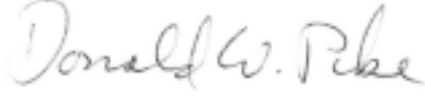





2022-2024 Strategic Plan

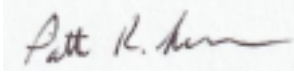
Board Authorization of Strategic Plan

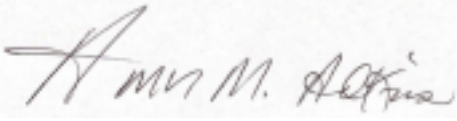
President:  Date signed: 26 October 2021
Brian Stultz


Vice President:  Date signed: 24 November 2021
Don Pike


Secretary:  Date signed: 29 October 2021
Urb Weidner


Treasurer:  Date signed: 25 October 2021
Susan Sridharan

Executive Director:  Date signed: 26 October 2021
Patti Fenner

Board Member:  Date signed: 8 December 2021
Ann Adkins

Board Member:  Date signed: 3 January 2022
Pete Allard

Board Member:  Date signed: November 2021
Dayan Anderson

Board Member:  Date signed: 26 October 2021
Scott Wood

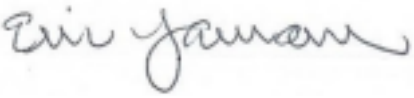
Board Member:  Date signed: 1 November 2021
Eric Yamane

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
Executive Summary	1
I. Mission and Vision Statements	2
II. Organizational Description	2
III. Standing Committee Roles and Responsibilities	2
IV. Working Relationship with the Tonto	6
V. Goals and Strategies	7
VI. Operating Budget	11
VII. Monitoring and Evaluation of Plan	11
VIII. Communicating the Plan	12

Executive Summary

This plan was developed by the Board of Friends of the Tonto National Forest, to guide our actions in coordination with the Tonto National Forest (TNF) until 2024. This plan will be reviewed and adjusted if necessary, at the end of each calendar year. It describes our organizational structure, mission and vision, goals, and how we will communicate our plan to others.

Friends of the Tonto National Forest (FOTNF) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization of volunteers who assist the TNF in its critical mission of natural and cultural resource management. FOTNF promotes public understanding of the Tonto National Forest's policies and programs through community outreach, projects and outings.

By 2024, FOTNF envisions being a valued Forest Service partner through successful development and implementation of projects that support forest programs.

The FOTNF is organized exclusively for conservation and educational purposes; to protect, conserve, and promote appreciation and enjoyment of the ecological, cultural, scenic, and recreational resources and values of the TNF. FOTNF serves the TNF – its resources, its employees, and its users. FOTNF accomplishes its mission through volunteer projects and activities such as interpretation, education, advocacy for the Tonto National Forest, and fundraising, in consultation and coordination with the TNF.

FOTNF is a dues-paying membership organization that encourages active involvement from our members, Board, Committees, and Project/Event Leaders. Project volunteers do not need to be dues-paying members to work on FOTNF projects.

FOTNF Board will provide leadership for raising funds to support approved activities. Fundraising will be accomplished through membership dues, grants, corporate matching programs, corporate and private donations as well as other fundraising activities approved by the Board.

In addition to its Board of Directors and Officers (Executive Director, President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer), FOTNF also maintains several standing committees associated with different aspects of our mission: Communications, Cultural Resources, Education/Outreach, Finance, Membership, and Natural Resources.

FOTNF works as a Partner organization under a Master Challenge Cost Share Agreement with the Tonto National Forest, that allows for transfer of funds, services and items of value between our two entities. For projects which involve grants or donation of items of value from the Friends, or transfers of funds from the Forest to Friends, a Supplemental Project Agreement (SPA) is created that details the financial and work terms of the project. This SPA is signed by both the FOTNF and the Tonto.

The primary goals established in the plan for FOTNF for the period 2022-2024 are to maintain a coherent and consistent organizational focus, increase organizational capacity, establish volunteer network to include trained project leaders who can develop and implement projects, to ensure FOTNF becomes an integral partner of the entire Forest for planning, development and implementation of natural and cultural resource management projects, expand community outreach and our membership/volunteer base, and ensure all projects sponsored have sufficient organizational and financial support.

To accomplish the primary goals, the Plan identifies a number of specific objectives and a procedure for monitoring and evaluating our achievements.

I. Mission and Vision Statements

Mission

Friends of the Tonto National Forest is a group of volunteers who assist the Forest Service in its critical mission of natural and cultural resource management. FOTNF promotes public understanding of the Tonto National Forest's policies, programs and projects through community outreach, projects and outings.

Vision

FOTNF continues to be a valuable partner fully integrated into the Forest 's organizational procedures and is recognized as a significant part of the Tonto NF's success in resource management and accomplishing targets.

II. Organizational Description

The FOTNF is a 501(C) 3 organization, organized exclusively for educational purposes; more specifically to protect, conserve, and promote appreciation and enjoyment of the ecological, cultural, scenic, and recreational resources and values of the Tonto National Forest. FOTNF serves the Tonto National Forest – its resources, its employees, and its users.

FOTNF accomplishes its mission through volunteer projects and activities such as interpretation, education, advocacy for the Tonto National Forest, and fundraising, in consultation and coordination with the TNF.

FOTNF is a membership organization. Members vote each fall to elect board members and officers. All board meetings are open to anyone to attend. Any modification of bylaws is first voted on by the board/officers, then referred to the membership for a vote. Only board members, officers, and the Executive Director are authorized to vote on all other decisions.

The Board shall consist of no fewer than three (3) Officers (President, Vice President, and Secretary/Treasurer), and an Executive Director; and no more than 5 Officers (President, Past President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer), Executive Director, 6 standing committee chairs, and 8 Board members-at-large.

There will be no position held by two or more people.

III. Standing Committees

Each standing committee is listed below, with its primary role and responsibilities. Within the next year after approval of this strategic plan, each committee will write a brief operating plan for inclusion in the overall plan, detailing how they will fulfill their responsibilities.

Communications

- The basic role of the Communications Committee is to communicate information to the general public about FOTNF and the Tonto National Forest through the FOTNF website, Facebook page and newsletters.
- Responsibilities of the Communications Committee are to:
- Maintain the FOTNF website (www.friendsofthetonto.org)
- Regularly post on the FOTNF Facebook page.
- Maintain current calendars of events on both the website and FB page. ● Respond to FB page inquiries in a timely manner (ideally within 24 hours). ● Gather information for, create and email a newsletter approximately every September, October, January and April.
- Maintain photographs of FOTNF events and meetings, for the record.

Cultural Resources

- The Cultural Resources Committee (CRC) has the responsibility for developing and implementing projects, programs, and activities for FOTNF where the basic focus is to protect, enhance, and/or interpret cultural resource sites on the Tonto NF. It works in consultation with the Forest Archaeologist or a designee, who identifies projects where the Forest requires volunteer assistance and evaluates the capability of FOTNF to undertake such projects before referring them to the Board.
- The CRC may also independently identify issues concerning cultural resources, and bring those to the attention of the Forest Archaeologist, especially those concerning ongoing vandalism, erosion, and the effects of recreation and other uses. The CRC may also propose enhancement projects to the Forest Archaeologist, including interpretive development projects and public education programs for development and implementation by FOTNF either in conjunction with Forest efforts or independently.
- Ideally, the CRC would meet on a regular basis with the Forest Archaeologist to discuss issues and to plan programs and projects.
- For those projects to be administered directly by Forest Heritage staff, the CRC would organize volunteers through FOTNF to work under FS supervision.
- For those projects and programs where the Forest will allow FOTNF to operate independently, the CRC will develop, organize, and implement all aspects using the volunteers and resources of FOTNF and will provide professional archaeological supervision where needed.

Education/Outreach

- Communicate information about management activities on the Tonto National Forest to the general public and students.
- Assure that all education communications are conducted by knowledgeable and informed individuals in order to convey the most updated and accurate information.
- Maintain close communication with the Forest Service so that current information is shared, and the Forest Service knows what types of education events are being held.
- Keep the Board of FOTNF informed of education and outreach activities.
- Focus education activities for youth at schools within driving distance of the Tonto National Forest. (Examples: lectures, participation in science fairs, field trips)
- Focus education and information activities for adults and families at clubs and service organizations that are within driving distance of the Tonto National Forest.
- Base education activities on topics that generate interest for involvement in ongoing natural and cultural resource projects.
- Responsibilities of the Education/Outreach Committee are to:
 - Coordinate education/outreach activities with committee chairs for uniformity, accuracy and continuity. Make sure all contacts with students and adults are professional, and presenter is appropriately dressed to represent FOTNF and the Tonto National Forest.
 - All presenters should follow up with groups after presentations to make sure they were well received and to solicit input for future presentations.
 - Committee chairperson will monitor presentations and provide constructive critiques. All presentations will conclude with a brief period to answer questions and explain the FOTNF and its relationship with the Tonto National Forest. The conclusion of talks will also include how to join FOTNF or participate in field activities.

Finance

- The primary roles of the Finance Committee are to support the Treasurer with his/her duties and to advise the FOTNF Board on matters that impact the finances of FOTNF.

Treasurer Support:

Provide advice on accounting procedures

- Support with necessary tools (software, record retention)
- Develop financial reporting formats for Board and membership
- Provide guidance with financial requirements of grants and Forest Service Supplemental Project Agreements
- Serve as advisor to the Board regarding financial matters:
 - Draft annual budget
 - Periodically audit financial reports and procedures
 - Advise Board on external audits
 - Provide guidance to Board on establishing and maintaining reserves/endowments
 - Work with committee members in order to establish financial needs of projects
 - Asset management
- Oversee and manage fundraising activities.
- Review Financial Internal Control Policy annually to confirm compliance.

Membership and Recruitment

- Provide new member welcome, orientation, and periodic requests for project volunteers
- Plan and coordinate opportunities and personnel for membership recruitment.
- Develop and maintain e-mail contact lists (board members, FOTNF members, committee members, etc.) that can be readily accessed by board members and committee chairs.
- Provide instruction in the use of these e-mail contact lists for interested board members and committee chairs
- Maintain database on member skills and interests to recruit project volunteers (Set up at entry/renewal)
- Track member retention statistics
- Arrange periodic outings for member orientation and promotion

Natural Resources

- The Natural Resource Committee (NRC) has the responsibility for developing and implementing projects, programs, and activities for FOTNF where the basic focus is to protect, enhance, and/or interpret natural resources on the Tonto NF. It works in consultation with various Tonto NF natural resource staff who identify projects where the Forest requires volunteer assistance, and evaluates the capability of FOTNF to undertake such projects before referring them to the Board.
- The NRC may also independently identify issues concerning natural resources and bring those to the attention of Forest staff. The NRC may also propose enhancement projects to the Forest, including interpretive development projects and public education programs for development and implementation by FOTNF either in conjunction with Forest efforts or independently.
- Ideally, the NRC would meet on a regular basis with the Forest staff to discuss issues and plan programs, and projects.
- For those projects and programs where the Forest will allow FOTNF to operate independently, the NRC will develop, organize, and implement all aspects of the project using the volunteers and resources of FOTNF, and will provide supervision where needed.

IV. Working Relationship with the Tonto

FOTNF works under a Partnership organization Master Challenge Cost Share Agreement with the Forest. This instrument was selected, as it allows for transfer of funds, services, and items of value between our two entities. For projects which involve grants or donation of items of value from the Friends, or transfers of funds from the Forest to Friends, a Supplemental Project Agreement is created that details the financial and work terms of the project. This SPA is signed by both the FOTNF and the Tonto.

The Tonto has asked FOTNF to change its operational relationship with the Forest from a Volunteer organization to a Partner organization. This means project workers are no longer covered by OWCP by the Forest, and FOTNF now must supply its own workers insurance.

These are the types of projects FOTNF has done and is continuing to do:

- Invasive plant mapping, control and post-control monitoring,
- Wildlife habitat restoration,
- Inventory of water developments,
- Water quality monitoring in coordination with the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality,

- Riparian photopoint monitoring program for the Forest,
- Upland monitoring at sites selected in coordination with TNF staff,
- Trail maintenance, inventory, and signage,
- Wilderness stewardship projects
- Adoption of recreation sites and recruiting other groups to adopt recreation sites,
- Archaeological survey and inventory,
- Creation and publication of interpretive brochures,
- Public outreach and education about various Forest Service programs,
- Working with other nonprofit organizations on projects and to obtain grants for project work on the Tonto,
- Involving schools in work on or near the Tonto,
- Providing funds and food for volunteers working on Forest projects, and
- Assistance with litter clean-ups.

We are open to other types of projects suggested by the Forest Service, our members, or Forest users, if they fit within our and the Forest Service's mission.

V. Goals

(Year 1 is calendar year 2022; Year 3 is calendar year 2024) Those who are assigned tasks will report to the Board at least every 3 months on progress being made or emerging issues that need to be addressed.

Organizational Development

Goal 1: Increase organizational capacity

Actions:

Year 1:

- Identify changes needed in standing committees; modify bylaws accordingly
Assigned to: President, Past President, Vice President, Executive Director
 - Identified six committees: Communications, Natural Resources, Cultural Resources, Education/Outreach, Finance, and Membership/Recruitment.
- Plan for creation of Recreation Committee
- Appoint committee chairs
 - Assigned to: President

- Name committee chairs for Education Outreach and Recreation.
- Recruit committee members
 - Assigned to: Each committee chair
- Create FOTNF protocols and forms for volunteer sign-up for projects including insurance waiver, safety analysis for projects, and registration. Develop detailed and comprehensive project safety protocols and ensure they are understood and used by project/event leaders.
- Actively seek volunteer assistance for administrative and communication needs of the organization.

Year 2:

- Each standing committee draft a plan for operations
Assigned to: Each committee
- Establish a full-time Executive Director paid position which reports to the board. Obtaining funding for this position will be a primary duty of the position.

Goal 2: Establish volunteer network to include trained project leaders who can develop and implement projects

Actions:

Year 1:

- Develop orientation manual and training program for project leaders and other interested members, consistent with Forest Service requirements
Assigned to: Vice President and Executive Director
- Recruit and train project leaders from our volunteer pool/ mailing list
Assigned to: Vice President and Executive Director
- Set up training guidelines.

Year 2:

- Project leaders work with other volunteers to develop new project and event leaders
Assigned to: Project leaders

Goal 3: Build membership and volunteer base

Actions:

Years 1 and 2:

- Conduct at least one annual event designed to attract new members/volunteers
Assigned to: Membership and Recruitment Committee
- Contact all members personally to encourage involvement
Assigned to: Membership Committee with help of the entire Board

- Assign mentor to new members
Assigned to: Membership Committee
- Seek out and coordinate with outside organizations eg. AmeriCorps for additional volunteers.
This should be project-oriented, reaching out to specific groups with aligned interests.

Forest Service Partnership

Goal 1: FOTNF is recognized by the Tonto as a significant partner in successful planning, development and accomplishment of resource management projects.

Actions:

Years 1 and 2:

- As a minimum, meet at least annually with District Rangers and/or their staff
Assigned to: President & Executive Director; all board members may participate ●
Meet regularly with FLT and Partnership Coordinator
Assigned to: President and/or Executive Director
- Keep up to date and support the Tonto in its strategic plan
Assigned to: President and/or Executive Director

Programs

Goal 1: Increase public understanding of natural and cultural resources, and opportunities to assist in their management, within communities that surround the Tonto National Forest.

Actions:

Year 1:

- Sponsor at least 2 community outreach events per year
Assigned to: Outreach/Education Committee
- Participate in a minimum of 4 other sponsored conservation events
Assigned to: Outreach/Education Committee to delegate
- Develop and maintain relationships with other nonprofit/volunteer organizations
Assigned to: All board members
- Encourage participation by the public in FS projects by including a link to the Tonto's NEPA website page and/or post notices of when/where input to various Forest projects may be submitted by the public.

Goal 2: Increase range of operations across the Forest.

Actions:

Year 1:

- Identify for implementation projects on Cave Creek, Mesa and Payson Ranger Districts
Assigned to: Natural, Cultural Resource, and Recreation Committees

Year 2:

- Identify for implementation projects on all 6 ranger districts
Assigned to: Natural and Cultural Resource and Recreation Committees

- Build membership and volunteer participation across the Forest
Assigned to: Membership Committee

Fundraising

Goal 1: Ensure all projects have sufficient financial support.

Year 1: Secure sources of income and/or grants for projects

Goal 2: Secure operational budget to support paid staff independent of Forest Service funding.

Actions:

Year 1:

- Investigate issues and opportunities related to hiring a part-time administrative/communication employee
Assigned to: Finance Committee

Year 2:

- Advertise for part-time administrative/communication employee. Part of their job in their first year will be to secure funding for their job for future years.

Goal 3: Position FOTNF to attract and retain donors

Actions:

Year 1:

- Add fundraising duties to the Finance committee
Assigned to: President, Past President
- Actively seek grant funding to correspond with selected projects, organizational capacity, and operations
Assigned to: All board members
- Evaluate need for support person to focus on fundraising
- Seek partnerships applying for grant proposals with other nonprofit/volunteer organizations
Assigned to: All board members

Year 2:

- Find corporate sponsors to support FOTNF activities on a continuing basis
Assigned to: Fundraising committee

- Pursue listings with donation coordination organizations such as United Way or Combined Federal Campaign
- Assigned to: Finance Committee & Executive Director
- Cultivate relationships with donors
Assigned to: Finance Committee/other committee chairs as appropriate to donor interests
- Primary sources of income are supplemental project agreements with the Tonto, membership dues and donations, corporations that match their employees' donations and/or volunteer time with donations, and grants.
- The board will develop an annual budget each fall, to be approved by a vote of first the Board, then the general membership in the fall election.

VI. Operating Budget and Finance

Primary Sources of income are membership dues and donations, companies who match their employees' donations and/or volunteer time with donations, grants and supplemental agreements with the Tonto.

The Finance Committee, with input from all committees, will develop an annual budget each Fall, to be approved by a vote of first the board, then the general membership in the Fall election.

The committee shall develop a Financial Internal Control Policy for adoption by the Board.

VII. Monitoring and Evaluation of Plan

Monitoring

This Strategic Plan will be monitored and evaluated at the end of September of each year. In the early summer, the President will assign an ad hoc committee to perform this evaluation, to be presented to the entire board each October. A summary of the Strategic Plan review will be provided to the membership with each year's annual report.

Monitoring and evaluation activities will consider the following and/or other questions:

1. Are goals being achieved or not? If they are, then acknowledge, reward and communicate the progress. If not, then consider the following questions.
2. Will the goals be achieved according to the timelines specified in the plan? If not, then why?
3. Should the deadlines for completion be changed? Be careful about making these changes -- know why efforts are behind/ahead of schedule before times are changed.
4. Do personnel have adequate resources (money, equipment, facilities, training, etc.) to achieve the goals?
5. Are the goals still realistic?

6. Should priorities be changed to put more focus on achieving the goals?
7. Should the goals be changed? Be careful about making these changes -- know why efforts are not achieving the goals before changing the goals.
8. What can be learned from our monitoring and evaluation in order to improve future planning activities and also to improve future monitoring and evaluation efforts?

Reporting Status of Implementation

Results of monitoring and evaluation will be in writing, and will include:

1. Answers to the questions outlined above
2. Trends regarding the progress (or lack thereof) toward goals
3. Recommendations about the status
4. Any actions needed by management

Procedure for Changing the Plan

Regarding any changes to the plan, write down answers to the questions:

1. What is causing changes to be made?
2. Why the changes should be made (the "why" is often different than "what is causing" the changes).
3. What specific changes should be made, including goals, actions, responsibilities and timelines?
4. Does this change necessitate a modification of the bylaws?

Reminders:

Manage the various versions of the plan by putting a new date on each new version of the plan. Always keep copies of previous plans.

VIII. Communicating the Plan

This plan will be widely communicated including through use of the following approaches:

1. Every board member and member of management should get a copy of the plan.
2. Train board members and volunteers on portions of the plan during orientations.
3. Include portions of the plan in policies and procedures, including the orientation manual.
4. Provide copies of the plan to the Tonto NF and to major stakeholders, for example, funders/investors, trade associations, potential collaborators, vendors/suppliers, etc.
5. A summary of the Strategic Plan will be included in the Annual Report to members, and the complete copy will be made available to any member upon request.