

## HOW TO BECOME A SITE STEWARD

Thank you for your interest in the Santa Fe National Forest Site Steward Program. Training is usually held every other year based on the need for new site stewards with the most recent regular training session completed in the spring of 2010. However, the program also provides for steward training on an as-needed basis during the two-year interim.

Site stewards work in assigned areas to monitor archaeological and historical sites for evidence of deterioration due to natural causes or vandalism on the Santa Fe National Forest (SFNF). The forest is approximately defined by the area north of Cuba to the Rio Chama (along Highway 96); Cuba and Jemez Springs on the west; Cochiti and Santa Fe on the south; and Villanueva and Las Vegas on the east.

Site stewards must adhere to the SFNF Code of Conduct for volunteers, which includes compliance with preservation ethics and laws at all times, adherence to confidentiality regarding site location and composition, and avoidance of conflict of interest with the program. Stewards are expected to sign an agreement with the Forest Service to abide by the code of conduct and the procedures in the SFNF Site Steward Manual. Participants in the program may be subject to a background check by SFNF law enforcement officers. Steward responsibilities include visits to sites on a regular assigned basis (usually once a month, weather and roads permitting), to report damage or significant changes, and to participate as a team member in one of the forest's six assigned areas. Site visits are always made with two site stewards; neither non-site stewards nor pets are allowed on official visits. Additional criteria for the selection of SFNF Site Steward training candidates are:

- Must be 18 years or older and must not have been convicted of a felony.
- Must be willing to commit to a minimum of one day per month for field monitoring activities. Time commitment per visit can be from three hours up to a full day, including driving to and from the assigned site/s plus the monitoring activities in the field.
- Must be willing to drive to assigned sites that may be up to 100 miles each way from their homes.
- Must be willing to drive their vehicle on roads that may be rough or primitive. Access to approximately 95% of the sites is via roads that require high clearance or a four-wheel-drive vehicle (provided by the steward). Many sites are ideal for reaching on a mountain bike.
- Should be capable, at a minimum, of moderately strenuous hiking to monitor sites.
- Should have a history of involvement or strong commitment to either cultural heritage or natural resource preservation programs. Candidates will be asked to provide specifics on their application form regarding the

nature of their interest and length of involvement with cultural or natural resource programs.

- Should be interested in assisting with the infrastructure of the program including helping the area team leaders (ATLs), working with the governing council, and participating in educational programs.
- Prohibited from carrying or using firearms while conducting site steward duties.
- Not allowed to take pet animals on site visits.

The program also has affiliated volunteer roles that provide possibilities for those who choose not to work in the field, but are willing to assist with record keeping in the SFNF office, help with training material preparation or public outreach via the newsletter and website, etc. With the addition of many new stewards, assistance with maintaining the infrastructure of the organization is needed.

Educational and field opportunities are available to site stewards and affiliated volunteers. During the winter, monthly evening dinner meetings with educational talks are presented. In addition, training courses are provided in response to requests from the site steward membership. Past training courses have included basic and advanced GPS training, site survey training, ham radio course, etc.

A solicitation for new stewards is made every other year. Applicants must complete a one-day training course to become a SFNF site steward or affiliated volunteer. Training introduces volunteers to the Site Steward Program, law enforcement methods and protocols, examples of site deterioration, documentation, a visit to simulated sites to observe the conduct of a site visit, and demonstration of techniques of evidence collection that do not affect the site. ATLs provide overviews of the SFNF six defined areas.

Upon completion of the one-day training, candidates are assigned to an area in the forest dependent upon each candidate's interest and area team needs. Candidates spend a day or more with the ATL to become acquainted with assigned sites and methods of observation. Once trained and approved by the forest supervisor, stewards are placed on a provisional status for one year. With satisfactory performance during that first year, candidates become certified site stewards with the SFNF.

Between regular training sessions, the need for new stewards is met by interim training. All steward requirements described above must be met, beginning with submitting an application. The applicant must agree to join a team in one of the six forest areas where a steward vacancy currently exists. If there are no vacancies at the time of application, the Program will contact the applicant when a vacancy occurs.

The program is an organization of volunteers sanctioned by the SFNF, overseen by the Forest Heritage Resource Program Manager, and supervised by the site

steward council. It is a cooperating resource with the New Mexico SiteWatch Program administered by the Historic Preservation Division of New Mexico.

If the site steward program sounds interesting to you, please follow these steps:

1. At the website, go to the **Forms** page
2. Download the application: **Site Steward Application**
3. Fill out the requested fields, and
4. Either print and mail the application to:

SFNF Site Steward Program  
P.O. Box 31943  
Santa Fe, NM 87594-1943

5. or email the application to:  
[sitestewards@sfnfsitestewards.org](mailto:sitestewards@sfnfsitestewards.org)

Thank you for your interest in this great program! We look forward to hearing from you!

*October 16, 2009 (rev July, 2010)*