

Visit our website:

www.dflt.org

CALL TO ACTION

1. Please take a moment right now and e-mail us at info@dflt.org. Put "newsletter" in the subject line. That action will help us go paperless on updates and cut waste, leaving more money to buy and save precious land.
2. We urge you to contact your State Representative tax staff member (202.224.3121) and request they sponsor HR 1831 for permanent tax incentives on conservation easements. We would like to thank Representatives Mitchell, Kirkpatrick, Grijalva and Giffords for their continued support.

LOOKING FORWARD- GREAT THINGS TO EXPECT THIS YEAR

Conservation

Raising funds for open space F.O.R.C.E

Stewarding current Land

Working with private owners on conservation easements

January 9, Work day at the Jewel

Fundraising

Fall Membership Drive

April 24, Sonoran Symphony, dinner prepared by Tonto Bar and Grill

Spring hike-a-thon and a Birding Event

Black Mountain Photo Contest

December 5, Free Photo Workshop with Jerry Sieve (first 15 to register)

February 12 - March 12, Photo Entries Accepted



On top of the world! Hike-a-thon hikers at the top of Elephant Butte.



Desert Foothills Land Trust

P.O. Box 4861

Cave Creek, AZ 85327

Working together to protect the Sonoran Desert for future generations.

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CAVE CREEK, AZ
PERMIT # 168

The land trust accreditation program recognizes land conservation organizations that meet national quality standards for protecting important natural places forever. Desert Foothills Land Trust is pleased to announce it is applying for accreditation. A public comment period is now open.

The Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent program of Land Trust Alliance, conducts an extensive review of each applicant's policies and programs.

The commission invites public input and accepts, signed, written comments on pending applications. Comments must relate to how DFLT complies with national quality standards. These standards address the ethical and technical operation of a land trust. To learn more about the accreditation program and to submit a comment, visit

www.landtrustaccreditation.org

Comments may also be faxed or mailed to the:

Land Trust Accreditation Commission

Attn: Public Comments

112 Spring Street

Sarasota Springs, NY 12866

Fax 518-587-3183

Comments on DFLT's application will be accepted through December 17, 2009.

DESERT FOOTHILLS
LAND TRUST



OCTOBER 2008 TO OCTOBER 2009

IN RETROSPECT

NOVEMBER 12, 2009

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COMING UP:

- DFLT to announce new Executive Director
- Black Mountain Photo Contest
- Sonoran Symphony scheduled: April 24, 2010
- Accreditation through Land Trust Alliance
- Spring Stewardship Training

TWO MISSIONS, ONE COMMON GOAL- DFLT & BMC MERGE

September 30th, 2009 marked a special day for both Desert Foothills Land Trust and Black Mountain Conservancy. After many months of discussion and planning the two organizations signed a merger agreement. Black Mountain Conservancy will now operate jointly with and under the name of

Desert Foothills Land Trust. To maintain continuity two BMC board members, Pat O'Brien and Pat Patterson, have joined the DFLT board and programs such as the Black Mountain Photo Contest will continue. Black Mountain hikes and educational lectures will also be added to

DFLT's existing calendar of events. Arlene Patton, BMC Board President commented, "The missions of the two organizations came together, so why not these organizations themselves? Now, more than ever it makes sense for us to merge."

HAPPY TRAILS AT THE JEWEL OF THE CREEK

The Jewel of the Creek was transformed this year. Rare sightings of newly hatched Sonoran Mud Turtles and Canyon Tree Frogs were made. In October, members of a bird banding class were treated to a rare Arizona sighting of an American Redstart. It's no secret that the Jewel is a birding paradise. The Jewel is one of DFLT's five preserves earning the prestigious designation of Important Bird Area (IBA) by the National Audubon Society. There are only 37 IBA designations in Arizona.

In February dedicated volunteers worked with a professional trail builder, Dennis Smith. They con-

structed the Dragonfly loop trail that travels along the creek and connects with the Spur Cross Ranch trail system. The Dragonfly Trail has become a favorite of local hikers.

On June 19, 2009, a fire spread through three acres of the mesquite bosque. The amphibian populations we were welcoming back earlier in the year do not seem to have been affected by the slurry drop used to contain the fire. Regrowth has begun.

We salute our local fire fighters for their quick response which minimized the damage and for their support.



A saguaro charred in the Jewel fire.

A DESERT THAT TEACHES

The Sonoran Desert is not just pretty it also has much to teach us. In May DFLT partnered with DAC (Desert Awareness Committee) to present a program on Native Edibles and Medicinals at the Desert Foothills Library. Due to its popularity DFLT plans to continue to offer similar programs.

Another popular and educational event was our annual Saguaro Fruit Harvest, which took place in early July once the fruit ripened. Participants took part in harvesting and processing fruit from our P.A. Seitts preserve and enjoyed a picnic breakfast at Desert Awareness Gateway Park.

This year The Rudolph Garden Team was formed. In their honor we held the inaugural Saguaro Hill Festival to support their ongoing project. The festival included a native plant sale, educational seminars, guided hikes through the preserve, and pet adoptions from area rescues.

MESSAGE FROM DESERT FOOTHILLS LAND TRUST PRESIDENT, SUE CLEMENT

The benefits to our community of a merger between Black Mountain Conservancy and Desert Foothills Land Trust are many. Both organizations have rich histories of protecting the foothills of the Sonoran Desert for future generations. As a single land trust we will manage the largest number of visitable preserves in the area, and the community will benefit from the efficiency of combined management. Together we will expand guided hikes, environmental education events, community events, stewardship projects and land and easement acquisitions.

Dr. Elinor Ostrum recently won a Nobel Prize in economics. Her research included proving local organizations achieve 92% of

optimum in governance of environmental resources like forests, fisheries, and other sensitive areas. Her rigorous analysis supports her conclusion that "Not officials, but instead, local citizens need to make decisions. People whose lives depend on sustaining an area, working together can build trust and respect and solve critical issues," said Dr. Ostrum. By the way, Dr. Ostrum is a member of a Land Trust and plans to donate important land she owns to them for governance.

Dr. Ostrom affirms the logic of our local efforts. We are people working together to protect, preserve and steward sensitive land. Our members are concerned about maintaining fragile desert habitat and give what

they can afford of their time, money and various talents to help. It is our stated mission to work with partners and communities in our preservation and stewardship efforts. Our joint efforts with F.O.R.C.E. (Friends Of Recreation, Conservation and the Environment), Desert Awareness Committee, and Black Mountain Conservancy have multiplied effectiveness.

Our merger with Black Mountain Conservancy is testimony to the success of both organizations in building the trust and respect needed to solve critical land use issues and insure that future generations will find our community abundant in natural areas, remarkable views and rich cultural heritage.

MESSAGE FROM DAVE MILLS, CO-FOUNDER OF BLACK MOUNTAIN CONSERVANCY AND FORMER BMC BOARD MEMBER

I appreciate the opportunity to address you BMC donors in this space. On behalf of the former BMC board, we want to express our gratitude for your support over the years. Many of you contributed each year and we are profoundly thankful; without you we could not have continued the work to preserve the mountain. Many of you have contributed loyally to both organizations - I think you can feel assured that your continuing contributions will be used with even more impact and efficiency than before.

The work of preserving the undeveloped land on Black Mountain will now continue under the auspices of Desert Foothills Land Trust. At least two of the former BMC directors will join the DFLT board to further the effort and maintain continuity. Popular programs such as the Black Mountain Photo Contest, the photo calendar, and guided hikes will continue.

The coming together of the two organizations has been fortuitous. The timing is good this year

as the economy reels, but the full story actually goes back ten years.

When BMC was in organization in 1999, the founding board members met with DFLT to assess whether the missions of the two organizations were compatible. A meeting was moderated by LTA (the national Land Trust Alliance) to evaluate the possibility. The conclusion was "no," on the basis of the riparian interests of DFLT versus the viewshed interests of BMC.

Then some five years later, both organizations entered into a joint project with the Trust for Public Land and The Nature Conservancy to prioritize open space in the Desert Foothills region suitable for conservation and preservation. This important DFNRI (Desert Foothills Natural Resources Initiative) had multiple positive outcomes, including the recognition on the part of DFLT of the importance of "viewsheds" as a legitimate preservation goal. DFLT has

since broadened its mission statement to include viewsheds.

This conclusion and action on the part of DFLT paved the way for the merger a few years later. While the actual merger may have been triggered by the mundane reason that BMC's sublease was going to terminate, and require a move, it did serve to stimulate the active dialogue between the two organizations earlier this year.

It was and is clear that both organizations now share much the same missions, and it was equally clear to both boards that merging would also be a benefit to you, our supporters. With DFLT's concurrence to raise the preservation of Black Mountain to equal status with their other priorities, the stage was set to complete the merger.

So with that we, the former BMC board, continue to urge you to consider DFLT in your gifting, perhaps a little more than usual, despite these tough times, in light of the expanded work now before DFLT.



Hikers travel along Spur Cross Trail during the DFLT's Fall Hike-a-thon.

"It is our stated mission to work with partners and communities in our preservation and stewardship efforts."



Stacy Fischer, Interim Executive Director, Sue Clement, DFLT President and Dave Mills, transition chairman of the merger, at DFLT's Saguaro Fruit Harvest

OUR PRESERVATION EFFORTS GROW ON

The land trust has continued to expand the number of protected acres in our preserve system. As of this year we currently steward 16 properties in the Desert Foothills area totaling over 619 acres.

In December DFLT received Sierra Vista Sanctuary, a generous land easement gift encompassing 80 acres. From a habitat perspective it is a keystone parcel contributing to the connectivity of other critical lands

in the area. The Sanctuary includes two different Sonoran desert plant communities and over 100 plant species including two that are found in no other part of our preserve system. It is a property abounding in flora, fauna and cultural history.

Black Mountain Conservancy brought to the table another 4.5 acre preserve on Black Mountain. The parcel abuts the county park at the top of the

mountain and offers viewshed protection of a central focal point in our community.

To continue our mission DFLT partnered with the town of Cave Creek as fiduciary agent in their open space initiative to acquire 4,000 acres of conservation land for the purpose of protection, connectivity and light recreation. We also continue to engage private land owners in conservation easement opportunities.



A spring morning at Sierra Vista Sanctuary.

SONORAN SYMPHONY- THE BEAT GOES ON

The 14th annual Sonoran Symphony, "A Symphony at Sunset" held on April 25, 2009 was attended by 550 guests who enjoyed a wonderful gourmet meal presented by Tonto Bar & Grill followed by a concert featuring the Symphony of the Southwest and Cody Bryant's Riders of the Purple Sage. The event was held on the driving range of Rancho Manana Golf

Club with a sunset backdrop that only the Sonoran Desert could produce.

DFLT would like to thank all those who support the symphony. Its success for the past 14 years is due to the dedication of all the volunteers, and support of all our sponsors and loyal guests.

This year will mark the 15th anniversary for our signature

event. The 2010 Committee and Co-Chairs, Diane Low and Shari Flatt are already hard at work and still looking for volunteers to make this event our best yet. The event will be held on **Saturday, April 24, 2010** with the promise to be the ONE not to miss!

The entertainer will be announced soon!

GOOD PEOPLE + GOOD FUN = SAVED LAND

DFLT has had many great opportunities this year to work with talented volunteers and local businesses and to partner with other local non-profit organizations to raise both funds and awareness.

In partnership with the Desert Foothills Library we presented an evening with Barry Goldwater, Jr. featuring refreshments on the patio, a presentation by Mr. Goldwater and a signing opportunity for his new book.

The library also hosted our "Medicinals and Edibles" seminar, a collaborative program with the Desert Awareness Committee and has partnered with us in the inaugural Saguaro Hill Festival. The festival was the brainchild of the Rudolph Garden Team to support their stewardship efforts. The team was formed by volunteers to maintain the Richard E. Rudolph Memorial Garden, the Barry Goldwater Memorial and

the Caroline Bartol Preserve trail system on Saguaro Hill.

In partnership with the Town of Cave Creek as F.O.R.C.E. (Friends of Recreation, Conservation and the Environment) DFLT held a fall Hike-a-thon. The event offered a choice of six different hikes at various levels of difficulty and an after hike celebration sponsored and hosted by Harold's Corral in Cave Creek.



Glenn Farhinger discusses plants with Rudolph Garden Team Leader Donna Alexander.

Fall Hike Schedule:

- Nov. 14- 9:00 am
Wallace Lone Mountain
- Nov. 20- 8:30 am
Black Mountain Hike
- Nov. 28- 9:00 am
The Preserve at the Cave
- Dec. 5- 9:00 am
P.A. Seitts @ Go John Canyon
- Dec. 12- 9:00 am
Wallace Lone Mountain
- Dec. 18- 8:30 am
Black Mountain Hike
- Dec. 19- 9:00 am
The Preserve at the Cave