



# BERNALILLO COUNTY OPEN SPACE NEWS

## Bernalillo County Open Space Highlights, 2009 Summary

**B**ernalillo County Parks and Recreation launched its Open Space Program in 2009, engaging citizens of all ages on County Open Space properties in meaningful, educational experiences. The Program's inception coincided and joined the efforts of the Aldo Leopold Centennial Celebration. County Open Space, with the help of the Celebration Committee and local partners, put on a series of free public events. Additionally, County Open Space staff worked on developing environmental education and resource-based recreation opportunities.



**U**nder the pillar of environmental education, Bernalillo County Open Space working with East

Mountain High School started a Land Health Monitoring protocol. Students participated in science-based education by investigating water quality through water chemistry stations and surveying aquatic insects. The data they collect is part of ongoing monitoring to learn how our lands change over time and to inform the County how to best manage the natural resources.

**C**ounty Open Space also worked with East Mountain High School on an orchard

restoration project at Ojito de San Antonio as part of their Legacy Tree Initiative. County Open Space staff identified the species, as well as assessed the overall health of each tree in the orchard area. Students then took cuttings from desirable trees to propagate at their school nursery. Eventually the new trees will be planted back at Ojito de San Antonio to provide valuable food for wildlife.



**O**ther educational activities included working with students in the South Valley. Polk Middle School students installed artistically tiled mosaics on benches dedicated to Aldo Leopold at the Gutierrez-Hubbell House and Pajarito Open Space.

Additionally, teens from Paradise Hills Community Center took a trip to Carlito Springs to investigate their relationship with themselves, each other, and their environment. Both of these groups were introduced to Aldo Leopold's writings from [A Sand County Almanac](#).

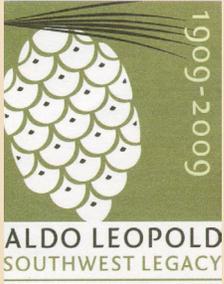
**R**egarding the second pillar, resource-based recreation, County Open Space developed a two-mile single track trail at Sabino Canyon and worked with the East Mountain Historical Society to produce a Sabino Canyon Interpretive Guide that gives a comprehensive historical overview of the property.

**C**ounty Open Space also joined efforts with the health community to be part of the Prescription (Rx) Trail Program and 2009 guide. Doctors prescribe a number of walking steps to their patients as part of their path to healthy living. The patients are given a guide to walking trails throughout the area including Open Space perimeter trails in the South Valley.



**T**his has been a tremendously successful year with a wide variety of activities to help meet the mission of Open Space. The County will continue to develop the projects that have been initiated this year to create a sustainable, well-founded program that enables the community to be co-stewards of these public lands. The program was largely built on the principles of Aldo Leopold's teachings that will continue to serve as a foundation.

# Open Space Program Summary of Events, 2009



The Aldo Leopold Centennial Celebration 2009 honors Leopold's legacy in New Mexico and Arizona by promoting Leopold's vision that an ethical relationship with the land is essential to a vibrant and healthy community. The theme of this year-long celebration is the relevance of Leopold's land ethic to how we address today's pressing environmental issues and make policy decisions about our future. The goal is to engage the citizens of our community in the meaningful commitment to promise our children the inheritance of a beautiful and healthy physical environment. To learn all about the Celebration, visit [www.leopoldcelebration.org](http://www.leopoldcelebration.org).

As part of the Centennial Celebration, Bernalillo County Open Space and partners, including La Plazita Institute and the Hubbell House Alliance, held a series of free events throughout the year.



## Leopold Legacy Film Series

County Open Space and Leopold Centennial Celebration Committee spearheaded the Leopold Legacy Films Series and Competition throughout New Mexico, including outdoors in Open Space.

Film Series events include the following:

August 7 – Healing the Earth

August 29 – Restoring a Legacy

September 11 – Film Competition

September 25 – Blue Gold: Water Wars

September 26 – Lords of Nature: Life in a Land of Great Predators

October 9 – Heart and Soil

October 17 – The Mardy Murie Story

November 20 – Dirt! The Movie

### Winners of the film competition

- Youth Category, "Que Viva El Arte De Regando" by Andrew Mascarnes
- 5min Category, "Bovine Saga" by Stephen Auserman
- 20min Category, "An American Hero; Floyd Red Crow Westerman" by Brad Stoddard

## Gutierrez-Hubbell House Events

- March 21, History and Future of the Hubbell Farm
- April 18, Organic Composting
- June 6, New Mexico Reads Aldo Leopold "Kick-off"
- June 20, Gardening for Pollinators
- July 11, Intro to Urban Chicken Keeping
- July 18, Lunar Living and Water Harvesting
- August 15, Medicinal Gardening
- September 12, Hydroponic Gardening
- October 17, Harvesting and Storing Food and Seeds
- November 7, End of the Year Celebration



## Sanchez Farm Events

- March 22, Urban Food Forest Workshop
- April 26, Composting: Containers and Worms
- May 31, Chi Kung for Preventative Health
- June 14, El Agua es la Vida: Water is Life
- July 26, Curanderismo and its Roots: Session 1
- August 16, Curanderismo and its Roots: Session 2
- September 13, Opening to Wonder and Awe in One's Own Backyard and Open Space
- October 4, Vertical Gardens
- November 8, Seed Saving Workshop



## East Mountain Events

- Ojito de San Antonio, August 29, Bear Walk and Talk
- Carlito Springs, June 6, Wildflower Walk

## Volunteer Appreciation

### Special recognition goes out to the following volunteers:

EMHS teachers Bradd Schulke, Marisa Salazar and Stephanie Henderson for their valuable work with the County to develop the Land Health Monitoring Protocol and Orchard Restoration project at Ojito de San Antonio.

Allison Theoret's class at Polk Middle School for creating beautiful mosaic tiled benches that can now be enjoyed by the public at the Gutierrez-Hubbell House and Pajarito Open Space properties.

Eagle Scout James Gorley and Troop 286 for building and installing two information kiosks that have been installed at Pajarito and Sanchez Farm Open Space.

Eagle Scout Dylan Bality with assistance from troop 395 and Saint Bernadette's Parish for a terrific project at Sanchez Farm Open Space building ADA accessible raised bed garden structures, constructing and installing bat houses, and removing graffiti.

Los Vecinos Community Center and the High Desert Bird Club of NM for constructing 25 birdhouses to provide bird habitat throughout Open Space.

## Partner Recognition

Hubbell House Alliance farms and manages the Gutierrez-Hubbell House and property. To learn more or volunteer, visit <http://www.hubbellhouse.org>.

La Plazita Institute farms and manages Sanchez Farm Open Space. To learn more or volunteer, visit <http://laplazitainstitute.org>.

Durand Citizen Farmers farm the Durand Open Space 100% for wildlife habitat. To learn more, call Susan White at 505-321-2221.

East Mountain Historical Society partnered with the Open Space Program to develop interpretive materials at Sabino Canyon. <http://eastmountainhistory.org/>.

Bernalillo County Extension Office assisted the Open Space Land Management staff with trainings, as well as helped initiate the Orchard Restoration project at Ojito de San Antonio. <http://bernalilloextension.nmsu.edu/>.

New Mexico State University has a Memorandum of Agreement with Bernalillo County Open Space to help develop programming and provide technical assistance. <http://www.nmsu.edu/>.

# Bernalillo County Open Space Property Updates

## Valley Properties:



### Bachechi

Construction plans are being prepared that include landscaping and the development of a multi-use educational building. The landscape plans incorporate trails, a boardwalk, interpretive signs, outdoor kiva classroom, arbor maze and much more. The County is working with the local neighborhood associations to refine the plans before construction begins in spring 2010.

### Valle del Bosque

An additional acre along the eastern boundary was purchased in 2008. The Corps of Engineers is constructing a bridge to the Rio Grande Bosque from the property. The trail around Valle del Bosque has recently been adopted by Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Mexico for its status as a Prescription Trail.



### Sanchez Farm

La Plazita Institute is currently farming and managing this property. The Institute works with many parcientes, or groups, to farm separate areas throughout the site but collectively work together. Some of the groups include the UNM Sustainability Program, Erda Gardens, Gardens Edge, American Friends Service Committee and many more. The County and La Plazita Institute will be working on a

site master plan to identify the current needs of the property and future developments including outdoor furnishings, landscaping, and interpretive signs.

### Durand

The Durand Citizen Farmers lease the property from the County to farm it with native grains for birds, especially migrating cranes. The County is working with the group for general property enhancements including a memorial to the Durand family, installation of bird wood carvings, and additional outdoor furnishings. Future developments include an Albuquerque Metropolitan Arroyo Flood Control Authority project to put a culvert underground for flood control that will utilize the northern portion of the existing parking lot. This will also allow pedestrian access to the Rio Grande and Bosque.



### Pajarito

The property is currently being farmed by Scott Rasband for Rasband's Dairy Farm that provides local milk to New Mexico. The property is complete with a perimeter trail that meets Rx Trail standards and has benches and picnic tables. An additional 4 acres was purchased in 2009 and community planning for the additional acreage is underway. The County will also be installing interpretive signs and trail markers.

### Hubbell

The Hubbell House Alliance (HHA) manages this property and has open hours of operation to the public on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays from 10:00am-2:00pm. A docent is available during open hours to lead tours of the historic house. The Hubbell demonstration farm and living history museum provides many benefits to the community including job training for South Valley residents, local history tutorials, and demonstrations for small-scale sustainable agriculture. Future improvements include the acquisition of period piece furnishings, an exhibit master plan for interpretation, and continued agriculture production.



## East Mountain Properties:



### Ojito de San Antonio

Bernalillo County is working with East Mountain High School to develop a Land Health Monitoring Protocol that will be used as a model for other East Mountain properties. The County is also working on an orchard restoration project. Upcoming improvements include establishing an orchard irrigation system, developing a trail, and installing general and interpretive signage.

### Sabino Canyon

The County has completed a two-mile singletrack trail that extends to the east and west side of the property. General improvements have been made to the parking area and road. The County and East Mountain Historical Society have developed a "Sabino Canyon Open Space: An Interpretive Guide" as part of the National Park Service Challenge Cost Share Grant. Future work includes fuel wood reduction in 2010 to prevent forest fires. After the thinning, the trail will be enhanced with outdoor furnishings and interpretive wayside signs.



### Sedillo Ridge

An additional 10 acres was purchased in 2008 for a parking lot and trail access. The County is currently working with NM State Forestry to implement a fuel wood reduction project to help prevent forest fires. Future developments include the design and layout of a trail complete with outdoor furnishings and interpretive signs.

### Carlito Springs

Carlito Springs is currently closed to the public. The County is making site improvements and will be working towards contracting out architectural design to renovate the current structures so they will be safe and accommodating to visitors.



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BERNALILLO COUNTY

OPEN SPACE

## **Volunteer Opportunities:**

Bernalillo County Open Space Program welcomes volunteers and values the participation of community and neighborhood groups in property stewardship. To learn about volunteer and educational opportunities, visit the County web site at:

<http://www.bernco.gov/openspace>

or contact the Open Space Coordinator at 1 (505) 314-0400

