

Project Year-End Summary Report 2021

Title of Project: Rio Fernando Park Herbarium

Begin answering in the shaded box right beside or below each question and it will expand to accommodate as you type. Use up to a total of two pages. More detailed presentations, articles or posters are welcome separately (See final instructions at the end of this form.)*

1. Organization name or Individual who received the grant: Taos Land Trust

2. Amount of Grant: \$1000

4. Was additional outside funding obtained? (check box that applies) Yes No
Other funding source(s) if you checked "yes." NM YCC Program, UNM CCC Lift Program, NRGNHA, LANL, SF Community Foundation, Taos Community Foundation

5. Briefly, how was the grant money from the Carter Conservation Fund used?
The funding from the Carter Conservation Fund was used to purchase herbarium supplies, build an herbarium cabinet, and for training in herbarium techniques.

6. Write an abstract or summary of the activities performed and the progress that was made this year on your project. Save any conclusions, lessons learned, and benefits achieved for the final sections, 7&8.

The Rio Fernando Park herbarium project was coordinated and led by UNM Climate Change Corps program student, Peggy Descoville. She researched the techniques based on the recommendations of Kari Malen, guided the purchase of supplies, and then led the NM youth conservation crew members in collection, identification, mounting, and storing the plant samples. Ben Wright will be building the herbarium cabinet, and mounting it in the Taos Land Trust offices in the winter months of 2021-2022. Peggy will follow with a catalogue of the plant samples that will be updated as samples are collected in the future.

7. State how your project furthers a Native Plant Society mission area. Pick the best fitting area: achieves plant or ecological education, contributes to conservation/restoration of native plants and habitats, adds to botanical research, or promotes appropriate use of native plants to conserve water, land and/or wildlife.

The project allowed the Taos Land Trust to begin the process of cataloguing the plant species growing at Rio Fernando Park. This information adds to the depth of the Long Term Ecological Monitoring (LTEM) at Rio Fernando Park and promises to continue to add to those data sets as time progresses. Since the project involved students, both in teaching and learning roles, the NPS educational goals were expressed through the project as well. Discussions related to the classification of native versus non-native versus invasive species ensued through the work on this project as well as through the parallel invasive species weed mapping project through the Taos County Cooperative Weed Management area.

8. State any other conclusions. Include any lessons learned that would assist others. What benefit to you, the community or the environment resulted or do you hope will result from your use of this grant?

Peggy's work on this project helped us to recognize the value of learning by teaching. She took on the project as part of her summer internship for UNM, intending to learn as much as she could about native plants and how to collect and store them. As the project progressed, it became clear that her knowledge and skills needed to be communicated to our youth crew members. The young folks became interested in the project and gained a basic understanding of native plants and their wetlands and uplands habitats. In general, we are finding that comprehensive and holistic trainings in outdoor education carry significant community benefits because the students are learning both practical skills and their real world implications.

We are hoping that the ongoing efforts in the herbarium project directly connects with the LTEM at RFP program, so that we can begin to understand the connection between the effects of climate change and the subsequent ecosystem responses. Native plant habitat restoration projects are required to take into account the the effects of a changing climate to remain resilient, so the more information we can gather on which species are most likely to survive, the more successful our restoration efforts will become.

Final Instructions

Please send your completed form in MS Word as an email attachment to cartergrantapps@gmail.com by November 31.

** To remain in good standing for any future funding from the Native Plant Society of New Mexico, plan to write an article (600-1000 words, illustrations welcome) for our newsletter, **or** create and present a poster at our annual state conference, **or** send us a copy of or link to a published article connected with the past year's work, **or** work with a local chapter of NPSNM to make an educational and visual presentation to a group.*

What are your intentions in this regard? I have been asked to present at the Taos NPSNM chapter meeting on Long Term Ecological Monitoring and other recent programs at Rio Fernando Park

Our next state conference is scheduled for August, 2022 in Albuquerque. Contact our Albuquerque chapter if you wish to contribute in that way. Write to cartergrantapps@gmail.com at any time with questions.