

SANTA FE NATIONAL FOREST SITE STEWARD COUNCIL MANUAL

The council is the governing body of the Santa Fe National Forest Site Steward Program

I. BACKGROUND

The Santa Fe National Forest is responsible for managing public forest lands in northern New Mexico, which contains one of the largest collections of heritage resources in the United States. These include archaeological sites representing many cultures and time periods, plus historical sites remaining from the earliest occupation of the region by Europeans. These resources are a legacy of the history of this area and are treasured by both Native Americans and the current multicultural population residing in the area. These sites are threatened by natural actions including fire, erosion, land movement, and the constant decay caused by climate conditions. They are also threatened by human actions including harmful vandalism and willful exploitation.

The Santa Fe National Forest has the responsibility to identify, classify, and record the changing status of these resources as well as protect and preserve them for future generations as a legacy. The accomplishment of this goal must include the education of the general population regarding the value and need to preserve these resources. Success in this mission must include the development of a conservation ethic in the general public and solicitation of public participation in the protection and preservation of these resources.

The Santa Fe National Forest has limited resources to accomplish this mission. The Site Steward Program offers an opportunity for volunteers who practice this ethic to augment the resources of the Santa Fe National Forest by assisting as “eyes” in the preservation mission, by providing assistance in the identification and documentation of these resources, and by serving as spokespersons to the general public in fostering awareness of the importance of preserving these resources.

II. MISSION STATEMENT

The site steward council partners with the Santa Fe National Forest in those tasks suitable to a volunteer organization in the management of the heritage resources.

As a partner with the Santa Fe National Forest, the Site Steward Program adheres to the rules and regulations governing the Forest Service in the management of heritage resources. It is governed by those policies applicable to the use of volunteers within the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Forest Service.

III. ORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

A. STATE OF NEW MEXICO SITE WATCH PROGRAM

1. The New Mexico Site Watch Program is a state-wide volunteer program coordinated by the New Mexico Historic Preservation Division and funded by public and private partnerships.
2. It has authority to establish standards for training and operations of Site Watch stewards.
3. Santa Fe National Forest Site Steward Program and New Mexico Site Watch Program are mutually cooperating resources.

IV. COUNCIL RESPONSIBILITIES

A. GOVERNANCE

1. The council is responsible for developing, managing, implementing, and administering the policies, procedures, programs, and documents to conduct the business of the Site Steward Program.
2. The council may make changes in operating procedures by majority vote with notice to the Santa Fe National Forest
3. Changes in organizational structure require a two-thirds vote and approval of the Heritage Program Manager (HPM).

B. RECRUITMENT

1. The council is responsible for recruiting volunteers to become members of the Site Steward Program.
2. Completed applications of individuals interested in the Site Steward Program are screened by HPM in coordination with the Training Committee Chair (TCC).

C. TRAINING

1. The council establishes a training program in accordance with the requirements specified by the Santa Fe National Forest, the State of New Mexico, and stipulations in the Site Steward Manual.
2. After completion of a one-year provisional status, stewards are certified by the council upon recommendation from the Area team Leader (ATL) to the council.
3. The council identifies qualified trainers within the organization willing to participate in training
4. The council establishes a training program for members of the Site Steward Program that provides continuing education relating to cultural, archaeological and historical events. Site steward training includes the use of monitoring and survey techniques. These training programs may be conducted in coordination with the New Mexico Site Watch program.

D. CERTIFYING

The council is responsible for certifying provisional stewards. (See Site Steward Manual, section III. D. CERTIFICATION FOR SITE MONITORING.)

E. MONITORING AND OVERSIGHT

1. The council is responsible for establishing adequate monitoring of all aspects of the Site Steward Program to assure that operations satisfy the requirements of the Santa Fe National Forest and the goals and objectives of the Site Steward Program.
2. The council is responsible for evaluating participants and applicants to assure continued commitment to the vision and mission of the program.

F. DOCUMENTATION

1. The council maintains the official records of operations for the program.
2. The council ensures that the work of members is recorded in the records of the Site Steward Program (records include but are not limited to minutes, functional organizational chart, newsletter, roster, budget coordinator report, heritage resource report, and the Council, ATL and Site Steward Manuals.
3. Records include documentation of the certification process for each member.

V. COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

- A. ATLs and Assistant Area Team Leaders (AATLs) are automatically voting members of the council; membership continues for the duration of their assignment as ATL or AATL.
- B. The council appoints a minimum of two members-at-large from the certified program membership to serve as voting members of the council for a one-year period. Members-at-large may identify issues raised by non-council members and present these issues to the council. These appointments may be extended one additional year.
- C. The chairs of the four standing committees—archive, communications, education, and training—are automatically members of the council and shall have one vote each. If the chair is already serving on the council as a voting member, he/she may have only one vote.
- D. Site stewards or affiliated volunteers who are assigned to head major projects other than the four committees listed in C, become nonvoting members of the council and serve for the duration of their project.
- E. The HPM or his/her designated representative is a nonvoting member of the council, may participate in all deliberations, and may exercise veto power.

VI. COUNCIL OPERATION

A. OFFICERS

1. The voting members of the council elect a chair, vice-chair, secretary, and budget coordinator. If deemed necessary, chair and vice chair may be substituted by co-chairs. These officers serve for a one-year term, may serve one additional consecutive term, and may serve again after an absence of at least two years.
2. New officers take office at the close of the first quarterly meeting of the calendar year.
3. If a vacancy is created for an officer position during the elected term of an individual, the members elect a replacement to fulfill the term.
4. The chair shall appoint an ad hoc Nominating Committee to prepare a slate of officers for submission to the council in a timely manner.

B. RECORD KEEPING

1. Minutes are maintained of the council deliberations and are available for review to any program member on request.
2. A summary of council actions is reported to the membership in a newsletter at least semi-annually.

C. METHOD OF OPERATION

1. The council meets quarterly on an agreed-upon date and location normally set at the preceding meeting. Special meetings may be called by the chair to deal with emergency matters.
2. The chair is responsible for establishing and communicating the agenda of the meetings to members.
3. *Robert's Rules of Order* govern proceedings of the council.
4. Communications from the Santa Fe National Forest are conducted on a priority basis. Representatives of the Santa Fe National Forest may attend quarterly meetings to present specific material germane to the program operations.
5. Any site steward may attend the quarterly meetings of the council, may be recognized by the chair, but cannot vote on matters coming before the council.

D. PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

1. By a majority vote, the council may terminate the membership of any member for failure to abide by the code of conduct, for personal action that discredits the site steward organization, or for failure to perform assigned duties.
2. A letter report on any personnel action is forwarded to the HPM. The HPM may request council reconsideration of a termination order with justification.
3. The HPM may request council review of questionable conduct of a steward with recommendation for termination.

E. MEMBERSHIP COMMUNICATION

1. The council holds an annual meeting for the entire membership of the Site Steward Program as well as additional periodic educational meetings.
2. The council publishes a newsletter to advise all members of operational activity of the program, announce new program initiatives, introduce new members, etc.
3. The council sponsors a member-managed website.
4. The council sponsors a member-managed mailing list.

F. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

1. The council monitors via quarterly reports by the budget coordinator the issuance of checks and deposits of Site Steward Foundation (SSF) funds.
2. The council reviews the status reports of the Site Steward Program finances at each quarterly council meeting.
3. The council participates in the development of the annual budget and other budgets for operations requiring financial support.
4. By consensus, the council requests the SSF to transfer existing funds and records to a similar organization in the event of termination of operations.
5. The council reserves the right to request an audit of Site Steward Program records as necessary.

G. OPERATING YEAR

For financial purposes, the operating year is October 1 to September 30.

H. STANDING COMMITTEES

1. The Standing Committees have a chairperson(s) elected by the Council. Members (if required) are appointed by the Committee Chair. The committee chairs are members of the Council.
2. The Standing Committees and their functions are:
 - a. Archive Committee. The Archive Committee will gather all Council meeting minutes, updated manuals, training materials, awards, and *Site Lines*. Materials will be organized and stored on an external shared folder on the SFNF network. Access to the folder is controlled by the HPM or other Forest Staff, and is granted to the Archive Committee Chair, Training Committee Chair, Secretary, and Council Chair, plus other members of the Council as needed.

The Archive Committee, in coordination with the ATLS, also maintains a roster of all current stewards and their contact information.
 - b. Communications Committee. The Communications Committee consists of four aspects: the Email distribution list, the Site Steward web site, the publishing of quarterly newsletters, and the maintenance of the online system for reporting Site Visits and Activity logs.

- c. Education Committee. The Education Committee organizes programs for the membership. Duties include arranging for speakers, facilitating the meetings, arranging for meeting space and equipment as well as coordinating with the Budget coordinator for any honoraria. Notification of such meetings is initially done with timely reminders to interested parties.
- d. Training Committee. The Training Committee organizes training of new site stewards on an as-needed basis. Training may be in-person or on-line. The duties include receiving applications and coordinating their approval with the HPM, advertising of the training session, maintaining training materials, coordinating and conducting the training session (presenting and arranging for others to present material), coordinating with the HPM and ATLS on assigning trainees to areas for field training, and communicating results of the training to the site steward council chair for dissemination.

VII. COUNCIL MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

All members of the council and the HPM are asked to participate in quarterly council meetings. All council members are asked to stand for officer elections. To the extent possible, they are expected to attend the annual meeting, participate in or attend training session as well as educational programs. With the exception of the HPM and project leaders, all membership categories hold full voting privileges. If elected to office, members continue to serve in their original capacity but also assume specific responsibilities of the offices listed below.

A. COUNCIL CHAIR/COCHAIR

1. Provides overall leadership for council
2. Develops program plan/schedule/budget with officers
3. Serves as primary council contact with HPM
4. Develops functional organizational chart
5. Develops agenda and chairs quarterly council meetings
6. Chairs annual meeting
7. Provides summary council report for annual meeting
8. Participates in training and educational programs when feasible
9. Only casts a vote to break a tie.

In the case of co-chairs, the facilitating co-chair can vote to break a tie. The co-chair who is not facilitating the meeting can vote.

B. COUNCIL VICE CHAIR

If co-chairs are not elected, the Council Vice Chair

1. Assists chair in providing leadership, planning, and monitoring of council and organization functions
2. Chairs council meetings in absence of chair
3. Maintains awareness of chair and council activities
4. Participates in council committees as needed

C. SECRETARY

1. Records proceedings of council, annual, and other meetings
2. Prepares draft and final minutes for council review and approval
3. Transmits the approved minutes to the Archive chair

D. BUDGET COORDINATOR

1. Prepares the annual budget and other operating budgets requiring financial support for the Site Steward Program activities for the council to review and approve (See more above under section VI. F. Financial Management)
2. Prepares, submits, and makes any necessary revisions to the application for the annual budget to the Site Steward Foundation (SSF)
3. Prepares and submits the necessary request forms to the SSF for disbursements
4. Establishes and maintains back-up records and accounts that reflect receipt and disbursement of program funds by the SSF
5. Provides the program quarterly financial reports for the council to review
6. Provides orientation to successor regarding budgeting process and location of all pertinent records

VIII. AMENDMENTS

Amendments may be proposed by any steward, then discussed and adopted/rejected by the council in concert with the HPM. Any changes will be inserted into this Manual and, if needed, the Site Steward Manual and/or the ATL Manual.