

On the Cañoncito Trail, not far downhill from its junction with the Faulty, there's a spot where horses have been dropping down to Cañoncito Spring to drink. A steep user trail has developed, as well as some damage to a sensitive area near the water. For 3 or 4 years the SRD has been wanting to build a better-defined, sustainable connector trail to direct equestrians and other trail users to a more solid spot along the edge of the spring. On Saturday May 14, eight volunteers from New Mexico Volunteers for the Outdoors (NMVFO) set out to do just that. SRD Trails Foreman Russell Berman had pin-flagged the line earlier in the week based on prior conversations with Cibola Trails & Wilderness Manager Kerry Wood. This was conceived as a weekend project, but the planned work was completed by the end of the day on Saturday. In addition to sawing through a veritable carpet of deadfall on the lower end, and building the (roughly 250-foot) trail itself, volunteers moved logs and other debris to keep horses off of sensitive areas near the spring; reinforced the edge of the water where the new trail "lands"; and obliterated the steep user trail. The new connector trail meets the Cañoncito Trail just downhill from where the user trail did.

Time will tell how the trail will work for horses. One concern is the small turnaround area at the edge of the water if there's a line of multiple horses, something which will likely need to be addressed. A "triangle" will also need to be built at the top end of the connector trail, where it meets the Cañoncito, to accommodate traffic moving east from the Faulty junction. Signage might be needed as well, since currently the new trail looks more inviting than the Cañoncito, and trail users moving west on the Cañoncito could get confused! 😊

The NMVFO volunteers were Jenny Blackmore, Luis Cuadros, Adam Johnson, Ralph Kopp, Mike Madden, Brian Salem, Laura Salem and Raquela (Rocky) Thomas.

Photos by Jenny Blackmore.



The flagged line went right through this debris field



Plenty of saw work needed

The tread work team



Hmm, looks like a FOSM work report... (Mike, Luis)



Before



After



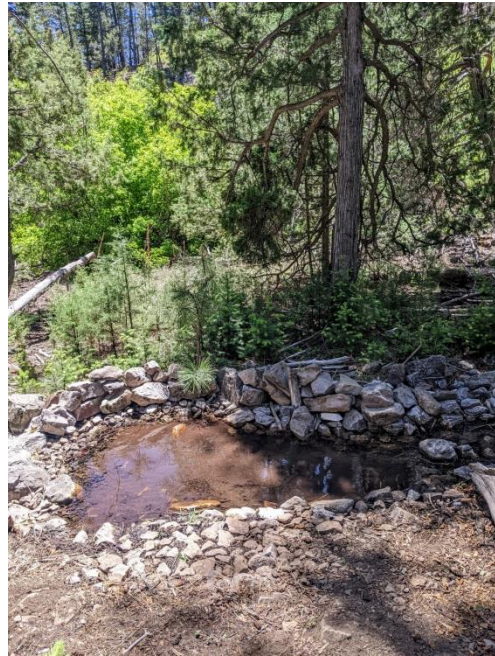
Before



After (from closer)



The new junction with Cañoncito Trail
(looking west)



The “landing pad” at the spring,
end of the line



With special permission we
camped at Cole Spring, still
with a trickle of water



Look who we ran into on the
Faulty, just up from Cole Spring!
56 miles into his run.