



Friends of Candelaria Nature Preserve
A Committee of the Open Space Alliance

Quarterly Newsletter ~ June, July, August 2024

Key Comments

~ **Come to the field!**

Work as a volunteer in the CNP fields with guidance from Rio Grande Return.

The Preserve's native plants need you to help them outcompete the invasives, and the work with other volunteers is super-fun! ("You have GOT to read this book!")

Mondays & Fridays, 8:00 AM to 12:00 noon

Please park on Arbor Rd. NW.

See a welcome sign on the gate with a note about where in the fields to meet the group that morning, and a phone number.

~ This newsletter has become *quarterly* rather than monthly. OK with all of you?

~ Open Space Alliance quarterly newsletters are available at this website:

<https://openspacealliance.org/about/>. (Scroll down past Board of Directors.)

~ Bill Pentler, who recently retired from 17 years leading Visitor Services for the City's Open Space Division, will begin leading our Guided Walks this fall. Thank you, Bill!

~ We are still on the hunt for a *successor* to me as Lead for this organization. I am staying on for the next few months while the search continues.

Issue Contents

- I. SAVE THE DATE. I: Thursday, March 27, 2025 - in-person meeting with OSD, Ciudad SWCD, RGR at the CNP Tree Nursery Tract.
- II. SAVE THE DATE 2: Tentatively, Saturday, October 19, 2024 - informal in-person gathering for members at CNP TNT.
- III. August 29: Jon Gahate, Native American educator ~ Special speaker for this month!
- IV. Message to Neighbors from OSD Field Biologist Joanna Strange
- V. Quarterly Update on biological activities at the CNP - written by Jacob White, will be coming to your Inboxes within the next couple of days.
- VI. New Points of Contact for CNP at City Open Space Division ~ and Other Personnel Updates
- VII. Discovery Walk on Field Medicine at the CNP was such a great success.
- VIII. Reminder: Terrific 4-minute video about the CNP
- IX. Build Your Backyard Refuge Day, September 21

- I. **SAVE THE DATE 1: Thursday, March 27, 2025** - in-person meeting with the Open Space Division, Ciudad SWCD, and Rio Grande Return at the CNP Tree Nursery Tract.

Details to come. I am attempting to have it start at 5:00 PM so all members can come, or to change the meeting date to Saturday, March 29, at 10:00 AM. I will keep you all posted.

- II. **SAVE THE DATE: 2: Saturday, October 18, 2024** - informal in-person gathering

Date not yet firm. I am in the process of finding out what Saturday we can use the Tree Nursery Tract.

This would be just us, Friends of CNP.

No speeches. No agenda. Just getting together with some refreshments (and name tags).

If you have ideas for what should happen during this gathering, please be aware that I will ask you to implement them.

More on this asap.

- III. **August 29, 2024** – Jon Gahate, Native American educator ~ Jon Gahate, Native American educator ~ our speaker for this month Catch this presentation if you can; he is a treasure and bound to be interesting. Flyer attached; participants must register per the flyer.

- IV. **Message to Neighbors from OSD Field Biologist Joanna (Jo) Strange**

This message was written by Jo in response to neighbors' concerns about activities in the CNP fields adjacent to Veranda. I thought you all might enjoy seeing it. (Jeannie):

Thank you for reaching out with your questions. The field on the south side of the Preserve was mowed due to high tumble weed pressure. Though it was seeded with wildlife crop, the only species that came up was the invasive, so we chose to remove it before it went to seed and spread to other areas. It is a constant monitoring and treatment adjustment process to keep up with what nature is giving us. We do have a yearly crop plan, and we also had a public Open House to discuss the plan with the community. We did discuss at the time that there may be some changes to the plan based on what conditions we experience on the ground, such as rainfall, irrigation availability, and general climate that will influence the vegetation. As much as we plan on paper, we can never fully know what the land will do, and we must adjust quickly to maintain the health we are trying to rebuild on the property.

As for the other concerns, the only fence that was upgraded was at the main entrance on the east end of the property. Due to safety concerns, multiple break ins and nightly off leash dog walkers from the neighborhood, we did install a continuous metal fence and gate. The design will not affect the visibility into the Preserve and will provide extra security. There is no plan to change the fence at any other location along the property line. When we do have public programs, we always instruct participants to park on Arbor Road, any parking along Veranda is not by our direction.

The fields you have a direct view of are currently in wildlife crop rotation as per the Resources Management Plan, eventually they will transition to an array of habitat types you can find in the

report. The current plan does include hedgerows along roadways for wildlife habitat but not along the fence line. As a nature preserve, the wildlife habitat is a priority, and we do strive to create a diverse mosaic of vegetation to support the wildlife that lives here as well as those that stop by on their migration journey. I do hope you understand that we are trying to build a healthy and dynamic system and that may lead to changing views over time.

We at Open Space are doing our best to keep up with all the 30,000 acres of land that we are responsible for managing. It is a heavy lift given the limited staff and financial resources we have to work with. We definitely strive for transparency and do not mean to manage the property in secret but it can be difficult to update multiple parties every time we need to make a land management decision. We have weekly partner meetings with Rio Grande Return and Ciudad Soil and Water to assess the conditions and plan the restoration work that will be the most beneficial and make the most sense given our resources. The Friends of CNP does send out a monthly newsletter that has details about the work being done on the property, that information comes directly from our meeting notes. They also host a monthly walking tour of the property on the last Friday of every month that includes more details on the current happenings at CNP.

We also offer two weekly community volunteer days, Monday and Friday mornings, where all are welcome to work alongside of staff in the fields. We provide all the tools, we just ask that you bring gardening gloves, water, and sun protection. This is an amazing way to stay up to date on all that is happening in real time as well as interact with our staff and ask more detailed questions about what you are seeing. It takes a huge amount of time to keep this property moving forward and we appreciate all the community help we can get.

I hope this helps to address your concerns and offers a better understanding of our process. We really do appreciate your connection to the land and hope that you understand that we are doing our best to steward it forward. Please let me know if you have any other questions or concerns.

¡Gracias!
Jo

- V. A Quarterly Update on field activities at the CNP, written by Jacob White, will be coming to your Inboxes within the next couple of days.
- VI. New Points of Contact at CABQ for Questions about CNP ~ and Other Personnel Updates

Points of Contact at CABQ Open Space Division for all questions and concerns::

- Joanna (Jo) Strange, Field Biologist: <jstrange@cabq.gov>
- Dustin Chavez Davis, Open Space Project Coordinator: <dchavezdavis@cabq.gov>

New OSD Education Lead, Alexandra Bezner - <akbezner@cabq.gov>

(Ellie Grisham has taken a position with Bernalillo County.)

Welcome, Alexandra!

New Ciudad SWCD Point of Contact for CNP: CJ Ames, Agriculture Manager - <cj@ciudadswcd.org>

Welcome, CJ!

- VII. Discovery Walk on Field Medicine at the CNP earlier this summer was such a great success. Jacob White will let us know if this event gets scheduled again.
- VII. Reminder: There is a terrific 4-minute video about the CNP:
[https://player.vimeo.com/video/850673048?
badge=0&autoplay=0&player_id=0&app_id=58479](https://player.vimeo.com/video/850673048?badge=0&autoplay=0&player_id=0&app_id=58479)
- VIII. ABQ Backyard Refuge event on September 21, per Laurel Ladwig. Flyer attached. This is bound to be a wonderful event!!!

Sending best regards to everyone ~

Jeannie Allen
Committee Chair, Friends of CNP
A Committee of the Open Space Alliance
<friendsofcandelarianaturepres@gmail.com>