

LAS PLACITAS  ASSOCIATION
2008 ANNUAL REPORT

Our goal is to protect open space, restore riparian watersheds, promote recreational, educational and rural activities, and engage the members of our community in appreciating the environmental and cultural richness of this area. We work with residents, land owners, developers and others to ensure Placitas retains its quality of life, adequate and clean water, clean air, dark skies, plant and animal diversity, scenic views, sites of archaeological significance and opportunities to learn about and enjoy our surroundings.

Find out more about LPA -- including directions to the Open Space -- by logging onto www.lasplacitas.org.

Community Outreach - The work of the Community Outreach committee continued to focus on public input to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Resource Management Plan revision for BLM lands within and near Placitas. Our May 2008 Public Lands Forum, featuring BLM managers and many of our elected officials, provided an effective vehicle for local residents to register their public land use preferences for nearby BLM land uses for years to come. LPA will continue to support conservation and low-impact recreational uses for all public lands immediately adjacent to Placitas. We are also encouraged by the recent addition of the Crest of Montezuma to BLM land holdings in Placitas, and we're continuing our work to have this area designated for open space and low-impact recreation. LPA's hard work opposing the 2/3-mile wide energy corridor through Placitas, proposed by federal authorities in 2007, paid off greatly with the official removal of the Placitas corridor segment from the final plan!

Education/Hikes - We had wide community use of the Placitas Open Space area during the 9 events hosted by LPA this season. Twenty to thirty people were in attendance at the Migratory & Nesting Bird Hike and also at the Plants of the Placitas Open Space Hike. In August we hosted the Wild Trails of Placitas Workshop featuring many speakers including Dave Foreman of the Rewilding Institute. The Diamond Tail Hike was a big hit with over 65 in attendance and the Star Party had great weather and over 100 community members in attendance. We all learned more about the beauty and history of our wonderful community and appreciated the fragile treasure that we have in our back yards.

Placitas Open Space - In conjunction with our Las Huertas Watershed project, LPA has worked cooperatively with City of Albuquerque Open Space Division to implement volunteer-driven management measures included in the Placitas Open Space Management Plan. LPA volunteer crews worked with the City of Albuquerque Open Space Division staff during 2008 to restore existing trails, construct new ones, and close trails that are no longer needed. A primary loop trail is now about half complete, with the remaining work slated for 2009.

Watershed Management/Riparian Restoration - 2008 was a busy and productive year for the Watershed Project. Riparian restoration efforts focused on our work with private landowners along the Rosa de Castilla reach of Las Huertas Creek. Together with Wild Earth Guardians (formerly Forest Guardians), we planted hundreds of native cottonwood and willow trees to restore native riparian habitat in this area, at the same time we've removed highly water-consumptive invasive tree species. We've also designed additional Creek channel stabilization structures in this area to reduce erosion and channel scour, enhance riparian vegetation and wildlife habitat, and increase aquifer recharge, and look forward to new projects implementation early next year. Thanks to all the LPA members who have participated in our many educational seminars and project workshops throughout the year. We look forward to further restoration work with you in 2009!