

Friends of the Agua Fria National Monument



2017 Annual Report



Perry Mesa following the Brooklyn Fire

By Mike Hoogendyk

Friends of the Agua Fria National Monument

<https://friendsoftheaguafrianationalmonument.wildapricot.org/>

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Greetings

Given by Sarah Striker

Dear Friends,

2017 has been an eventful year for the Friends and the AFNM. In February, we held our second annual Agua Fria Day in Black Canyon City, which was a huge success and was attended by both Friends and members of the public. In June we conducted our annual wet/dry mapping of the Agua Fria River in June for a remarkable 10th straight year! Our Cultural Resources Committee members continue to monitor, clean up, and maintain popular cultural sites including the 1891 Schoolhouse and Teskey homestead so that visitors can continue to enjoy these wonderful resources.

We also faced new challenges this year. The lightning-caused Brooklyn Complex fire, which burned more than 33,000 acres on the AFNM and Tonto National Forest, had us all on edge in July of this year. Fortunately, no injuries were reported and no structures were threatened. Our Cultural and Natural Resources committees have been closely monitoring the burned areas for potential impacts. We won't know the fire's long term impacts on the range, grazing, grassland, and wildlife until the yearly rains regenerate the vegetation on the mesa.

Finally, 2017 has brought major changes to the FAFNM Board. Chris Caseldine and I have ended our terms as President and Vice President. In October, Tim Flood was appointed FAFNM President, and in November Dr. Kathleen Rickard joined the board as Vice President. Please welcome them - I know that they will do an excellent job!

It has been a pleasure to serve as your President these past two years. I remain on the Board and will continue to work for the Friends and the AFNM. Thank you for your support!

Financial Update

Update given by Jim Riggs

The Friends income is derived from a variety of sources: Cooperative Agreements with the BLM, small grants from environmental organizations and businesses, and member donations and dues. Also, we highly value the participation of our members in volunteer activities on the Monument. These volunteer hours provide significant benefit that count toward our match of income from outside sources.

Of note, we were able to transfer funds designated by the BLM for the Schoolhouse/Teskey Homesite trail. Due to complications associated with land ownership for the proposed trail, it will not be possible for the trail to be constructed. Instead the Cultural Resource Committee has suggested using the money for an interpretive trail around Pueblo La Plata. A La Plata interpretive trail has been a long-term goal of the Friends, so the money will contribute greatly toward the completion of this project.

Awards and Recognition

Update given by Chris Caseldine

The third annual Distinguished Member Award was announced during the Friends Annual Meeting on September 23. The recipient of the 2017 award was **Jim Riggs**. Jim has been a long-time member of the Friends. He has actively participated in the management of the Friends, the promotion of the Friends, and led service projects on behalf of the Friends. During his time as member, Jim has served as Vice President, Archivist, a Director-at-large, a liaison between the Board and the Cultural Resource Committee, a member of the Recreation and Outreach Committee, and is currently fulfilling the roll of Treasurer.

If you know a member of the Friends who has performed outstanding service to the Friends or protection of the monument, please nominate them for the 2018 Distinguished Member Award. Nominations are due to Chris Caseldine (chris@aguafriafriends.org) by June 1st.

Several members were recognized for reaching a designated level within the Service Hours Recognition Program (SHRP). The SHRP allow members of the Friends to be recognized for their volunteer service. Members recognized for reaching the 100 Hours SHRP level were Marie Davis and Shelley Rasmussen. Members recognized for reaching the 250 Hours- level was Larry Kraft. Mike Hoogendyk was recognized for reaching both the 500 Hours and 750 Hours levels.

If you are providing volunteer hours as a member of the Friends make sure you are updating your hours on the Track it Forward website, so that you can be recognized for your efforts. If you have questions about keeping track of hours, contact the Friends at fafnadmin@aguafriafriends.org.

Cultural Resource Committee Update

Update given by Connie Stone

The Cultural Resources Committee continued to assist BLM staff in monitoring and protecting archaeological sites. Members ranged far and wide to inspect the condition of sensitive sites. These efforts were especially useful in helping the BLM to identify and assess the effects of the extensive Brooklyn Complex wildfire on Perry Mesa. During several trips to affected areas, volunteers located more than a hundred prehistoric sites and provided the BLM with information on their exact locations, characteristics, and condition. The committee also inspected an area on Black Mesa to identify potential locations for future site recording projects.

The committee conducted site cleanup projects at the 1891 School House and the Teskey Home Site, historic sites interpreted for public visitation. The worn interpretive sign at the Teskey site was flipped over to install a colorful copy on its other side and is now good as new.

Members enhanced their skills in a day-long workshop on identifying prehistoric pottery types, conducted by J. Scott Wood, retired Tonto National Forest archaeologist. The committee is assisting Wood and Dr. David Abbott of Arizona State University in conducting archaeological surveys as part of a research project permitted by the BLM.

Educational outreach included a tour of Pueblo Pato for BLM staff attending the annual meeting for managers of Arizona's national monuments and conservation areas. Public outreach included a tour for members of the Center for Biological Diversity and participation in events like the annual Agua Fria Day and the Cañon Arizona History Bookfest. The FAFNM was represented by Mike Hoogendyk during a panel discussion on "Debunking Monumental Myths" at an event sponsored by the Friends of Cedar Mesa in southern Utah.

The committee prepared a strategic plan to guide its mission and future activities. We welcome visitors and new members who are interested in protecting and learning about the Monument's cultural resources. Activities include opportunities to hike and explore the area's intriguing cultural and historical sites. Committee meetings are held on the third Tuesday of the month from 12:00 to 2:00 pm at the BLM Phoenix District Office at 21605 N. 7th Avenue in Phoenix.

Natural Resources Committee Update

Update given by Tim Flood

Most activities carried out by the Natural Resources Committee this year were conducted by members of the Water Team.

Team members participated in the popular Wet-Dry (WD) mapping of the Agua Fria River and its tributaries. The 2017 mapping marked the 10th consecutive year of mapping. The active wildland fires across the West again created challenges in scheduling of BLM staff to provide the safety training that preceded the mapping. Safety training was held on June 17 and twenty-two volunteers arose early on June 24, 2017, to map surface water along the Agua Fria River, Badger Springs Wash, Big Bug Creek, and Silver Creek. Previous years' data were shared with researchers from Arizona State University for preparation of a scholarly manuscript. This year the Arizona Game and Fish Department assisted in processing the WD data. Audubon Arizona and the National Audubon Society helped in posting previous years' data online.

To complement the WD mapping efforts, committee members continued to attend meetings of the Upper Agua Fria Watershed Partnership (held the first Tuesday of each month at Arcosanti, just north of Cordes Junction). This Partnership discusses significant issues in the watershed including commercial developments, the ongoing drought, and groundwater withdrawals. Current plans are aimed at reducing erosion by stabilizing the soils of the watershed. Riparian photo point monitoring continued at the Riverbend of the Agua Fria (see <https://sway.com/xG0NkCBGCGd0Ka5s>) and other segments.

The Natural Resources Committee also participated in bird surveys on the monument. This was the 6th year of monitoring for the western yellow billed cuckoo, designated as a Threatened species in 2015. From June-August, the Agua Fria River provides nesting habitat for the neo-tropical migrant cuckoo in Arizona. Members of the committee participated in the biannual general survey of birds in the riparian area in conjunction with the Sonoran chapter of the Audubon Society. The committee also was represented at various outreach events.

In the coming year, these opportunities will continue for members of the Friends. If you are interested in activities of this committee please contact Tim at TJFlood@att.net. Additionally, the Friends are still searching for a member to chair the Natural Resources Committee. If you are interested, please contact Tim.

Outreach and Recreation Committee Update

Update given by Sarah Striker

The Friends had a busy year taking part in outreach events. In addition to the events that Connie discussed in the Cultural Resource Committee update, a major event coordinated by the Outreach and Recreation Committee was the second annual Agua Fria Day. Due to rain, the event was held indoors at the Albins Community Center in Black Canyon City. We enjoyed presentations from several local experts including Gail Morris with the Southwest Monarch Study, Crystie Baker with the Phoenix Herpetological Society, Ron Tipton AFNM Manager, Wendy Hodgson from the Desert Botanical Garden, Kara Jensen from Be Outdoors Arizona, Scott Wood from Friends of the Tonto, and local historian Gerry Hasse.

Well Wishes

The Friends saw some change this year, but most importantly, we continued our strong tradition of protecting the Monument. I would like to thank Sarah and Chris for their service as President and Vice Presidents. Their tireless effort has greatly strengthened the management of the Friends. I would also like to thank Kathleen for volunteering to fill in as the Vice President. Officer positions play a vital role in the success, so Kathleen's willingness to step up is greatly appreciated. Currently we have a couple of vacant Board member positions. The Friends take part in many events and ensuring the Monument is protected takes many eye, ears, and hands. We hope you will help out in any way you can. I know the Friends will continue to prosper in 2018.

I look forward to the challenges of serving another term as president of the Friends. We have a remarkable National Monument with awesome objects deserving of the protection that its designation as a monument offers. Our mission is worthy and clear. Our working relationship with the Monument staff and management is as strong as ever. My hope is to strengthen our ties to the local communities and expand our outreach to academia and youth organizations. With the continued help from the volunteer members of Friends we can realize our goal of preserving a place that amazes future generations. Come and join us in the new year.

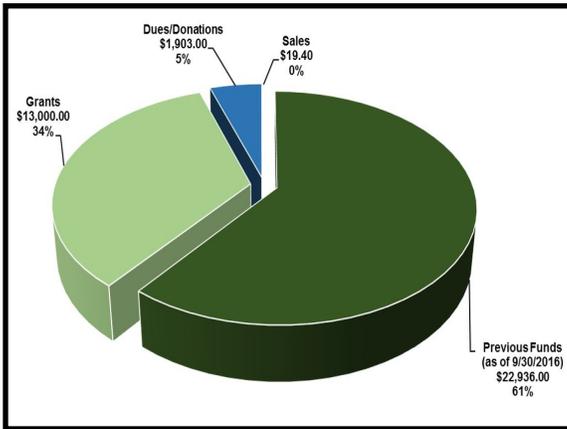
Sincerely,
Tim Flood
President,
Friends of the Agua Fria
National Monument

MEASURING THE SUCCESS OF THE FRIENDS

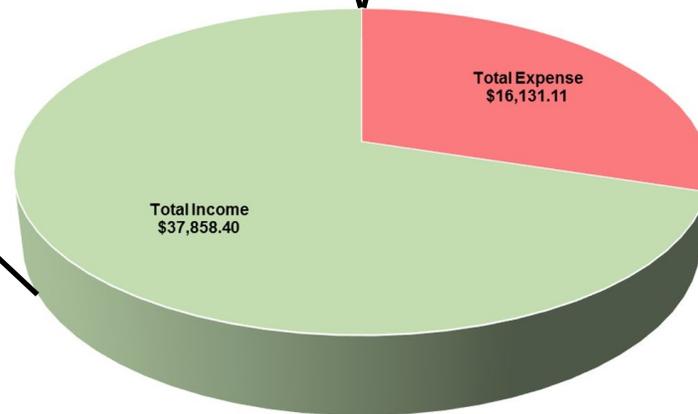
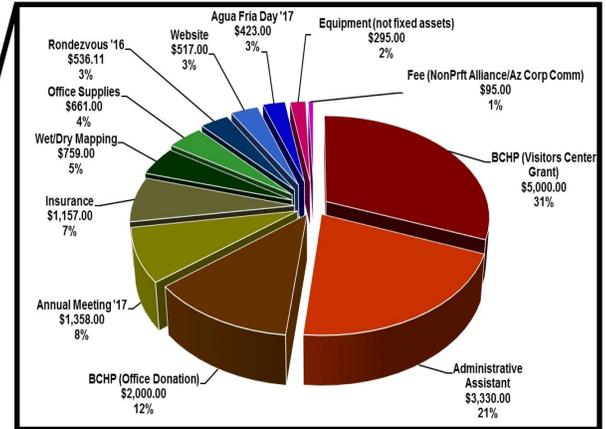
FY 2017
October 1, 2016—September 30, 2017

Financial Status

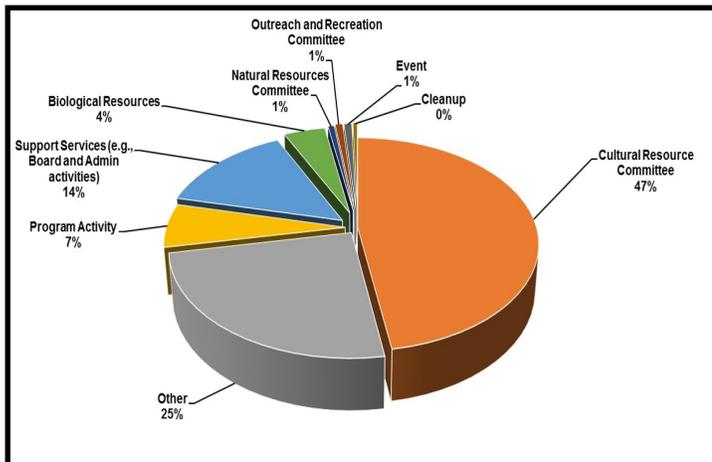
FAFNM ASSETS



FAFNM EXPENSES



Activities



Member Involvement

