

DRAFT *OJITO DE SAN ANTONIO* RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN 05/31/05 DRAFT
strategy for continued planning and implementation of resource-based recreational activities at Ojito. [See Appendix F for more LAC information.]

D. Operations and Maintenance

The operation and maintenance of Ojito depends heavily on Bernalillo County staff to work with community organizations and residents on varying stewardship projects. Maintenance needs include forestry-thinning projects, orchard restoration, site improvements, and trail rehabilitation. Administration and event coordination of volunteer stewardship projects will require County commitment of staff time and departmental resources. The County would provide funding, equipment, and staff time to assist where feasible.

VII. INTERAGENCY COORDINATION

Ojito will benefit from interagency coordination in several ways. Key coordinating partners and issues are listed below.

A. Acequia Madre de San Antonio Ditch Association

The County intends to continue dialogue with the Acequia Association regarding our mutually beneficial interests of (i) establishing Ojito as an Open Space Preserve and thwarting impending development; (ii) maintaining and preserving the integrity of the ancient acequia network; and, (iii) improving the viability of natural resources onsite and enhancing wildlife habitat.

B. USFS/Cibola National Forest

Ojito is bordered by the Cibola National Forest on the far north and west sides. The site has several informal connecting trails to existing USFS trails in the Cibola National Forest. Formal trail connections will be evaluated in conjunction with the USFS and include:

- Ojito to Faulty Trail
- Ojito to Sandia South Peak trail
- Connector trails from Carlito Springs to Ojito de San Antonio

C. Bernalillo County Parks and Recreation Department, Public Works Division, and the New Mexico Department of Transportation

Bernalillo County Parks and Recreation (BCPR) and Public Works Division (BCPW) have prepared an East Mountain Trails and Bikeways Master Plan. BCC adoption of this plan was approved on April 26, 2005. The Trails and Bikeways Master Plan attempts to link County- and City-owned Open Space properties, residential areas, commercial nodes, and lands of the Sandia Ranger District. This will be accomplished through a system of suitable shoulder improvements on State of New Mexico and County roads, and hard and soft surface trails either within public rights-of-way or on private properties. The Trails and Bikeways Master Plan has incorporated all County and City Open Space properties and their respective access points and trailheads identified in each RMP. Continued coordination with BCPR and BCPW shall be maintained as the Trails and Bikeways Master Plan and each RMP are implemented.

D. National Park Service/Cultural Landscapes Program

In 2002, the Cultural Landscapes Program of the National Park Service prepared a preliminary cultural landscape evaluation of Ojito de San Antonio. [See Appendix E.] Additional assessment is required to identify resource analysis priorities, appropriate uses, and potential eligibility of the property for the National Register of Historic Places. This analysis process may show that Ojito has precious and sensitive cultural landscape qualities that provide a record of how communities and individuals have, over time, adapted to and modified landscapes in the East Mountains.

E. New Mexico Department of Game and Fish

The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish could provide biological reviews, habitat assessments, wildlife inventories, and baseline studies at all four County EMOS properties. These types of wildlife

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evaluations may expand our appreciation for the role that any future development—including simple fencing projects—may play in enhancing or degrading wildlife viability at Ojito.

F. New Mexico Forestry Division

The New Mexico State Forestry Division may be able to offer assistance with determining basal area calculations of the piñon-juniper plant community at Ojito. Basal area is defined as the cross sectional area of the tree at breast height. For example, a tree 16 inches in diameter would have a basal area of 1 square foot. Basal area is calculated to show how trees are distributed on a site. A larger basal area number means that trees are growing closer together, which has a variety of effects on forest health, including higher fire risk, decreased water infiltration, and additional susceptibility to plant and insect diseases.

[PHOTOS HERE]

APS and Bernalillo County Community Centers are potential partners for a variety of educational and stewardship projects. Bernalillo County should form partnerships with APS staff and County community center staff to initiate curriculum development, student field trips, community events, and other educational activities. Certain events at Ojito will be dependent on off-site parking due to limited parking capacity onsite and the need to lessen vehicle impacts. Working with the *San Antonio de Padua* church to accommodate parking makes the most sense.

H. Carnuel Land Grant and the Carnuel Acequia Association

Both of these groups have a vested interest in the property because of their past and current relationship to the land. The springs drain to Tijeras Canyon and this feeds the Carnuel acequia.

I. Law Enforcement and Emergency Responders

Trespassing, hunting, and user conflicts have been identified as the primary law enforcement issues at Ojito. Currently, the Bernalillo County Sheriff's Department is responsible for responding to emergency calls at all nine East Mountain Open Space properties (City and County). City of Albuquerque Open Space rules and regulations have been adopted by Bernalillo County as the governing ordinance for its Open Space properties. As a result, it could be mutually beneficial for the City and the County to cooperatively fund Open Space ranger personnel dedicated to the East Mountain area. Although funding is currently not allocated to fill such positions, Open Space planners from the City and the County should begin a collaborative training effort to assist fire, emergency medical personnel, and law enforcement agencies by preparing detailed response plans. These response plans should be presented in an interagency workshop format. The following is a list of items to be included in the response plans along with suggestions for improving the implementation of the plans:

- Compile briefing packets that include detailed maps, sites plans, boundary information, aerial photos, and driving directions to all nine Open Space properties.
- Include copies of all relevant City/County Open Space ordinances and USFS rules and regulations.
- Distribute briefing packets to appropriate Bernalillo County Sheriff's deputies, management, and support staff as soon as possible.
- Request City and County information technology departments to enter Open Space property descriptions and pertinent GPS information into Map Quest for patrol unit reference.
- Train site stewards (including neighborhood association and Crime Watch volunteers) in incident report preparation.
- Include a comprehensive list of interagency personnel contact information and emergency response telephone numbers.

VIII. COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Continued coordination with community organizations will be essential if site development at Ojito is to reach its capacity for providing recreational and educational activities as well as protecting natural and cultural resources. Ideally, two volunteer oriented stewardship activities could be conducted every year at Ojito.

A. Open Space Stewardship

Another goal of this RMP is to develop sustainable stewardship practices for all East Mountain Open Space properties. The County Open Space Section does not have the staff or financial resources to develop the recommendations identified in these site plans without community involvement. A key finding as a result of this planning process is the need for neighborhood associations, community organizations, trail user groups, business community members, and schools to take an active part in Open Space management. To successfully coordinate volunteer activities, the County will need to dedicate adequate staff time to effectively administer stewardship opportunities.