



News Release

Public Affairs Office
PO Box 1306
Albuquerque, NM 87103
505/248-6911
505/248-6915 (Fax)

Southwest Region (Arizona • New Mexico • Oklahoma • Texas) www.fws.gov/southwest/

For Release: September 11, 2013

Contact: Nicole Haskett-Osborn at 505-284-6599

Valle de Oro National Wildlife Refuge Holds National Public Lands Day Event: Planning for the future of the Refuge

ALBUQUERQUE, NM— In association with of the 20th anniversary of National Public Lands Day, Valle de Oro National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), the Friends of Valle de Oro NWR, the New Mexico Outdoors Coalition, the Mountain View Neighborhood Association and representatives from several other environmental groups will be hosting a community planning event. On Saturday, September 28th, from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. at Valle de Oro NWR visitors will have the opportunity to give input into the future of the refuge.

Located in Albuquerque's South Valley, Valle de Oro NWR (7851 2nd Street SW) was established in 2012 as the first urban national wildlife refuge in the Southwest. With continued support from state and federal representatives, environmental groups and area residents, Valle de Oro NWR aims to provide close-to-home outdoor recreation and environmental education opportunities for New Mexico residents and beyond. With 431 of 570 acres purchased and under U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service jurisdiction, the planning stages are underway. Jennifer Owen-White, the Refuge manager, is working hard to bring the community together around this resource, preserving its history and promoting its future.

National Public Lands day was established in order to celebrate the beautiful lands that have been set aside as natural spaces for endangered species, plants, and the American people. Thousands of volunteers across the country will visit their favorite public places for a day-long, coast-to-coast effort to preserve and improve the lands they love as part of this national effort. One of every three acres of land in the United States-nearly 600 million acres-belongs to you, the public. These lands include wildlife refuges, forests, national parks, monuments, grasslands, coastal sanctuaries, lakes and reservoirs that give the public access to open spaces where they can hike, bike, climb, swim, explore, picnic, observe wildlife or just simply relax.

This planning event at Valle de Oro NWR will kick off a monthly public access day until the Refuge is able to open to the public full time. Please join us as together we plan for the future of your public lands! Informational activities will be provided for the entire family, and will include a community visioning session for the future of the Refuge. The Friends of Valle de Oro NWR will be providing lunch for those who commit to attending both sessions. Please RSVP to: info@newmexicooutdoorscoalition.org to reserve your space.

For more information, visit the New Mexico Outdoors Coalition website at: <http://www.newmexicooutdoorscoalition.wordpress.com> or follow the Refuge on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/ValleDeOroNationalWildlifeRefuge>. If you would like any more

information about the event or the refuge, please contact Refuge Manager Jennifer Owen-White at (505) 248-6667, or e-mail her at: jennifer_owenwhite@fws.gov

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov.

<http://www.fws.gov/southwest/>