

NATIONAL FOREST

Coconino

2007 REPORT TO THE STAKEHOLDERS

Dear Coconino National Forest Friends, Visitors, and Neighbors:

As I reflect back on 2007, the highlights that come to mind are associated with the time I spent out of the office, on the Forest, seeing visitors at play; employees, volunteers, and cooperators at work; and partners joining us to manage the Coconino National Forest.

Last winter, as I walked thru the Wing Mountain Snowplay Area and saw the hundreds of people enjoying themselves sledding and playing in the snow, I appreciated why it is so important for safe and managed snowplay areas with facilities like bathrooms and parking for the many visitors. The Wing Mountain Snowplay Area came about through the efforts of the Northern Arizona Winter Recreation Task Force, a community-based group of individuals, organizations, and agencies including the Forest Service, which formed in 2005 to address winter recreational needs. During the 2006-2007 winter season over 13,000 people visited the Wing Mountain Snowplay Area. Collaborations between the Coconino and the community are vital to finding ways to provide safe and managed snowplay sites.

If it's not snowing on the Forest then it must be fire season. In 2007, we responded to 401 lightning and human-caused fires which occurred in every month except January. In July 2007, as I visited the 5,046 acre

Birdie fire, southwest of Mormon Lake Village, I wished the Mormon Lake Basin project – which was designed to reduce hazardous fuels and improve forest health on 2,269 acres near Mormon Lake Village – was already done, not months away from starting. In conjunction with the Greater Flagstaff Forest Partnership, contractors and other cooperators, we've made good progress treating hazardous fuels in the Flagstaff area on the Fort Valley, Woody, Mountaineer and Eastside projects. And planning for the last project around Flagstaff is underway. I believe our efforts at protecting communities through fuels reduction projects around Flagstaff will serve us well when a fire happens to start. In addition to these projects, the Coconino began utilizing and managing lightning caused fires during the 2007 fire season to treat fuels and restore fire adapted ecosystems across the forest.

Beside the need to restore fire to the ecosystem, the other significant issue facing the forest is the increasing impacts and needs associated with the recreational use of the forest.

One particular area that needs to be addressed is Fossil Creek. There have been significant resource accomplishments in Fossil Creek, including the restoration of the water flow and the reintroduction of

native fish. Unfortunately, the increasing recreational use of the area has resulted in increased user-created impacts such as littering, improper disposal of human waste, trampling of vegetation, and other resource damage. In response to these issues, the forest is working with Northern Arizona University and other stakeholders to find ways we can work together to better address these issues and needs.

I believe the most promising and lasting way to sustain the resources of the Coconino National Forest and to address users' needs continues to be through partnerships between the Forest Service and the communities – individuals and organizations that also care so much about this incredible place. I invite and encourage you to be part of this great outdoor adventure – managing the Coconino National Forest.

Nora B. Rasure

Nora Rasure
Forest Supervisor



2008 MARKS THE CENTENNIAL OF THE COCONINO NATIONAL FOREST

President Theodore Roosevelt signed a proclamation on January 13, 1908 formally creating the Coconino National Forest from the San Francisco Mountains Forest Reserve. An additional proclamation signed by Roosevelt on July 2, 1908 consolidated portions of the Black Mesa, Tonto and Grand Canyon Forest Reserves into the Coconino National Forest.