

A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

The Santa Fe Conservation Trust is celebrating its 20th anniversary! We have a tremendous amount to celebrate and be thankful for, including: protection of lands along the lush Los Pinos River, lands above the Abiquiu reservoir in Georgia O'Keefe country, ranches outside the city of Las Vegas that preserve the vista near the local wildlife refuge and the Gallinas River, and parcels along the Atalaya and Dale Ball Trails in Santa Fe. We now have a dedicated network of landowners, supporters and advocates like you, who have helped to make our success a part of your community's success.



Conservation Ranch II in Galisteo, with a view of Cerro Pelon

Today we are witnessing the fruits of two decades of land conservation by SFCT. When hiking, mountain biking or riding a horse on some of New Mexico's best public trails in and around Santa Fe, or driving the Turquoise Trail and marveling at the views of the Ortiz Mountain Preserve, you are experiencing just a few of the efforts of SFCT.

I want to specially thank our landowner partners, who voluntarily choose conservation over development. They choose to retire the development rights (or the majority of rights) from their land, thereby ensuring it remains as nature intended and they receive a good financial return from the land. It is a win-win situation for us all.

At SFCT, we are beginning to weave a tighter landscape of conserved lands by working together with these landowners and supporters to identify, understand and promote the ecology of northern New Mexico. We are following connections that link our focal areas – water

ways, wildlife corridors, food sheds, cultural resources and trails - to produce a more effective conservation strategy for our communities.



SFCT is connecting lands of great importance. Like assembling pieces of a giant puzzle, we are identifying lands found in between already-established conservation areas, which provide important linkages. Adjacent lands that share attributes such as open space, wildlife habitat, cultural sites, and scenic views will be considered a high priority when conserving a landscape.

This year alone we are conserving 6 new parcels (see page 7) that directly enhance and expand the effectiveness of existing conservation efforts by filling in the "puzzle pieces."

Charlie

Charlie O'Leary, Executive Director



Rock formations on Diablo Ridge in Galisteo

P.S. I hope you will be a part of our continued success and get involved with SFCT today.

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On June 25th, Santa Fe County awarded SFCT with a proclamation of appreciation for all the hard work we've done on trails over the years,

HIGHER STANDARD

Progress on the path to accreditation

In September, SFCT submitted its final application materials to become an Accredited Land Trust. In the coming months, the Land Trust Alliance Accreditation Committee will review our exhaustive compilation of policies, project and financial documentation, and assess our compliance with the Alliance's Standards and Practices.

When Accreditation is achieved, SFCT will be among the top ten percent of land trusts from Alaska to Florida that have been awarded this distinction, signifying that SFCT meets the highest standards for quality and that our conservation work is indeed permanent.

GUIDESTAR

Gold level participant

SFCT received the GuideStar Exchange Gold level logo, a leading symbol of transparency and accountability provided by GuideStar USA, Inc., the premier source of nonprofit information. The logo demonstrates SFCT's deep commitment to nonprofit transparency and accountability.

We hope you will check out our profile at www.guidestar.org and tell us what you think.



AN EXQUISITE EVENING

12th annual Udall Legacy Dinner honors N. Scott Momaday

by Susan Munroe

About 260 patrons, donors and fans honored Pulitzer Prize-winning Kiowa and Cherokee author N. Scott Momaday at the Santa Fe Conservation Trust's annual fund-raising dinner on September 15. For the last ten years, this special event has been held at the iconic National Park Service Building, designed in the 1930's by famed architect John Gaw Meem. This year's event, conceptualized by philanthropist Charmay Allred, focused on preserving the land, with emphasis on wildlife habitat.

Raptors from the Wildlife Center in Española mingled during cocktails, predators and prey together. Dorothy Massey of Collected Works sold books by Momaday and former honorees such as Bill deBuys, donating proceeds to the Trust. Paintings by Carol Anthony, Peter Hagen and Abigail Ryan and wildlife photos by Kirt Kempter were scooped up for top prices. A number of previous honorees attended including Dale Ball and Nancy Meem Wirth. Civic leaders included State Senator Peter Wirth, County Commissioner Kathy Holian, and Santa Fe Mayor David Coss. Superb staff, able volunteers and Mother Nature made this evening truly memorable.



Above: Wildlife Center volunteer Scott Bol with a bald eagle (*haliaeetus leucocephalus*)

Right: N. Scott Momaday storytelling at the dinner just before sunset

Below: Attendees converse before dinner

Photos by Linda Carfagno



LAS VEGAS VIEWSHED

SFCT Focal Area

Conservation Easements 6
Acres Protected 19,505

Las Vegas, New Mexico was founded where the Gallinas River met the Santa Fe Trail in 1835 and was the seat of a Mexican Land Grant known as “Nuestra Senora de los Dolores de Las Vegas” or “Our Lady of Sorrows of the Meadows.” It became the first stop along the Santa Fe Trail after hundreds of miles of unsettled territory in Kansas and New Mexico. The town had a second birth when the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad came through in 1879, and a second town center, this time east of the Gallinas, was set up around the railroad station. Las Vegas became an exceptionally opulent trading post in its heyday and a melting pot of the different cultures traveling across the U.S. Miraculously, many of the city’s stunning collection of revivalist buildings from different periods survive today and Las Vegas boasts some 900 registered historic buildings.

*A society grows great when old
men plant trees whose shade
they know they shall never sit in.*
-- Greek Proverb



Romeroville ranch near Las Vegas, NM, circa 1906, courtesy Palace of the Governors Photo Archives (NMHM/DCA), neg. # 119145. This ranch has been preserved by a conservation easement with SFCT.

The present-day trip along Interstate 25 is very similar to the path of the Santa Fe Trail, and is a classic representation of the old West. Ranches, homesteads and breathtaking mountain passes are discovered all along the way from Las Vegas to Santa Fe, often little changed from how they were more than 100 years ago. To preserve this landscape is to preserve history itself, and the ways of a bygone era. SFCT has thus made the Las Vegas viewshed a top priority for conservation, and we hope to preserve much more of this classic landscape

DEFINING CONSERVATION

SFCT works with landowners to retire development rights and conserve land through the creation of voluntary land protection agreements called conservation easements. This is a legally binding document on record with the county that permanently protects land ensuring it remains natural and beautiful in **perpetuity**. To date, we hold 74 conservation easements, totalling over 34,000 acres, with an estimated value of \$56,000,000, all of which are monitored every year.

per·pe·tu·i·ty

(pərpɪˈt(y)ooɪtē)

noun

1. a thing that lasts forever or for an indefinite period, in particular.
2. the state or quality of lasting forever.

OVER THE MOUNTAIN

Reflections on land conservation

by Janet Betts, Redcloud Ranch
SFCT Landowner

It's time for a walk. The dogs are jumping excitedly . . . I grab the leashes. Leaving the house, we head across the middle field and up the hillside. When we reach the top of the high ridge, I am reminded of the children's song, "The Bear went over the mountain, the Bear went over the mountain, to see what he could see." And he sees "the other side of the mountain." I look to the East and what was once a huge field of Indian paintbrush is now covered by subdivisions and a gas station.

Turning back to the West, the land is still as ancient Man and the merchants on the Santa Fe Trail saw it. I'm gazing across nearly 10,000 acres of land protected by the Santa Fe Conservation Trust. Here, the land will remain undeveloped. Our own easements cover over 250 acres . . . and people often ask "What is it like to own and live on conservation acreage?" . . . It is a dream . . . you

become part of the land. You live with the land and its history. You come to know the animal crossings, you look forward to the coyote's song each night, you delight in the signs of the seasons . . . the bloom of the Easter daisy – first sign of Spring. You'll see turkeys in the oakbrush hunting for eggcorns, watch for geese on the pond, wake up to the bugle of the elk. On a hike, you might come face to face with an owl, jackrabbit or bobcat . . . you'll be surprised by a bullsnake and you'll never forget the first time you hear a rattler! After a heavy rain, you'll find a family of tiger salamanders in the swimming pool and . . . most certainly, visitors from the city will ask: "What do you do out here?" . . . and the rhythms of the ranch continue.

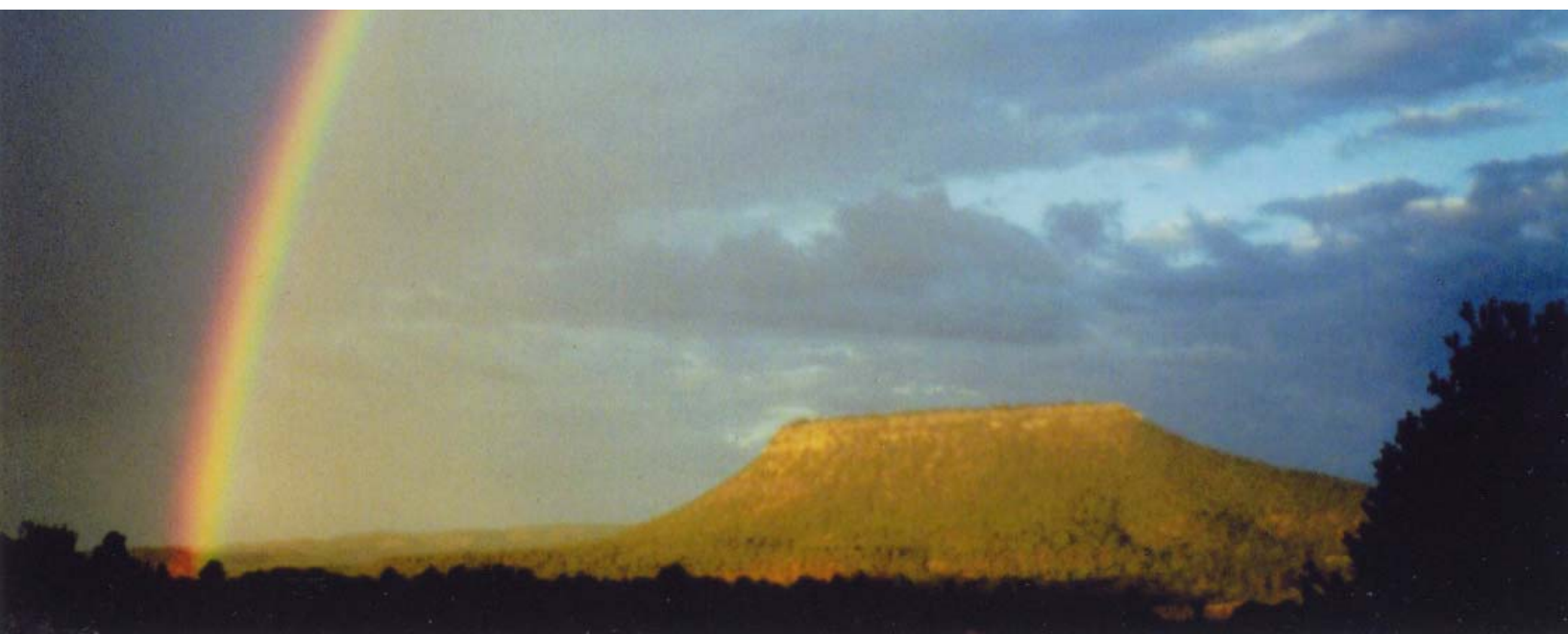
The dogs have picked up a trail: bear sign everywhere. We are now on the rock ledges above the forest. We head down and follow the Santa Fe Trail ruts and eventually end up at the Indian camps. It's time to circle back to the trail below the ridge. As we head home, I think of a time in the future. It will be a different bear

NEW MEXICO LAND CONSERVATION INCENTIVES ACT

Do you have a special piece of land worthy of conservation? Do you want to leave a legacy to your family by conserving your family's land? You may be eligible for a tax credit under the NM Land Conservation Incentives Act. Charitable donations of a conservation easement to SFCT may be eligible for state and federal tax benefits.

Contact SFCT to learn more about this program and how you can help conserve important land for all time.

that goes "over the mountain." It will be someone else heading across the field . . . but we feel assured that because our dreams of preservation and the commitment of the Santa Fe Conservation Trust, that the magnificent view to the West will remain . . . forever.



CONSERVING LAND FOR WILDLIFE HABITAT

The importance of connectivity in conservation planning

by Katherine Eagleson, Executive Director
The Wildlife Center

In the United States, we have done a pretty good job of setting aside public lands that have scenic appeal. We are getting much better at preserving land that is important wildlife habitat thanks to organizations like the Santa Fe Conservation Trust. But we are not thinking enough about connectivity. We make a mistake when we set aside islands of habitat without also negotiating corridors for wildlife to move freely between these habitats.

After years of drought, food sources for all manner of wildlife are very low. Grass seed and ground cover is poor, affecting rodent populations and ground dwelling birds like quail. Low water results in low insect populations which affect songbirds and fish and frogs

and all kinds of animals. Low rainfall and snowpack affect berry and acorn production which are essential foods for black bears in the summer and fall.

So what do animals do when they can't find food in their home habitats? They go wandering, across roads, through villages, into yards where folks are watering their grass or shrubs or trees. It looks like habitat to the animals and they are willing to risk the danger of humans to find food and feed their young. We will see more and more wildlife in our urban areas. The Wildlife Center gets hundreds of calls every summer from people wanting us to trap a bobcat and kittens and "take them to the wilderness". They want us to catch snakes that have followed the rodents that are eating the bird seed fallen from feeders. They want



us to move raccoons and skunks. They worry that coyotes will attack their roaming cats.

We have been remiss, Game and Fish and organizations like The Wildlife Center. We have given people the idea that we can save these animals by taking them to some remote wilderness Eden where wildlife will live in harmony and humans can live skunk free and coyote free with their coy ponds and bird feeders. It is time for us to be honest. **MOST ANIMALS THAT ARE RELOCATED WILL DIE!** Mammals that are relegated to islands of habitats without corridors will not be able to sustain healthy populations. We cannot create these corridors without intersecting human habitations or highways or industrial sites. Part of every conservation plan must include corridors. This will require good science and community involvement. Let's think this through next time we want to improve or conserve a habitat. It will be much prettier. It will also be alive with a great variety of critters, some we like, and some we need to learn to like.



The Wildlife Center

Inspiring Wildlife Stewardship in New Mexico

SFCT UPCOMING CONSERVATION PROJECTS

A sneak peak at the new land conservation efforts to be completed this year



Hondo Hills: a family parcel of 40 acres with habitat for wildlife and scenic vistas that enhance the neighborhoods in the urban fringe.



Sun Mountain II is the second of two easements retiring major development rights at the base of this mountain which enhances this popular public trailhead. Now a stop along the old Santa Fe Trail with a deep history is protected in perpetuity.



Galisteo Basin Preserve: three new parcels that help fill in the “puzzle” adding trails and protecting cultural sites in a landscape of national significance.



Hyde Park: a parcel conserved for open space which has been restored to benefit wildlife habitat and buffers an existing county-owned open space parcel.

Trails Alliance of Santa Fe

Work Hard. Do Good. Feel Great.

www.trailsallianceofsantafe.org

SANTO DOMINGO TRAILS

The Trails Alliance had the opportunity to work with seven young members of the Santo Domingo Pueblo, which had received a grant to build six miles of trails in their community. Alliance members helped the crew refine trail flow and placement and explained the basics of constructing sustainable contour trails on different types of terrain.

Dozens of children and adults attended the opening of their new trail and brought along bikes in much need of repair. Stephen Newhall of Rob 'n Charlie's fixed over 35 bikes in the broiling sun.



Below: Santo Domingo Pueblo trail builders with TAOSF Members

TRAIL OPENINGS

While they've been open for over a year, the La Tierra Trails were officially recognized at a ribbon cutting on September 26, 2013. Councilors Patti Bushee and Chris Calvert proclaimed the trails open to all. Santa Fe's monsoon season was great for grasses and trees around the trail system, but work will be needed to restore the ruts created by fast run-off.

The Arroyo Hondo Open Space trails now run all the way down to the new trailhead on Arroyo Hondo Road, and opened March 20.

LA PIEDRA UPDATE

Reinforcing the trail



Reineke Construction crew members and volunteers reinforcing switchbacks on the north side of the La Piedra Trail. July 2013

In 2013, with major financial support from the S. L. Gimbel Foundation, SFCT was able to invest over \$25,000 into additional infrastructure on the La Piedra Trail. Last year SFCT conveyed the 53-acre parcel to Santa Fe County and built a new connection from the foothills to the forest. Due to parcel boundary constraints, the trail had to be built in steep terrain. This year, with the help of Reineke Construction, we developed a new method for reinforcing trail "switchbacks." The trail crew had to carry in light-weight wire baskets, assemble them on site, and fill with local materials without leaving a trace! (See photo) We are glad to report that after a heavy monsoon season the trail is holding up well and it is receiving a lot of use.



Arroyo Hondo Open Space trails ribbon cutting on March 20

STAR GAZING EVENTS

Galisteo Basin Preserve

SFCT, with Commonweal Conservancy and the Capital City Astronomy Club, celebrated the Galisteo Basin Preserve's 10th Anniversary under the stars on October 12. The melodious sounds of Kitty Jo Creek echoed around the Cowboy Shack, while we dined on delicious enchiladas until the sun dipped below the horizon and the stars shone bright. Then a magical tour of the celestial bodies that grace the autumnal sky ensued with hot cider and sweet crumble to keep off the chill.

Salazar Elementary

The 2013 Fiesta de Estrellas at Salazar Elementary, hosted by the PTA and science teacher extraordinaire, Mollie Toll, celebrated another successful year on November 13. The Fiesta, now in its seventh year, celebrates local heritage, science and dark skies with storytelling and stargazing.

Below: just after sunset in the Galisteo Basin.
Photo by Jay Dolson

*"I have loved the stars too fondly
to be fearful of the night."
- Sarah Williams 1936*

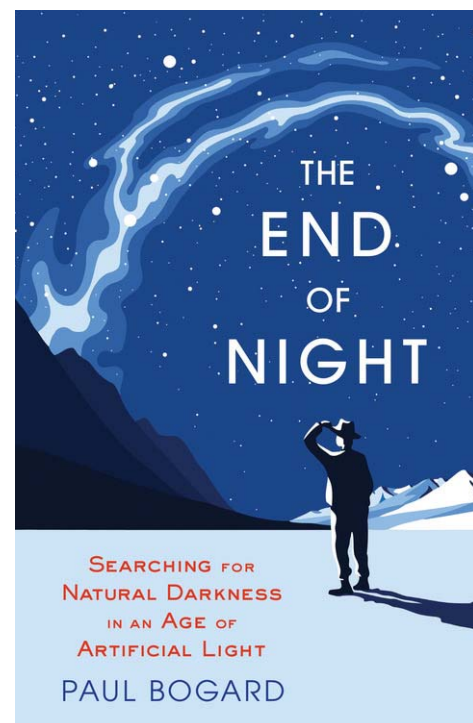
THE END OF NIGHT

by Paul Bogard

SFCT, with Santa Fe Prep and the Capital City Astronomy Club, hosted Paul Bogard on November 19 to discuss his new book *"The End of Night: Searching for Natural Darkness in an Age of Artificial Light."* The book is a deeply panoramic tour of the night, from its brightest spots to the darkest skies we have left. Bogard restores our awareness of the spectacularly primal, wildly dark night sky and how it has influenced the human experience across everything from science to art.

"In our artificially lit world, three-quarters of Americans' eyes never switch to night vision and most of us no longer experience true darkness." - Paul Bogard, "The End of Night"

From Las Vegas' Luxor Beam—the brightest single spot on this planet—to nights so starlit the sky looks like snow, Bogard blends personal narrative, natural history, science, and history to shed light on the importance of darkness—what we've lost, what we still have, and what we might regain—and the simple ways we can reduce the brightness of our nights tonight.



DARK SKY RESOURCES

- International Dark-Sky Association (IDA)
www.ida.org
- National Park Service
www.nature.nps.gov/night/index.cfm
- New Mexico Heritage Preservation Alliance
www.nmheritage.org
- Florida Atlantic University Department of Physics:
"The Problems of Light Pollution"
- Owen, David. "The Dark Side Making War on Light Pollution." *New Yorker*, August 20, 2007

LOOK AT WHO'S BEEN GIVING!

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We strive for accuracy. If we have overlooked your gift, we deeply apologize.

Please let us know via email so that we can make a correction in our next publication. Thank You



Carnell Chosa and guests from the Santa Fe Indian School at the Stewart Udall Legacy Dinner, Sept. 15, 2013

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Contributing artists, hosts and attendees at the Stewart Udall Legacy Dinner, Sept. 15, 2013

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Romeroville ranch, circa 1900, courtesy Palace of the Governors Photo Archives (NMHM/DCA), neg. # 184841
This ranch has been preserved by a conservation easement with the Santa Fe Conservation Trust.