



SITE LINES

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Safety First!!

At the July 18 Site Steward Council meeting, the subject of site visit safety came up several times. Here's a recap:

Fire Safety: Kathi Turner asked that we stop all site visits in an area if there is an active fire in the vicinity. Forest personnel will most likely be busy, so do not try to contact them for a decision. During the recent McCauley Springs fire in the Jemez, there was some confusion about whether our sites were in the closure area, and we tried contacting the Forest for clarification. Next time, simply make the safe assumption and do not go! **[See also the Late Breaking News story on pg 9.]**

Site Difficulty: One ATL related how a group of stewards recently went out to a rarely-visited site, and found that the hike in and out was more demanding than anticipated! Another described slipping on a loose, well-worn trail to a popular site. The council discussed the possibility of a rating system for site difficulty, but in the meantime, all agreed that if a visit starts to become too much of a challenge for ANY member of the group, TURN BACK. The site will still be there for a visit at a later date. To put it diplomatically, the demographics of our organization are skewed to the high end, such that we have a lot of site stewards who may be eager to prove they are still as fit as they were twenty years ago! This is most likely not the case for any of us.

Emergency Preparedness: Plan ahead for your site visit, and be prepared for emergencies. These might be as serious as a medical problem, or as trivial as a lost car key. Will you be out of cell phone range? Consider getting a satellite-enabled phone. If your car gets stuck, can you reasonably hike out? If not, be sure to have food and supplies in case you end up camping for the night! (Someone will eventually come looking for you, but there is always a possibility that it might not be till the next morning.) Consider taking two cars if roads are bad. And always be prepared to handle medical emergencies, including having a first aid kit, and taking CPR/First Aid training (see the story on pg. 3 of this newsletter for the opportunity).

-- Bob Florek

AWARDS! OUTSTANDING SPEAKERS!! FOOD!!!

It's the SFNF Site Stewards Annual Meeting!

See pg 2 for more information.

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Contributors to this issue:

Bob Florek
Siobhan Hancock
Susan McGrew
Lynne Newell
Gary Newgent
John Pitts
Fiona Shaffer
Kathi Turner

The editors thank you!

News from the Forest

Kathi reported that the heritage program office was holding steady, that nobody had retired or quit, but it was not yet at full capacity. The Pecos Area has a new archaeologist, Alec Bowder, assigned on detail, who will be working with Gilbert Burkman until the end of September (see the story on pg 7). Canyon recovery, trail improvement, the powerline projects, Poshuouinge, and reforestation are all proceeding.

Kathi suggests that Stewards not make site visits to areas where there are active fires. If there is a fire on the Forest, it is likely that the area Archaeologists are involved in some capacity. Please use common sense: If there is a fire near sites that are to be visited, delay any scheduled visits into that area until the fire is contained. Please check the SFNF social media, web page, Watch Duty app, Inciweb (<https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/>), or NIFC (<https://www.nifc.gov/>) for updates. We are more than happy to answer emails; however, there may be a delayed response.

-- Kathi Turner

SFNF Site Stewards Annual Meeting: Be There or Be Square!

The Site Steward Program's annual meeting will be held on Saturday, October 10th at the SFNF Office. We hope all stewards will attend and get acquainted with their fellow stewards from all areas of the Program. We also see at these gatherings some of our "retired" stewards who helped create our Program and make it a robust and important site protection plan.

We'll start with donuts, coffee and tea at 9:00 AM, a great time to circulate and meet others. Then the Council meeting will start at 9:30, at which all stewards are welcome. In fact, all stewards are always welcome at all Council meetings (4 per year).

At approximately 10:30, the meeting will adjourn so we can share a promotional PowerPoint that showcases our SS Program and encourages others to join our outstanding site stewards who help safeguard our SFNF archaeological sites. BTW, this PowerPoint will be available to show other organizations whose members may be interested in our Program.

Then we'll break for our always delicious potluck lunches. We tried boring boxed lunches but have salivated whenever we remember former years of delicious Site Steward cuisine! We know from past history that our site stewards are amazing cooks. We hope you'll bring your favorite entree, side dish or dessert to share. If you don't cook, bring sodas and water, or visit a deli for some of their goodies. We'll provide paper goods (plates, cups, napkins, and cutlery).

Following lunch and socializing, we'll have the presentation of awards, the guest speakers, and a quick clean-up. We're excited about our speakers, whose identities will remain a secret until you receive your September email reminder to attend. Plan to join us so you don't regret missing it!

-- Siobhan Hancock and Susan McGrew

ATL Reports

Caja del Rio (Jeff Koester): Sites have been visited regularly. Jeff reported that he led a group of seven stewards to the Tsinat site, but some participants had difficulty with the trail and there were several falls. He and Bob Florek commented that all stewards should be realistically aware of their physical abilities and limitations.

Garcia (Jeff Koester): Kathi Turner and zone archaeologist Jana Comstock are working to clarify sites in the Garcia Area. Jana and Robin Gibbs led an introductory visit to Guaje Village in the Garcia area. Participants included Chris Benson and Mike Pearce, the new Site Stewards responsible for the site, plus John Pitts and Jeff Koester.

Gallina (Anne Beckett): Anne reported that her stewards avoid visits during midsummer or when there is fire or smoke in the area, and noted that spring and fall are the best times for site visits in the Gallina area.

Jemez (Bob Florek): There is still no ATL for Jemez, but Kris Herbst and Nancy Mon have agreed to coordinate site visits. They are updating roster information to identify inactive stewards. Some areas are still closed after fires.

[Note: As of July 31, Kris Herbst and Nancy Mon were approved as official co-ATLs for the Jemez area by vote of the Council.]

Pecos (Bob Florek): Visits are ongoing regularly; nothing unusual to report.

Rio Chama (K. Paul Jones): K. Paul and Dave Bowman are co-ATLs for the area, but, at the close of the July meeting, K. Paul resigned and Dave will be the sole ATL. All sites but one have been visited multiple times, and that site has been visited once. Two new stewards have been assigned to the area.

[Note: See the story about K. Paul's retirement on pg. 6.]



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CPR Training Opportunity!

Three Gallina Site Stewards recently took a CPR/AED/First Aid class taught by Phil Rowe, a certified CPR/AED/First Aid instructor. We had all taken CPR training in the past, but had not renewed it in some time, and we found the class informative, interesting, and thorough. We thought it would be valuable to offer this training to the broader Site Steward community.

The class is a full day (about 6 hours) and includes a lunch break (please bring your own lunch). The cost is \$35 per person, and the Site Steward Foundation has agreed to cover this fee. The training will be held at the Santa Fe National Forest Headquarters, and class size is limited to 10–12 people.

Before we schedule a date, I need to know who is interested. If you would like to take the class, please email me at lynnenewell1@gmail.com. Once I hear from interested participants, I will coordinate with Phil to set a date. Thank you.

-- Lynne Newell

Rattlesnake Ridge Update

The Rattlesnake Ridge site on the Cuba Ranger District of the Santa Fe National Forest has been getting a facelift! Two new benches are being added on either end of the Rattlesnake Ridge trail. One of the benches has already been placed and looks out over the picturesque Llaves Valley. The other bench, which will be located at the northern end of the trail, sits in a comfortable shaded area, perfect for eating lunch on a hot day.

Huge thanks to the Jemez and Cuba Recreation Crew for adding new improvements to the Rattlesnake Ridge trail. They have been working hard, pouring concrete pads, and installing the benches in the perfect spots for visitors to take a rest after exploring the site. Hopefully by the end of the year there will be a new interpretation sign with a trail map, the history of the Gallina people, geology, landforms, and other interesting kernels of knowledge!

(Fiona Shaffer is an archaeologist/resource assistant in the Heritage department with the SFNF.)



-- Photo and article, Fiona Shaffer

Site Steward Foundation Report Update 08/09/26

The Site Steward Foundation is again offering our annual H. Wayne Nelson grant of \$1,000 with a grant application deadline of September 30, 2026 and a grant award date by December 1, 2026. To apply for a Foundation grant, please contact Gary Newgent at sitestewardfoundation@gmail.com for a grant application.

SiteWatch has not yet determined when or where the annual meetings for SiteWatch and the Foundation will be held next spring.

The 2026 Archaeological Society of New Mexico's annual meeting was held May 8-10, 2026 at the Marriott Courtyard in Farmington with about 110 people in attendance: archaeologicalsocietynm.org. The 2026 Pecos Conference was recently held August 6 - 9, 2026 in the San Juan National Forest near Mancos, Colorado, with approximately 440 people in attendance: pecosconference.org.

The Site Steward Foundation has been selected as the organizer of the 2027 Pecos Conference, with plans for the 100th anniversary of the Pecos Conference to be held at the Forked Lightning Ranch in Pecos National Historical Park.

If you are not a member of the Site Steward Foundation, or have not renewed your membership for 2026, please consider joining or renewing today. The Foundation accepts credit cards for membership dues and donations on our website, sitestewardfoundation.org, or they can be mailed to P O Box 32224, Santa Fe, NM 87594.

If you would like to be notified of Foundation tours and activities, please subscribe to our email list on the Foundation website. Thank you for your support of site stewards!

— Gary Newgent, President

John Pitts Receives Bice Award

At the SS Council Meeting, Gary Newgent announced that the Archaeological Society of New Mexico decided to award John Pitts the 2026 "Richard A. Bice Award for Archaeological Achievement." John joins the (short) list of Site Stewards who have received this award in the past, and hopes that it inspires others to continue volunteering.

John received a plaque with the following text:

In recognition of his 27 years as the Site Steward on the Santa Fe National Forest and 10 years as a New Mexico SiteWatch volunteer visiting sites at the Petroglyph National Monument and for the Bureau of Land Management in the Galisteo Basin and the Rio Puerco Valley. John has led recording and survey teams for the Mesa Prieta Petroglyph Project (for over 25 years), as well as a team on a 5-year recording project at Petrified Forest National Park, a project resulting in nine volumes of scientific reports on rock art in the Park.

At that point the plaque ran out of space, so there is no mention of John's 12 years as a SiteWatch member in Bandelier National Monument, inspecting sites such as Yapashi ruin and in the mid-Alamo canyon. He has



Selfie of John, inspecting sites at Bandelier N.M.

also worked at surveying rock art on State Trust Land properties located in the Mountainair region, and collaborated on a survey of cave art in the Carson National Forest. In his non-Site Steward time, he has done such fun things as leading two sets of rock art enthusiasts to sites in Namibia and Zimbabwe, Southern Africa.

John remarks, "My philosophy has always been to say 'yes,' as long as it is FUN and does not directly endanger anyone."

-- J. Pitts and P. Lozar

Site Stewards Needed!

The SFNF Site Steward program is always in need of more site stewards to ensure that all areas are thoroughly covered, and that there is backup when site stewards are unavailable or have to leave the program.

One of our best recruiting methods is word of mouth. If you have friends who like archeology and the outdoors, and find the idea of site visits interesting, urge them to contact us. If you are visiting a site and run into hikers who are curious what you're doing there, tell them about the site steward program and suggest that they follow up with us (we have actually gained new site stewards that way!). Contact information is on our website: sfnsitestewards.org

BIG NEWS!! The Recruitment Committee (Grace Brill, Siobhan Hancock, Bruce Herr, and Paula Lozar) has been working on a new version of a recruitment flyer suitable for posting in public locations. We hope to have copies available at the Annual Meeting in October.

K. Paul Jones Retires (or so he claims)

A world-traveling history professor arrived at Eastern New Mexico University some 25 years ago to accept an administrative position. He liked the location of the University because it was close to the town he and his wife planned to retire in, Santa Fe. Little did Dr. K. Paul Jones realize, at the time, that it would also lead him to another all-involving interest and semi-profession.

While at the University in Portales, K. Paul was introduced to nearby Blackwater Draw, a key Southwestern archaeological site. His research on it stimulated a new-found interest for him in the field of Southwestern archaeology. When he finally retired and moved to Santa Fe, he soon discovered the perfect organization in which to pursue this new focus, the Santa Fe National Forest Site Steward Program.

Forest archaeologists Mike Bremer and Anne Baldwin remember meeting K. Paul in the early 2000s. "From the start he was an active participant in the program ...which benefited from his dedication and experience ... good humor and willingness to share." On a hike down Polvadera Creek, K. Paul showed them his discovery of sun-moon and stars pictographs on an alcove wall. "While navigating pools of water in the creek, K. Paul, a former gymnast, put both his trekking poles down and bounded over the creek. It was effortless, elegant, and gave us a new appreciation of his physical skills."

Everyone who has hiked with K. Paul always comments on his endurance. Beth Parisi, a long-time site steward, remembers that ... "His energy was legendary – always ready to climb one more ridge when I was exhausted from a long day in the field." Bob Florek, our current Council Chair, agrees. "His strength and stamina on site visits always amazed me." The younger steward recalls, "It always seemed like I had a hard time keeping up with him."



Those who know K. Paul and the Site Steward Program will agree with Bob that, during K. Paul's 20 years of involvement, he has been "... a real force behind the site stewards." K. Paul, like Bob, was the Council Chair twice. Bob also believes that "K. Paul was the best ATL in the organization. His dedication and commitment to the job ... He took very seriously every aspect of the ATL role, including introducing new stewards to their sites, and making sure all sites were visited on a regular basis." And Beth, who has worked with K. Paul longer than most of us, states " ... his involvement in the program touched every possible aspect of its operation in a profound way." That included writing, alone or with others, ATL and steward manuals, guides for site visits, etc., as well as making sure we entered our site visit data.

K. Paul was a natural teacher. When I joined, he spent hours going over the rules and procedures with me and then taking me to the site twice to show me the procedures in action.

(continued on pg 7)

K Paul Jones Retires, Continued from pg 6

"Being a retired professor, I suppose it was in his blood to teach," commented Bob. "Beside the specific role of teaching new stewards ... I remember him leading groups of stewards to other sites, not in the SF National Forest, to broaden our knowledge and familiarity with the archaeology of the region."

And K. Paul was the consummate learner. As Beth recounts, "Being in the field brought out the most genuine excitement in K. Paul. With each new discovery he found, he would look at me and grin with delight. It's so typical of how he approached everything in life – his incredible knowledge of and dedication to the Rio Chama area. Between his deep dives into Forest Service records,

professional archaeology literature, and his own hands-on discoveries in the field, he built up an understanding of the region that approaches that of some experts."

Now, twenty years later, after helping the Site Stewards and the Santa Fe National Forest gain a better understanding of the ancients' Rio Chama area and their culture, K. Paul is retiring. I've worked with K. Paul for a decade, in awe of his abilities, but Beth said it best: "Two decades of shared hikes and long drives revealed a man whose dedication, passion, and kindness ran deep through every aspect of his life."

We'll miss you, K. Paul.

-- Susan McGrew; photos by Bob Florek

Volunteer Service Pays Off!

Volunteering for Site Stewards can have benefits above and beyond the good feelings it engenders. Site Steward Bob Greene writes:

"Los Alamos National Laboratory has a system in which employees can log their volunteer service.

"Based on that, LANL randomly selects non-profits to donate money to, crediting the volunteer that was selected.

"Recently, LANL donated \$500.00 to the Site Steward Foundation in my name."

Thanks once again, Bob!

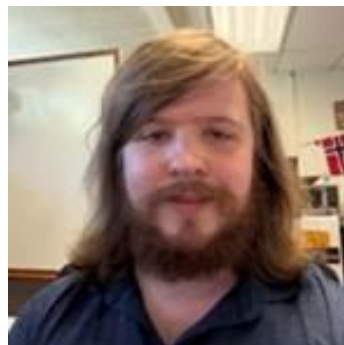


K. Paul Jones urging Site Stewards ever onwards ...

Alec Bowder, Acting District Archeologist

Alec joins the Pecos-Las Vegas Ranger District from the Shasta-Trinity National Forest in California, where he served as an archaeologist. Alec grew up in Washington and earned his undergraduate degree at Washington State University, where he dual-majored in anthropology and history with a minor in GIS. For his archaeological field school, he had the fortunate opportunity to attend one in Huari, Peru.

After graduating, he began his current government archaeology position with the Shasta-Trinity National Forests in California through the Recent Graduate Program. As part of this role, he worked out of the supervisor's office and served as the forest's heritage data steward, primarily supporting various districts with their projects while also taking on supervisor's office-specific work.



In his free time, he enjoys hiking, reading, and playing various online and tabletop games with his friends. As a fun fact, when he was growing up, one of his cats—named Fluff (short for “fluff for brains”)—once managed to flood their house.

Alec is grateful for the opportunity to be here and is glad to meet and work with the team.

Caja del Rio Team Excursion

As a reflection of the enthusiasm shared by the Site Stewards working on the Caja del Rio, seven hardy individuals joined forces on August 16, 2026, to visit two of the assigned sites, the Camino Real Site and the Tetilla Archaic Site. Both are located near the Bajada escarpment and represent the newest and oldest sites monitored by the Caja Stewards. The Camino Real shows evidence of up to 3 routes followed by Spanish immigrants as they prepared to enter Santa Fe (see faint evidence of the route in the center of the photo). The archaic site is difficult to find, but has a possible association to a nearby playa which may have served as an ancient hunting site.

The group also visited the top of the original Route 66 road where it reached the flat plateau. The road is no longer accessible by vehicle but shows ancient graffiti on the roadside advertising the "Santa Fe Camp." There are also some

archaeological ruins, and significant rock art panels farther down the road.

It was a hot but productive day, followed by an enjoyable lunch at a local Mexican eatery.



Stella Davidson, Charles Koenig, Jeff Koester, Stan Jones, Siobhan Hancock and Gary Newgent (photo and article, John Pitts)

Save the Date!

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Editor:
Paula Lozar
(505) 473-3479
lozarpaula@cs.com

Assistant Editor:
Susan McGrew
(505) 424-3932
sumac3b@gmail.com

Environmental Stewardship Exhibit Opening, August 25, 2026, 4 to 6 PM, Bradbury Science Museum, Los Alamos.

"Museum visitors will be able to explore features of the natural environment and learn how scientists work to ensure clean air and water, monitor cultural sites, and support healthy ecosystems now and into the future. Through a partnership with Pueblo de San Ildefonso, the exhibit highlights the culture of the community, as community members share their history and relationship to the area and to the Laboratory." Refreshments will be provided.

Archeology Fair, October 3, 2026, 10 AM to 3 PM at the Center for New Mexico Archaeology in Santa Fe, in partnership with the Office of Archaeological Studies. Information about participants and activities forthcoming.

SFNF Site Steward Council Meeting and Site Stewards

Annual Meeting, October 10, 2026 at the SFNF Headquarters in Santa Fe. Meeting at 9:30 AM, potluck lunch and speakers to follow. See the story on pg. 2 of this newsletter for more information.

The **Paleoamerican Odyssey Conference** will occur on October 14-17, 2026, in Santa Fe. For more information, see <https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/csfa/paleoamerican-odyssey-program-2026>

We're on the Web!

www://sfnfsitestewards.org

LATE BREAKING NEWS: U.S. Forest Service officials have issued a temporary closure for a central part of the Santa Fe National Forest due to the ongoing Frijoles fire.

Forest Supervisor Shaun Sanchez issued the temporary closure order Saturday, Aug. 16, for an area roughly bordered by the northern and western boundaries of the Santa Fe National Forest, as well as the Santa Fe County line to the east and the Rio en Medio to the south.

The order will be in effect until Sept. 15 unless rescinded.