

San Juan Public Lands People

End of Summer 2011

News for San Juan Public Lands employees, retirees & partners

San Juan Tackles Carbon Management



Interns monitoring reclamation and carbon sequestration at an abandoned mine site.

DURANGO - San Juan Public Lands have historically played a large role in providing natural resources - clean air and water, timber, minerals, livestock forage, etc. The San Juan is now on the forefront of exploring a new role for public lands - that of storing carbon in organic matter.

As plants grow they absorb atmospheric carbon, turning it into wood, leaves and other organic matter. This process sequesters carbon in long-term storage and can lower the concentration of carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas, in the atmosphere. Organic soil can also store carbon and keep it from converting to carbon dioxide.

Several efforts are underway to incorporate carbon management into overall management strategies. Colorado University, the Mountain Studies Institute and National Aeronautics and Space Administration are helping the San Juan develop tools for carbon management.

"We're working on a carbon assessment to help determine how much carbon is stored in vegetation across USFS and BLM lands,

and how computer simulation can best model carbon storage," said San Juan Forester Gretchen Fitzgerald.

A preliminary assessment has identified areas where existing vegetation data are lacking, and interns have been recording data in those under-represented areas, such as the Weminuche Wilderness. Baseline data have also been recorded in areas planned for future biomass-removal and fuels-reduction projects, such as Turkey Springs and Junction Creek.

"Several of the tools will be San Juan-specific, including downscaled climate-change models, carbon-stock maps and vulnerability assessments for plant communities and sensitive wildlife species," said Columbine Public Lands Manager Matt Janowiak. "But the methods we come up with for developing these tools can be used by any BLM or USFS unit."

Some carbon sequestration projects are incorporating the application of biochar to soils. Biochar consists of fine pieces of charcoal and was originally used by Amazonian Indians to supplement nutrient-poor rain forests.

Biochar has been rediscovered as a soil amendment for establishing growth in tough environments, such as mine tailings and waste rock piles in alpine settings.

Because biochar decomposes very slowly, it can lock away carbon for hundreds of years, keeping carbon from converting to carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. Monitoring of reclamation projects incorporating biochar at abandoned mines is showing positive results. Degraded sites where biochar was introduced three years ago now have native plants taking root.

The San Juan is also testing the use of biochar for reducing heavy metals in acid mine drainage, and biochar has been used to re-vegetate pipelines and the new half pipe at Durango Mountain Resort.



Biochar being introduced into the soil.

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PUBLIC LANDS CENTER NEWS

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Meanwhile, the USFS plans to launch a pilot project next year to evaluate how revegetation of burned areas might play a role in carbon sequestration and carbon credits in the future.

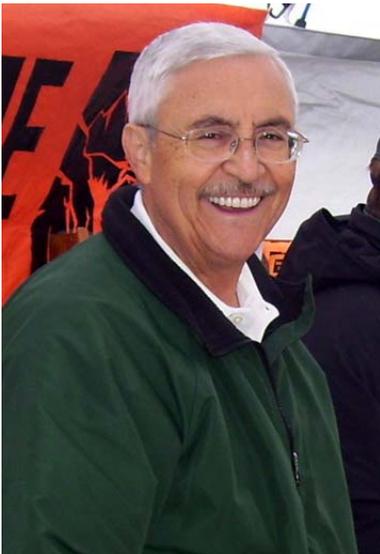
The project is funded in part by General Motors, the Bonneville Environmental Fund and National Forest Foundation. Spruce seedlings will be planted on 300 acres in the Bear Creek drainage, an area burned by wildfire north of Vallecito in 2003.

Over the next century, as the growing trees convert carbon into stored organic matter, estimates are they will be able to remove more than 65,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Once they grow large enough to begin sequestering carbon, General Motors will begin to receive carbon credits for its investment. An independent third party will monitor growth and carbon sequestration levels. The credits cannot be sold or traded, and will be retired once accounted for in a climate registry.



The Bear Creek burned area north of Vallecito Reservoir.

- Ann Bond



A Work of Art

DURANGO - Art Sanchez retired this summer after helping San Juan's visitors and employees for two decades. For the past 11 of those years, he served as Visitor Information Assistant in the PLC. Prior to that, Art was in Human Resources for nine years.

Art's federal career began with service in the U.S. Air Force for five years. During a military leave of absence, he worked as a Customer Service Agent with Frontier Airlines and United Express. Art came to work for the San Juan NF in 1990.

Art and wife, Barbara, have three children, David, Sarah and Susan, plus six grandchildren, with another on the way. Retirement plans include spending time with family and friends, as well as reading, camping, hiking, bicycling, golfing, yard work and travel.

"I think we have a high level of customer service across the San Juan," Art says. "Our federal and San Juan Mountains Association employees, and front desk ambassador volunteers work together on new systems, concepts and programs to provide a high level of service to our visitors. I feel fortunate to have worked with such a dedicated group of people."

- Ann Bond



Missy Moves Inside

DURANGO - Missy Carter, Columbine Developed Recreation crew member, has come in from the field to work a detail as Visitor Information Specialist in the PLC. Missy has been a seasonal Columbine forestry technician since 2007. During winters she has worked in equipment reservations and customer service at Durango Mountain Resort.

After studying forestry at Stephen F. Austin State University, Missy received a Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education from Texas Wesleyan University.

She has lived here since 1979 and enjoys camping, hiking, skiing, snowshoeing, hunting and gardening, although much of her free time is spent working on her Vallecito rental cabin.

She and husband, Tom, have three children; Katelin, 20, who is attending Southwest Community College and works at United Methodist Preschool; Kylie, 22, who works at Cypress Café; and Mitchell, 25, who works at the Durango Herald. The family includes an old hairy dog, Soso, and a new border collie puppy, Nala.

"I'll really miss working outdoors but will not miss the demanding physical labor required," Missy says. "My bones and joints will enjoy the new job at the front desk. I'll also enjoy talking to visitors and providing information about our area."

- Ann Bond

PUBLIC LANDS CENTER NEWS



Sally Heads to the Front Range

DURANGO - Sally Zwisler, San Juan Forester responsible for Vegetation Database Management since 2001, has left for the Regional Office to become Rocky Mountain Regional Vegetation Applications Coordinator.

Sally began her federal career in Durango on a BLM survey crew in 1979. She worked for the San Juan NF for 32 years, beginning in 1979 as a Forest Technician. Sally managed the first database for San Juan's 1983 Forest Plan and, over the years, has served as Receptionist, Forester Trainee and Timber Forester.

In 2007, Sally established the San Juan String Band, which provides conservation education awareness through music to children and adults. She is also proud of helping to bring the San Juan into the 'spatial' world of data and analysis and addressing research questions related to fire behavior and vegetation response.

Sally holds a Bachelor's degree in Forestry with a minor in Wildlife Management from Purdue University. She and husband, John, have a son, Ross, and two granddaughters, Avery and Grace, in the Denver area. Daughter Melissa will continue to live in Bayfield.

Sally enjoys playing several musical instruments, working with stained glass, sewing, quilting, beading, crocheting and playing with her horses and dogs. She and John

plan to hold onto their small ranch in the Beaver Meadows area so they can visit. She also plans to continue to participate in the San Juan String Band.

"I've really enjoyed working with all of you and take a lot of fond memories and stories with me," she says. - *Ann Bond*



Brian's off to the East Coast

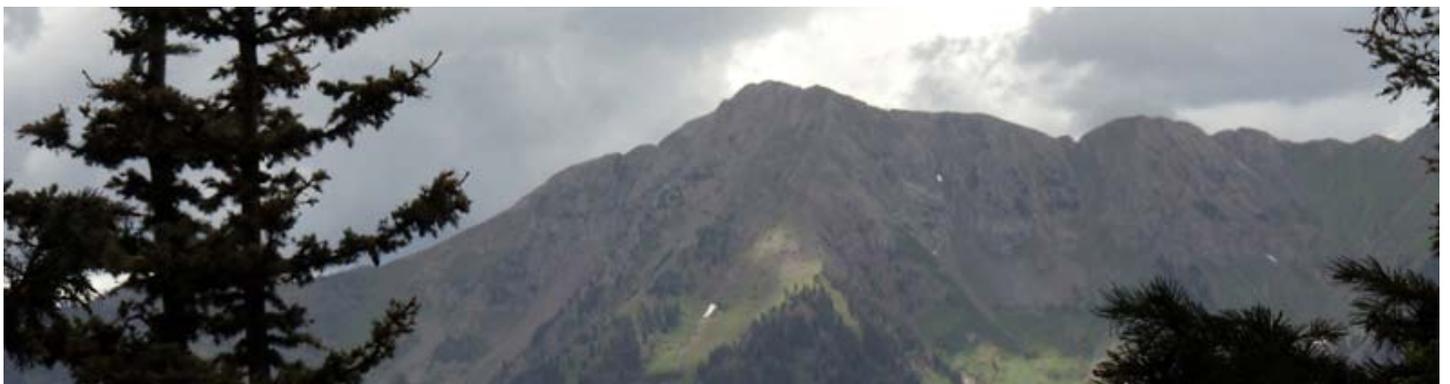
DURANGO - San Juan Telecommunications Service Area Technician Brian Post has taken a position with the Department of the Navy as Telecommunications Manager for the Norfolk Naval Shipyards in Portsmouth, Virginia.

Brian arrived on the San Juan in 2005 as part of the national centralization of USFS Information Technology Services. Prior to that, he served as Telecommunications Specialist for the Rio Grande NF in Monte Vista.

Over the past six years, Brian maintained the San Juan's radio communications, mobiles and portables, phones and data network. He also helped install a new base station at Mesa Verde NP to facilitate communications with the Durango Interagency Fire Dispatch Center.

"The San Juan's radio backbone is reliable and steady, and the dispatch system has seen a vast improvement," Brian says.

Brian began his USFS career in 2001 after active duty in the U.S. Army for 11 years. He provided telephone and data services to forward units in Georgia, Italy and Korea. The move back east will help him get closer to family in Virginia and North Carolina. "I'm excited to catch the color in the Blue Ridge Mountains this fall," he says. "It's been a long time since I've seen it, and my kids have never seen it." - *Ann Bond*



PUBLIC LANDS CENTER NEWS



Jessica's the New Facilities Engineer

DURANGO - Jessica Cain is the San Juan's new Facilities Engineer handling condition surveys for agency buildings. She is an inspector-in-training on the Glade Guard Station Rehabilitation Project and will be handling sanitary surveys in the future.

Jessica began her career in Engineering on the Shawnee NF in southern Illinois last year, under the Student Temporary Employment Program and was later converted to the Student Career Experience Program. Now she's a permanent federal employee.

Jessica holds a Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering, with an emphasis on Environmental Engineering and minor in Mathematics from Southern Illinois University.

"The most exciting aspect of my new position is the variety of tasks I perform and the problems I get to solve," Jessica says. "Working here will give me the experience I need on a professional level to become a well-rounded engineer."

- Ann Bond



Another Joyner on the San Juan

DURANGO - Ryan Joyner spent the summer working on the San Juan under the Student Career Experience Program as a Natural Resource Specialist Student Trainee shadowing Dave Swanson in the BLM mineral shop.

Ryan's background includes serving as a rappeller with the Sled Springs Rappel Crew on the Wallowa Whitman NF and as a crew member on the Newport hand crew on the Collville NF. He's currently a student at Western Washington University studying Environmental Planning with a GIS minor. Ryan and fiancé, Theresa Warren, have two dogs, Lou and Pete.

"I'm very pleased to be a part of the minerals division, it is proving to be challenging and meaningful work," he says.

Ryan is the son of former San Juan NF Supervisor, Cal Joyner, who is now working in Washington, D.C. as the USFS Director of Forest Management.

- Ann Bond



Ashley offers Service with a Smile

DURANGO - Ashley Hitchell is helping with office duties in the PLC under the Student Temporary Employment Program. Ashley is a senior at Durango High School and plans to graduate next spring.

She is available to help employees with copying, printing, shredding, filing, etc. She'll also be helping out at the front desk with visitor information. Ashley has been working full time this summer and will continue with us part time after school starts.

"I've already learned things that high school could not have taught me," she says. "I look forward to learning even more and experiencing everything the PLC has to offer."

Ashley, 17, worked the past two summers in housekeeping at the Wapiti Lodge but felt it was time to start building a career path for college. She enjoys camping, spending time with family and friends, seeing movies and taking photos. Her proud mother is Annett Hitchell, Engineering Administrative Assistant.

- Ann Bond



PUBLIC LANDS CENTER NEWS



Jill Stationed on the San Juan

DURANGO - The San Juan is hosting Computer Information Office (CIO) Level II Desktop Support Staffer Jill Jones, who is providing phone support to USFS employees across the U.S. and Puerto Rico on computer incidents transferred by the Customer Help Desk to Level II Desktop.

“I’m happy to help on location if you get an incident number for me,” she says to San Juan employees. Jill was previously hosted by the Prescott NF in Arizona, where she started work for the USFS in 1995 as an Information Receptionist.

Jill had a break in service when the CIO centralized and worked as a computer technician at her son’s elementary school for two years.

“Scheduling lab time for 700 kids was challenging,” she says. “My favorites were the kindergarteners - they are fearless on computers. However, I did have to wipe down the computers after their sessions.”

Jill says the PLC is the largest office she has ever worked in.

“I’ve had a tour of the office and met many people,” she says. “I’m wishing I could upgrade my memory so I could remember everyone’s name!”

- Ann Bond

FIRE NEWS



Joel Filling in as FMO

DURANGO - Joel Gossweiler, Assistant Fire Management Officer (FMO) for the BLM Idaho Falls District in Pocatello, Idaho, has been filling in as San Juan Public Lands FMO for the summer, helping out in the Durango Interagency Fire Dispatch Center.

Joel started his federal career in 1993 on BLM engine crews in Idaho. In 1997, he joined the BLM Great Basin Smokejumpers. He was named BLM Idaho Falls Fire Operations Specialist in 2000. In 2004, Joel moved into his current position in Idaho.

His background includes spending two winters guiding dog sled tours and training race dogs in Jackson, Wyoming, and working with a consulting firm for the Air Force on a bighorn sheep study. He holds a Bachelor’s degree in Forest Ecosystem Management from the University of Idaho. Joel and his wife, Crista, have two boys, Gavin, 1 and Isaac, 3.

“I’ve enjoyed working for the San Juan’s interagency program with new people in a new area to gain fresh perspectives and ideas while providing a new set of eyes for insight to this program,” he says.

- Ann Bond



Jayleen’s the New Assistant at Tanker Base

DURANGO - Jayleen Lineback is the San Juan’s new Assistant Air Tanker Base Manager, supporting aviation and fire operations at La Plata Field. She comes to us from Garden Valley Helitack on the Boise NF, where she was squad leader.

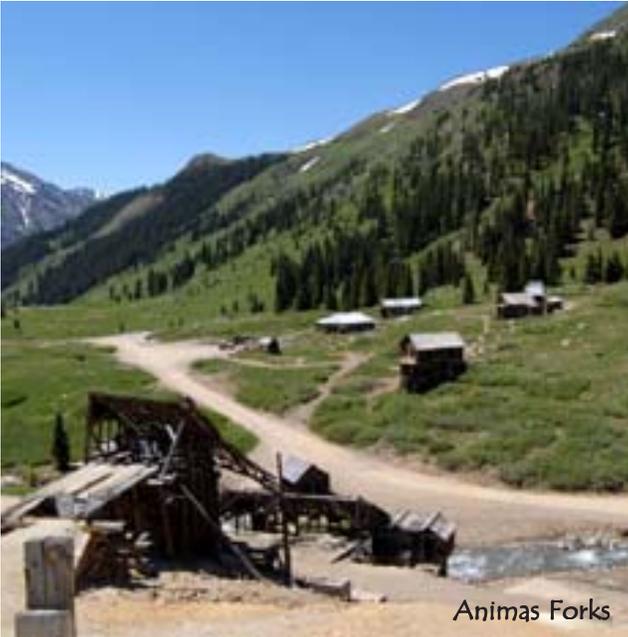
Jaylene began her federal career in 2002 as a seasonal engine crewmember for Chiricahua National Monument. She then worked as a seasonal fire monitor for Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks from 2004 through 2006, before moving to Boise.

Jaylene holds a Bachelor’s degree in Liberal Studies with a concentration in Sustainable Development from Arizona International College within the University of Arizona.

“I enjoy kayaking and look forward to exploring area rivers and getting to know the people and places as I continue my career in fire and aviation,” she says.

- Ann Bond

COLUMBINE NEWS



Animas Forks

Grant will help Animas Forks

SILVERTON - The BLM and Mountain Studies Institute were awarded a grant from the Colorado State Historical Fund this summer to stabilize five structures in Animas Forks.

The location of this abandoned mining town at an elevation of 11,160 feet means the standing structures are subject to extreme weather, cold temperatures and deep snow in winter.

Difficult winter conditions, combined with the impacts of heavy tourism visitation during summer, leave the historic structures in urgent need of stabilization.

Founded in 1875, Animas Forks is a ghost town that offers a look at Colorado's early mining days. It is a popular stop along the Alpine Loop Backcountry Byway in an area of the San Juan

Mountains extensively prospected and developed for hard-rock silver and gold mining at the turn of the last century.

- Julie Coleman,
San Juan Heritage
Team Lead



Acreage added to Public Domain

SILVERTON - The BLM completed a land exchange this summer which adds 219 acres of isolated patented mining claims to the public domain in the backcountry north of Silverton.

In exchange, Sunnyside Gold Corporation acquired about 80 acres of BLM surface and mineral estate to consolidate its mining operations one mile north of Silverton along Colorado Highway 110.

The properties acquired by BLM are located within the townsite of Animas Forks, and in the Eureka Gulch and Midway areas. The exchange will help BLM manage recreation in the very popular Alpine Loop Backcountry Scenic Byway area.

"We traded away lands already impacted by mining and milling activities in exchange for undeveloped backcountry mining claims, including much of the Animas Forks town site," said Columbine BLM Field Office Manager Matt Janowiak.

- Ann Bond

History Saved at Harris Cabin



DURANGO - The historic Harris Cabin on the San Juan NF behind Durango Mountain Resort got a facelift this summer, thanks to *HistoriCorps*, a public-private program modeled after community service programs, such as the Civilian Conservation Corps.

The cabin, tack room and corral are prime examples of a late 19th/early 20th century backcountry homestead. The Harris family of La Plata, New Mexico, acquired the property in 1934 for summer cattle pasture. The site also may have been a toll house along the earlier Rico to Rockwood Toll Road.

HistoriCorps instructors, who are craftsman skilled in historic log construction and preservation, worked with volunteers for several weeks to renovate the structures.

The project was funded by the USFS with the help of a Colorado State Historical Fund. The cabin will be maintained and preserved as an reminder of the early high county ranching era.

The Harris Cabin is listed on the La Plata County Register of Historic Places and is eligible for placement on the National Register of Historic Places.

- Ann Bond

COLUMBINE NEWS

Ecology Camp gets Kids Outdoors

SILVERTON - The San Juan offered an outdoor educational opportunity to 13 Silverton students between the ages of six and 12 this summer. Gretchen Fitzgerald, Columbine and Pagosa Forester, secured the funding and organized the week-long Ecology Day Camp on USFS and BLM lands.

Each day included field trips focused on different ecological themes. A trip to Andrews Lake featured lessons on plants and trees. MK Thompson, with the San Juan Mountains Association, took the group to Cement Creek, where they studied water quality from the headwaters down to below Gladstone and the American Tunnel. Columbine Wilderness Coordinator Nancy Berry took the group to Little Molas Lake for a lesson in *Leave No Trace* ethics and to help out on a trail rehabilitation project.

Whitney Gaskill, Americorps volunteer with the Mountain Studies Institute, led an outing to Ophir Pass to learn about pika and nature photography. BLM Wildlife Technician Tae Hillyer sponsored a bird-watching trip along South Mineral Creek.

The students were provided with nature journals and colored pencils to capture their experiences, and a BLM backpack to carry it all in.

The week ended with a barbeque in Silverton's Memorial Park featuring wild plant salad from Turtle Lake Refuge, and elk burgers, chokecherry tarts, skunkberry lemonade and mint tea, compliments of Gretchen.

The camp couldn't have taken place without the efforts of the Silverton Schools, Silverton Youth Center, Silverton Public Lands Office, Mountain Studies Institute, San Juan Mountains Association, Turtle Lake Refuge, all the volunteers, parents, and of course, the kids.

- *Jessey Ramirez, parent in training*



Whitney Gaskill leads students on the search for pika sightings.

PAGOSA NEWS



Kim Keeps the Office Running

PAGOSA SPRINGS - Kim Vernon stepped into the role of Pagosa RD Support Services Specialist this summer. She's handling filing, volunteer agreements and general office support services, including correspondence, procurement and budget.

"I basically make sure the office is running smoothly," Kim says, "keeping things working so we can serve the public."

Kim was formerly with Archuleta County CSU Extension Office, serving as Administrative Assistant and Fair Manager since 2004, as well as 4-H Coordinator since 2011.

In the past she has worked as a chef and emergency medical technician. Kim holds a Bachelor's degree in Education from East Central University in Oklahoma. She enjoys hiking, cross-country skiing, reading, cooking and canning. Kim is also active in the Upper San Juan Search and Rescue and volunteers with 4-H and the county fair. She has two rescued cats, Bungee Catastrophe and Kashmir Purrahna.

"I'm excited about being a part of such a great team," Kim says. "I have 13 years of administrative experience and am looking forward to whipping Excel files into shape, making those resource documents get in their place and hopefully can sneak out into the field every so often."

- *Ann Bond*

DOLORES NEWS



San Juan Loses Kathy

DURANGO - Dolores Public Lands Office Wildlife Biologist Kathy Nickell passed away peacefully on July 4, surrounded by family, friends and pets shortly after a celebration of her life shared with family, friends and co-workers.

Those of us who had the pleasure to work with Kathy during her career are well aware of the level of enthusiasm and commitment she brought to managing and protecting our wildlife resources. Those of us who were near her over the last few years also witnessed, and were greatly influenced by, the way she led her life in the face of cancer.

Kathy demonstrated to all of us the power of spirit, positive thinking and living life fully. She will long be remembered for her efforts on behalf of the

San Juan Public Lands, and she will forever be remembered by the many of us touched by her will, determination and attitude.

- Mark Stiles, San Juan Public Lands Manager



The Dolores School District set right to work this summer cleaning up the grounds of the former Dolores RD office, which had been vacant.

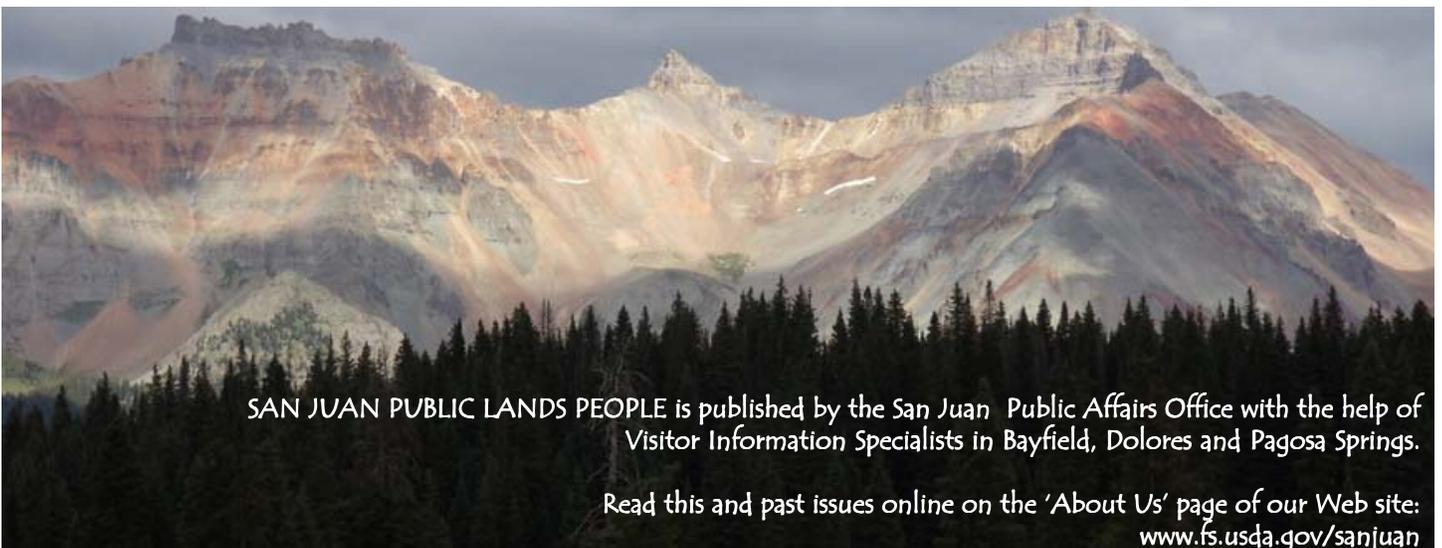
Schools Acquire Old Office

DOLORES - The former San Juan NF Dolores RD Office was formally conveyed to the Dolores Public School District this summer. The school district acquired the property for educational purposes for a nominal fee of \$10 per acre and payment of the costs of transfer. The property can only be used for contracted public school purposes and is not transferable.

The school district is purchasing the four buildings on the property under the USFS Facility Realignment and Enhancement Act. The buildings will be used for school meetings and training, and for other educational organizations. The direct sale was offered to the school district, following an appraisal to establish market value. The San Juan NF will use the proceeds from the sale to maintain other administrative sites.

"We're happy that the old ranger station is being restored and used for critical educational purposes in the local community," said San Juan Associate Supervisor Bill Dunkelberger.

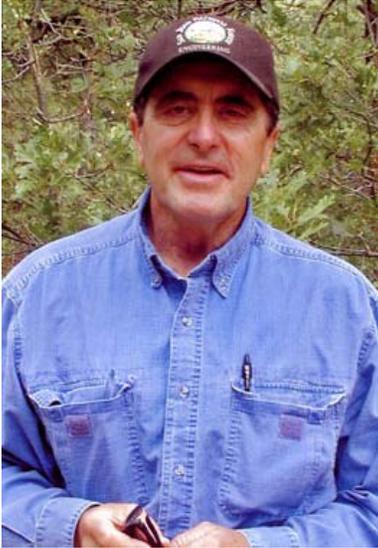
- Ann Bond



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www.fs.usda.gov/sanjuan

DOLORES NEWS



Gary's Going for It

DOLORES - Gary Ferdinando says it's time to join that elite group of retired USFS employees. A Durango native, Gary has lived in Southwest Colorado his entire life, with the exception of the summer of 1969, which he spent in Casper, Wyoming, working for Teton Exploration and Drilling Company.

Gary began his USFS career in 1970 as a temporary surveyor on the Dolores RD. After graduating from Fort Lewis College with a Bachelor's degree in Biology, he went to work full time for the Dolores RD in 1972 as a USFS Civil Engineering Technician, working on timber-related engineering projects. Gary went on to help engineer the developed recreation sites, roads and boat ramps around McPhee Reservoir.

"In the 1990s, having outlived all of my supervisors, I was promoted to West Zone Engineer for the Dolores and Mancos areas," Gary says. He also worked with commercial and private road use permits. With the advent of Service First, Gary started doing the engineering road work for all of the oil and gas projects in the zone.

"You can only imagine the changes I've seen in the Forest Service over the last 42 years, especially changes in technology and in personnel," he says. "Believe it or not, when I started, calculators had not been invented yet, and we used slide rules, but,

yes, the wheel had been invented."

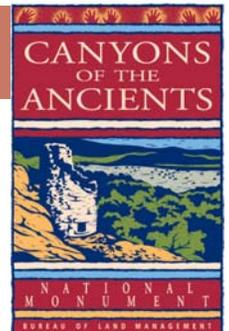
Gary has worked with eight different District Rangers and about as many Forest Supervisors. "Through the years, the one thing that has never grown old is my love for the outdoors," he says. "The Forest Service hasn't been a job for me - it has been a life."

Gary and wife, Phyllis, plan to use their home in the Cortez/Dolores area as a "base camp" for retirement. They plan to hunt and fish, and look forward to spending time together in their bass boat. Phyllis plans to continue painting, and Gary to continue teaching karate, which he's done for 17 years. In typical Ferdy fashion, he says; "I get a real kick out of it!"

"I hope all of you have a long and fruitful career with the Forest Service/BLM, and if you all will do me one big favor, try to keep a smile on your face and peace in your hearts," he says.

- Ann Bond

AHC/CANM NEWS



Little Bugs doing a Big Job

DOLORES - The BLM worked with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and Colorado Department of Agriculture Biological Pest Control this summer to release tiny flying insects called *Jaapiella ivannikovi* to help control the spread of Russian knapweed near the Utah border in Canyons of the Ancients National Monument.

Russian knapweed is a long-lived perennial that reproduces primarily from the roots. Stands of Russian knapweed can survive for more than 75 years.

"The key to knapweed control is to repeatedly stress the weed, and releasing *J. ivannikovi* has proven to be effective," said Heather Musclow, BLM Natural Resource Specialist.

The goal is to slow the noxious weeds' rate of spread by reducing seed production and biomass. The insects lay eggs on the knapweed leaves, and larvae emerge from silky webs to feast on the plants. In field tests, the length of new Russian knapweed shoots decreased 10-20 percent and plant biomass shrunk 20-25 percent in the first two years. In the third year, plants treated with *J. ivannikovi* did not produce any viable seeds.

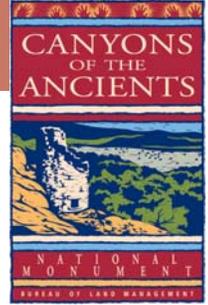
J. ivannikovi was also tested for its host-specificity and has been determined to rely almost completely on Russian knapweed and to not feed on other plants. While it is not expected to completely control Russian knapweed, if used in conjunction with other methods, the bugs should reduce infestations.

"Controlling knapweed involves a multi-faceted approach including herbicides, mechanical treatment and biological control agents", Musclow said.

BLM personnel will monitor the release site to determine success.

- Shannon Borders

AHC/CANM NEWS



Safeway Manager Dan Workman.

Safeway and BLM Recycle

DOLORES - Anasazi Heritage Center Curation teamed up with Cortez Safeway to recycle more than 30,000 deteriorating plastic bags previously used to store some of the millions of Ancestral Puebloan artifacts excavated prior to the completion of McPhee Dam and Reservoir.

“Our rural location and the number of discarded bags made it difficult to find a partner able to accommodate our needs, until Safeway generously allowed us to drop off bags for pickup by their recycling services contractor,” said Deborah Kelley-Galin, grant project coordinator.

The project is part of a two-year grant from the Colorado State Historical Fund to provide more than \$100,000 to the AHC and McElmo Canyon Research Institute to improve artifact storage conditions and transfer records to a modern computer database. The goal is to allow researchers better access to study artifacts.

“We’re pleased to partner with the Heritage Center on this recycling initiative,” said Dan Workman, Cortez Safeway Manager. “Our stores support the global drive toward zero-waste business practices.”

- Michael J. Williams



CANM acquires Acreage

DOLORES - Canyons of the Ancients National Monument was expanded by 1,855 acres this summer, when the BLM purchased property south of McElmo Creek owned by Corey Veach. About 20 percent of the parcel has been inventoried for cultural resources with significant results.

“The degree of physical preservation at some of the recorded sites on this parcel is exceptional and will contribute a great deal to our long-term understanding of how humans have used this corner of Colorado and the Southwest,” said Vince MacMillan, CANM Archeologist.

Acquisition of the parcel also creates a more contiguous landscape for management of resources. A portion of the parcel is federally leased, and known minerals include crude oil, natural gas and carbon dioxide

gas. There are 11 oil exploration/production sites on the parcel, with one currently producing oil.

BLM staff will complete a Land Health Assessment of the parcel to facilitate improvements in rangeland health conditions. The area also provides sweeping scenic vistas in an isolated setting, and is now accessible to the public.

- Shannon Borders



New Signs Make Sand Canyon Safer

CORTEZ - New directional and informational signs are being installed in Sand Canyon to provide visitors with better orientation along the complex set of trails in this popular area of Canyons of the Ancients National Monument. The signs include maps that designate trails in Sand Canyon, East Rock Creek and Rock Creek in different colors.

“The new markers should enhance protection of natural and cultural resources by ensuring users stay on designated trails,” said Marietta Eaton, CANM Manager.

The Sand Canyon area lures thousands of people a year for hiking, mountain biking and horseback riding. To protect fragile resources, *Stay On Designated Trail* signs have also been placed at key locations to remind visitors to stay on designated trails.

Area Closed Beyond This Point signs now mark archaeological sites to keep visitors from entering and damaging delicate cultural sites.

BLM rangers and staff will monitor the area and work with volunteers to repair trail damage, address user conflicts and educate visitors about responsible use.

- Shannon Borders