITE MOUNTAIN HAPPENINGS

APRIL

2-3

Easter Egg Party – Pinetop/Lakeside (928) 368-8696 ext. 255

16

Blood Drive – Show Low By Appointment Only (661) 805-1079

24

Tillman Honor Run – Pinetop/Lakeside (928) 368-8696 ext. 240

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.

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.sunriseskipark.com/>

Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest – Lakeside Ranger District News

By Lorna McNeil-Cox

Spring is coming and we hope winter went well for everyone. We are looking forward to welcoming and introducing a new Recreation Staff soon. Once our Recreation Staff is on board, we will be able to move forward again with proposed projects.

Over the next few years, we have grant funding from Arizona State Parks that will assist with environmental assessment needs to expand and realign the trail system.

We are also looking forward to working on trails this season and with Great America Outdoor Act funding we are planning to utilize a conservation crew for trail segments that need more intensive maintenance.

Due to extreme drought, we are preparing for a potentially difficult fire season and will pass along information as it becomes available. Please observe increased fire safety as conditions get drier.

Unfortunately, COVID-19 is still an issue and the same limitations are in effect. The forest is open, but our offices are open by appointment only. Trail maintenance limitations are also the same as in 2020 with working groups of no more than 10 and social distancing with masks as appropriate.

Please forward any questions you may have for the Forest Service and stay safe. 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>. ❗

WHITE MOUNTAIN APACHE TRIBE NEWS

WMAT camping and fishing is open to non-tribal members as weather conditions permit. Phase One reopening plans and other pertinent information can be found at the WMAT website at: <http://whitemountainapache.org/>.

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.

Arizona Game and Fish (AZGF) NEWS

By Jackie Fullmoth

We've had some talk about mountain lions in some local Facebook groups lately, so I thought this little informational snippet might be especially helpful as a reminder to folks who may be on trails.

Mountain lions may be seen passing through human occupied spaces on occasion and this isn't usually cause for concern. Most often they only stick around if they have easy access to food, water, or shelter (like under sheds or elevated patios.)

If you encounter a mountain lion:

- Do not approach the animal. Most mountain lions will try to avoid a confrontation. Give them a way to escape.
- Stay calm and speak loudly and firmly.
- Do not run from a mountain lion. Running may stimulate a mountain lion's instinct to chase.
- Stand and face the animal. Make eye contact.
- Appear larger by raising arms or opening your jacket if you are wearing one. Throw stones, branches, or whatever you can reach without crouching or turning your back. Wave your arms slowly. The idea is to convince the lion that you are not easy prey and that you may be a danger to it.
- Maintain eye contact and slowly back away toward a building, vehicle, or busy area.
- Protect small children so they won't panic and run.
- Fight back if attacked. Many potential victims have fought back successfully with rocks, sticks, caps, garden tools, their bare hands, and even mountain bikes. Since a mountain lion usually tries to bite the head or neck, remain standing and face the animal.

Please check the Arizona Game and Fish Pinetop Region facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/azgfd/> and for information about news and events, visit the AZGF website at: <https://www.azgfd.com/>. ❗

TRACKS MONTHLY SCHEDULE – April 2021

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION / DETAILS
Mondays – April 5 th to be the start of Trail Crew	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.
Tuesday through Saturday (weather permitting) <i>Days and times will vary due to leader availability and weather conditions.</i>	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 7:45 am (weather permitting) Hiking to commence in May 2021	Up the Hill Gang (UTHG) Hiking:	To get UTHG information please check box on the website for “Hiking” on “Join” form and/or email Susan High at shigh118@gmail.com . See page two of newsletter for more biking news.
Thursdays April 8th -- 1:00pm	TRACKS Board Meeting (members and visitors welcome)	White Mountain Nature Center, 425 Woodland Lake Rd, Lakeside
Saturdays – Will commence in June	TRACKS General Meeting (members and visitors welcome)	TBA

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