



# NEWS FROM TREK COUNTRY

*Stories and Events from the Cottonwood Gulch Foundation*

Thoreau, New Mexico

Spring 2012

## Cottonwood Gulch Welcomes New Executive Director, Kris Salisbury

I am very excited to be joining the Gulch Community and embarking on this incredible opportunity to continue the legacy of many dedicated people. I first fell in love with the Southwest when I moved to the Four Corners area fresh out of college and have continued my love affair whenever I can get past the Sierras. There is nothing quite like wandering through a slot canyon with sun rays glowing on red rock, backpacking into a high alpine lake in the Rockies when the columbines and monkshood are in bloom, and standing at the foot of the Gila Cliff Dwellings and experiencing the awe of place and a respect for those unharnessed early rock climbers. I am eager to get back to this inspirational place.

I currently hail from Northern California where acres of vineyards meet the canopy of Redwoods and I have spent the last 5 years running a program for at-risk teens in the wilderness. Before that, I spent 15 years around the country and globe working with youth in a variety of endeavors mostly in the outdoors. My career passion has been to provide experiences for young people to explore the wild places on the planet while exploring the wild places inside themselves. To this end, I have a strong belief that wandering through the wilderness with a group of friends allows us to not only learn about the natural world unplugged and untamed, but also to learn about what it means to live in community with others. It puts all 5 senses to work and enables each of us to more experientially understand what many times we have only perused in textbooks. The inexplicable guidance of the wilderness takes one version of us and transforms us into something just a little different, a little more connected and self aware.

When I am not meandering through the wilderness with young



Top: Kris on the trail in Colorado. Above: Kris rock climbing in Joshua Tree.

people, you might find me climbing, paddling, peddling, traveling, remodeling or hiking with my husband Paul and my dog Miso. Our favorite outdoor haunts have most recently been in the Sierras on the Pacific Crest Trail near Tahoe. Paul and I were married in Zion National Park and have hiked most of the Colorado Trail from Denver to Durango. We are both eager to get back to the Southwest. Since my days as a Peace Corps Volunteer, I have been an avid international traveler and have had



good fortune to hike 90 miles through the Alps, paddle the mighty Zambezi, explore Mayan and Incan ruins of the Americas and begin to sink in the Tar Ponds of Trinidad. When we are lucky, Ben, my stepson, who is currently a Math and Japanese double major at UC Santa Barbara, joins us (and humbles us) on the various rock formations of Joshua Tree National Park.

With Mike's departure, it is clear that I am stepping into some incredibly tireless and community focused shoes. Alongside the work of his great predecessors, Mike's legacy and commitment have created a solid foundation for me as I start this new adventure. I look forward to working with Gulch friends, alumni, staff, and the Board to continue the tradition of excellence while growing the dreams that many of you have for the Gulch. I welcome and invite your contributions to this process! With me comes a love for adventure and a commitment to experiential education. I can't wait to meet as many of you as possible this summer!

*Kris Salisbury*

### Summer 2012

Outfit Expedition 1	6/23 to 7/8	5 spots still open
Outfit Expedition 2	7/14 to 7/29	6 spots still open
Turquoise Trail	6/25 to 7/30	8 spots still open
Prairie Trek	6/25 to 7/30	8 spots still open
Wild Country Trek 1	6/25 to 7/14	4 spots still open
Wild Country Trek 2	7/17 to 8/5	10 spots still open
Trek Institute	6/25 to 7/14	7 spots still open
Paleontology Trek	7/21 to 7/29	4 spots still open
Family Trek	7/29 to 8/5	10 spots still open
Mountain Desert Trek	6/25 to 8/5	3 spots still open

First Rendezvous	July 7th
Navajo Picnic	July 21st
Second Rendezvous	July 28th



The Cottonwood Gulch Foundation sponsors educational wilderness expeditions and outdoor programs in the American Southwest that promote personal growth, scientific, historic, and cultural discovery as well as a knowledgeable environmental ethic among all those who participate.

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 Jordan Stone, Assistant Director  
 Lezle Williams, Office Manager

#### *To Contact the Foundation:*

(800) 2-Go-Trek  
[www.cottonwoodgulch.org](http://www.cottonwoodgulch.org)  
[info@cottonwoodgulch.org](mailto:info@cottonwoodgulch.org)

#### *From June to September:*

HC 62, Box 2200  
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 (505) 862-7503

#### *From September to June:*

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 (505) 248-3319 (fax)



### Note from the Chair

I want to write about 1) our CHANGE IN LEADERSHIP and 2) CALLS TO ACTION: one for new Trekkers and the other for contributions to the Foundation.

Over the past few weeks, Mike Sullivan has been training our new Executive Director, Kris Salisbury, in the Howie and Gulch traditions. Despite the difficulty of making changes, we know that it will be good for the Foundation. (Besides, we are getting ready for another exciting summer!) I want to take a moment to thank Mike for his careful guidance of our Foundation over the past five years. Mike and his wife, Sidsel, have been our loudest Gulch cheerleaders and we will miss them very much. We also want to give a shout-out to Kris and her husband, Paul Meeker. We wish them both a smooth transition during their move to NM. Kris and Paul, welcome to the Land of Enchantment and to our Gulch family.

As Chair of our volunteer board, I have had the opportunity to get to know the staff in some important ways. I have been working more closely with Jordan Stone, Assistant Director, and Lezle Williams, Office Manager. As an example, my wife and I hosted Jordan in a recruiting trip to Portland, Oregon. While in the region, Jordan drove north to Seattle and the surrounding area and south to Eugene and Ashland, before hitting California. During our time, I was fortunate to host about 6 Gulch alumni and 6 neighbor families to stimulate their interest in the Gulch. CALL TO ACTION: **Each of us receiving this newsletter knows a family who has a child or grandchild whose life could be forever changed by a summer in the Southwest with a Trek Group.** All we have to do is ASK. This summer, in particular, we have some openings in the Prairie Trek, the Turquoise Trail and the Outfit. As a call to action, I want to request that you reach out to one family and encourage them to look into the Gulch for their children or grandchildren. Your outreach could help us fill our trek groups to the optimal levels.

I also have had the opportunity to work with Lezle Williams, on the operations behind-the-scenes. Lezle is a talented professional artist, and she works in the office to help meet her family financial obligations. She addresses inquiries, collects health forms, processes the applications, works with the banks and the auditors, and she makes sure that we are good stewards of the assets of the Gulch. Lezle works with Neal Macneale to make sure that our endowment is appropriately allocated to scholarship, buildings & grounds, and programs. Lezle also sends out those thank you letters for your gifts. THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY: your contributions to the Gulch have made a huge a difference to the Foundation. Last year (like nearly every year) without the generosity of our alumni and friends, our Foundation would have fallen nearly \$100,000 in the red and we could not have carried out our mission and programs. Now is the time to put the Foundation in your annual giving plans and/or in your will. Thank you for your consideration, and thank you for your attention to these important Gulch matters.

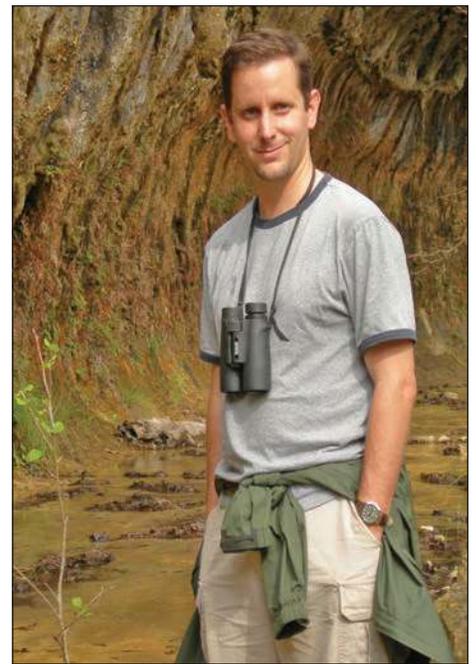
*Henry Hooper*

### Beth Williams-Breault: New Board Member

I first joined the Gulch in the summer of 2001 after I graduated from Wheelock College in Boston, MA. I started as TT staff and fell in love with the Southwest and everything Gulchy. After being Outfit group leader in 2002, I moved to Albuquerque and started my Master's in Language, Literacy and Sociocultural Studies at UNM. Soon after that I started teaching 5th grade at an Albuquerque public charter school where I met my husband, Josh. I continued as Outfit group leader in 2003. The next summer I helped out around base camp and in 2005 I ran the Native Arts Workshop.

I am currently working on a Doctorate in Family Studies at UNM while Josh and I raise our two children: Griffin, 3 years old and Macy, 3 months old. I have lived in Albuquerque for 10 years now and love being a part of the Gulch family. I am absolutely thrilled to be on the board!





**Upcoming Loop Highlights for Summer 2012... Our 86th Year!**

There is a quotation from Hillis Howie that has been stuck firmly in my head: in describing the early Treks, he distinguished the Gulch from other programs by firmly stating, “These expeditions are not sight-seeing trips.” He meant that we are not traveling simply to see as many spectacular places as possible. We travel to broaden our horizons, surely, but there is a conscious depth to each of our treks as we take the time to develop relationships with the land and the people who live here. As I look at our 2012 schedule, it is striking how many close relationships we have with our New Mexican neighbors, many of which Mike began in the last five years. While Mike will not be around this summer, we are all going to benefit from the many relationships he fostered.

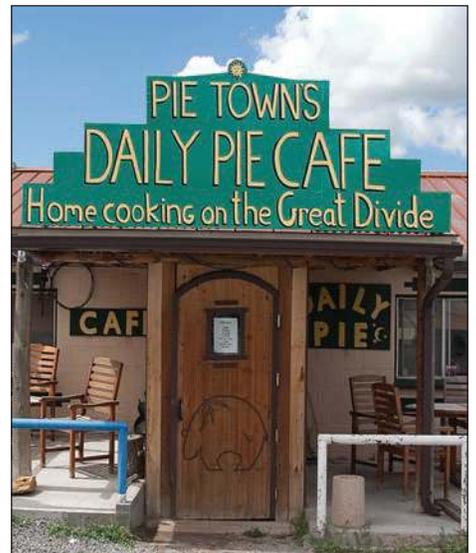
Take the 2012 Prairie Trek as an example, whose first loop will take place in west-central New Mexico amid many of our close friends. Their first few days will be spent around Mt. Taylor and El Malpais, where we have a thriving relationship with BLM ranger Paul Yoder, a man whose volcano impression you may remember from the 85th Reunion. We have also been scheming bat-related projects with newly appointed ranger and former trekker David Hays, who took up residence in Grants a few months ago to work for the National Park Service at El Malpais.

From there the PT will head south to

aply named Pie Town, where they will camp on the land of another friend, the esteemed baker Nita Larronde. On either side of a challenging backpack in the Apache Kid Wilderness, they will have the opportunity to assist with two private riparian restorations. The first will be at La Jencia, a ranch near Socorro that was decimated by decades of overgrazing, where, for the third year in a row, trekkers will plant native species and remove invasives. After the backpack, on the other side of Socorro, they will visit former trekker, staff member, board member, and archaeological sage Wenda Trevathan, who along with her husband Gregg Henry recently purchased a piece of land along the Rio Grande in need of some trekker power to improve the ecosystem’s health. And that is just the first loop!

Their second road loop will take them to the northern part of the state, where they will stay and work at the Camino de Paz Farm School in Espanola, another relationship that has blossomed in the last few years. Camino de Paz students will also visit Base Camp to teach trekkers how to felt wool and slaughter chickens.

New Mexico is full of hidden gems like these, and we are grateful to have friends who are eager to share their boundless knowledge of this captivating land. This is by no means a sight-seeing trip—we have become part of the local community wherever we go.



*Photos (clockwise): Terry Flanagan from La Jencia Conservation Ranch in Socorro (which is pictured below her). Nita Larronde in Pie Town. David Hays birding in TX; he’s the Chief Naturalist at El Malpais National Monument near Grants. The Daily Pie Cafe in Pie Town. A favorite license plate in Albuquerque (Mike is reflected in the tow hitch). Road Loops 2012!*

**Thank you to all the Friends and Alumni who hosted Recruiting Events this Winter**

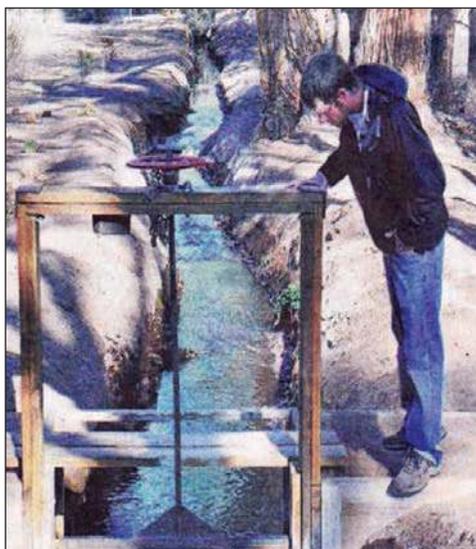
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Wellesley, MA	Eve Zimmerman and Seth, Emma, and Zoe Lloyd
Indianapolis, IN	Chet Kubit
Albuquerque, NM	Betul Ozmat and Billy, Lev, and Simon Handmaker
Las Cruces, NM	Wenda Trevathan and Gregg Henry
Los Angeles, CA	Tracy Burgess, and Tom and Maddie Merchant
Seattle, WA	Laura Feshbach
Portland, OR	Henry and Tracy Hooper
Eugene, OR	Arch McCallum, and David, Sandra, and Lauren Maloney
Ashland, OR	Leslie, Bruce, Lauren, and Quinn Sargent
Berkeley, CA	Leslie Crary, and Andrew and Matthew Stoloff



*Assistant Director Jordan Stone working his recruiter magic.*

**Cottonwood Gulch Wins Local Contract to Live and Work at Bachechi Open Space in Albuquerque**

We are thrilled to partner with Bernalillo County at the new Bachechi Open Space in the North Valley of Albuquerque, right along the Rio Grande. Acting as the residential caretakers and educators on such a unique and dynamic property marks our greatest local presence in over 85 years of delivering experiential education programs to students of all ages throughout New Mexico and the Southwest. Alongside the County's Open Space Staff, we look forward to building on our summer programs and on our fall and spring school group expeditions by serving a greater number of local students and families on a more year-round basis. We are eager to inspire more of our neighbors to understand, respect, and celebrate the wilderness in their own backyard. For more information, see [www.cottonwoodgulch.org](http://www.cottonwoodgulch.org).



*Photos (clockwise): Off-the-grid Education Building, site of the 2012 Board Meeting. Pond and wetlands. Caretaker's home. Bosque. Eric Peterson, a longtime Gulch staff member, inspects an acequia on the property. He's the first Caretaker/Educator at Bachechi and will be a Group Leader again this summer. We hired and trained a local friend and teacher, Adam Brechtel, to be the summer resident.*

**2012 TT Scholarship Essay**

by Bailey Fink, WCT 2011 (Session 2)

I think that I should be considered for the Cottonwood Gulch scholarship because I really like the Gulch, and I learn a lot there. I have been to the Gulch before too, so I know how things are done around base camp. For example, I know how the chores work in the kitchen and after meals, like how to do the dishes, and cleaning up the porches and cafeteria after meals. I know that after meals, a few people are chosen to wash the dishes in the kitchen, with the large sink. Usually two people wash, one person rinses, and another person dries the dishes and sets them on the table closest to the kitchen. On the porches, a few, usually two people per porch (since there are more than one porch) sweep most of the dirt and sand off of, onto the ground around the porch. Of course, all of the sand and dirt cannot get swept off because it is a desert, and dust settles back on the area that someone might sweep within five minutes!

Ever since I went to the Gulch last summer, on the Wild Country Trek, I have not stopped thinking about how much fun I had, both at base camp, and on the road loop with all the cool people, both counselors and trekkers alike. The thing I liked about all the people there the most, was that no matter how old or young they were, every one was really nice and I was able to make a lot of good friends quickly. Some of the counselors are good at comforting the trekkers when they're home sick, and others are good at just making someone laugh. The trekkers there are also really cool, because they generally wanted to come to this camp in the first place, and they're usually pretty excited about



*Bailey Fink (above, black shirt) lives in Albuquerque and is a scholarship recipient for 2012. She spent her first summer at the Gulch in 2011 with the WCT, where she did many wonderful things, including baking dinner treats in the Mess Hall and peaking the top of Kennebec Pass in southwestern Colorado (right). This article was her scholarship essay to join the Turquoise Trail expedition. She will be on the TT this summer!*

all the hiking and places that we go. I also enjoyed the activities, such as the group and trust games, like the one where there was a spiderweb made of bungee chords and we would have to, as a group, pass people through the web without touching it. I think that was one of the coolest games of them all. I also like how many physical challenges came up when we were on hikes. The amount of hiking was the main challenge for me because I had never hiked for a very long distance before I came to the gulch. I remember that the longest hike we had in one day was twelve miles. We had hiked six miles in the morning, and six miles in the afternoon. At the beginning of camp, I realized I was not as fit as I had thought I was, however, by the end, I was able to hike a lot more, and with more enthusiasm. I also had a lot of fun at base camp, not doing so much physical activities, but learning new things about New Mexico's culture and the life of

its desert environment. I really liked learning there, because they teach you things that you don't usually learn in school, such as, how to tell different plants apart, like how one could know whether a tree is a Ponderosa Pine by smelling it, to see if it smells like a vanilla bean, and even how to make goat mozzarella cheese!

I will benefit from the scholarship because I love Cottonwood Gulch. It also teaches me a lot of things, from about New Mexico's culture, to about myself. It teaches me a lot about New Mexico's culture and different environments by taking me to different places to learn about how the people live at that place, and what types of plants grow in its climate. It teaches me about myself by teaching me how fit I am, like whether I can hike a mountain without a lot of breaks, or how well I can make friends in a new environment. - B.F.

**Welcome Lisa Fontes!**

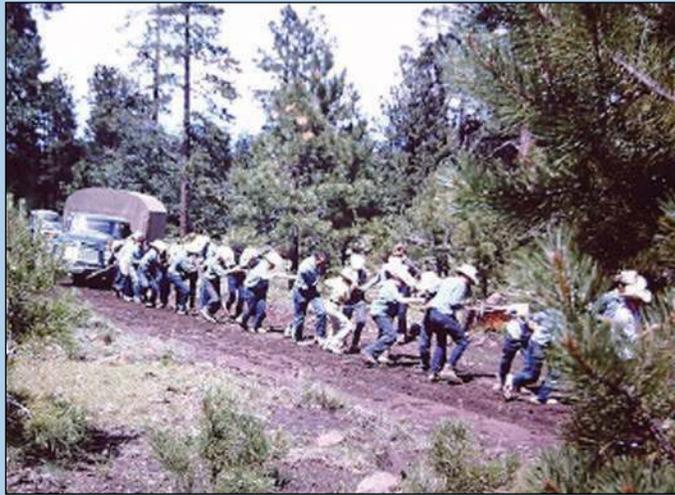


*Lisa is a PhD candidate at UNM and will be the Archaeologist this summer. Perhaps she'll bring her magic history wand, too.*

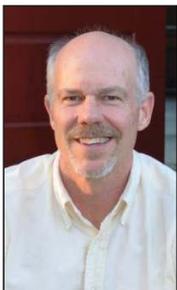
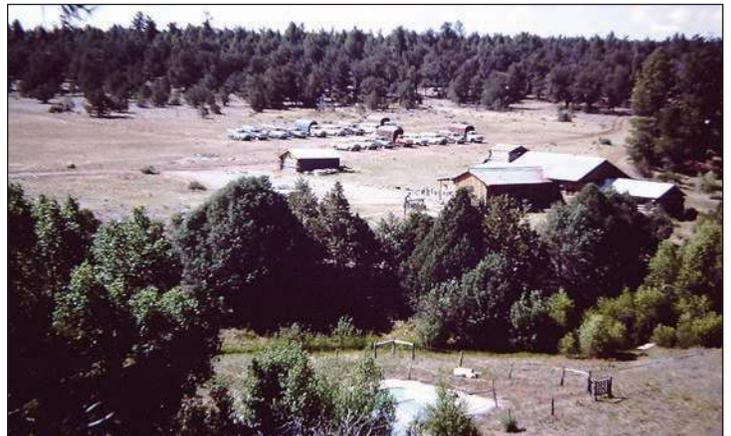
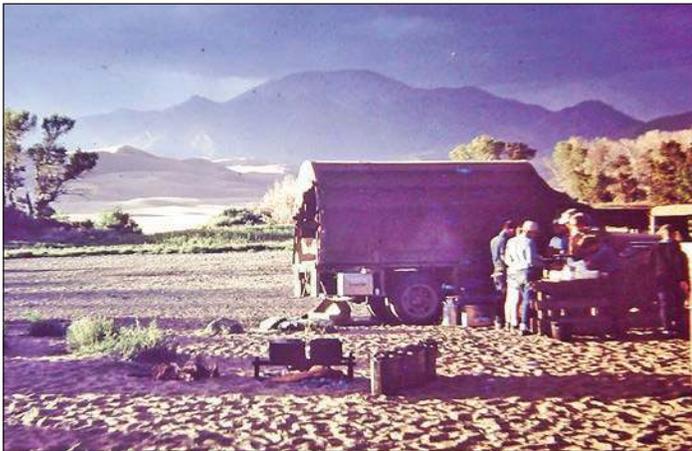
Sometimes it's hard to remember why you've chosen the path that you have; this is especially true when you're standing in the middle-of-nowhere, Nevada, staring a rattlesnake in the face. This is even more true when the rattlesnake is moving toward you and you happen to not have any clothes on. It's you and the rattlesnake—what do you do? I found myself in this situation a week into my first archaeological field project in Nevada. I had never been in a desert before, and certainly had never seen a rattlesnake in person. It took me a moment to decide what I was going to do—but strangely, that moment did not involve any strategic pondering, rather, the question I asked myself immediately was, "Lisa, why did you choose to do this?" This, of course, did not refer to "hang your shower bag under a tree near the sagebrush your instructor warned you was a rattlesnake area" (the logical thought), but instead referred to "archaeology." Even stranger—this was the first moment that I had ever asked myself this particular question. My answer in that moment was the same as my answer is today: because I love the past, I love the outdoors, and I love teaching; with archaeology, I get all three. This is precisely why I am so excited about The Gulch. Archaeology is not always an easy task, but I have always found it exciting and worthwhile—I love waking up in the morning not knowing what amazing materials I will discover. It is my goal to share my passion for archaeology with others and to explain the importance of cultural heritage and preservation with the public; and at Cottonwood Gulch, I'll be able to achieve this goal. As for the rattlesnake: after my brief meditation on my career choice, I just ran away. -L.F

# “PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE”

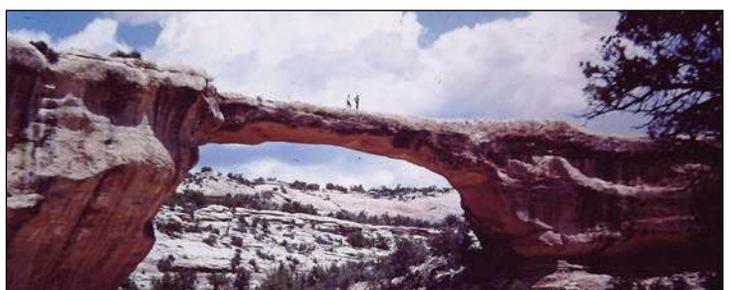
## A CALL FOR TREKKER POWER



The Trek has an amazing capacity to inspire us long after we leave Base Camp. This powerful passion is unique among organizations. It serves to sustain the Foundation year after year as we share our summer stories with others. Those who hear of our adventures, flip through our photographs, or read our Group Logs are understandably mesmerized. And even though people independently discover Cottonwood Gulch online, the Foundation survives on those critical “people to people” moments, when we simply talk about The Trek. At these times, we tap into a classic lesson from the Gulch: relationships that we build here are as magical as the places we go. Share your stories with others. We’re eager to help them live their own Trek adventure.



*Tom Hyde (left) visited the office in April to commence the Gulch Archives Project, a noble and necessary effort to digitize our historical photos and documents. He even wrote an original computer program to facilitate better scanning. Thank you, Tom! And many thanks to those who mailed and scanned images like these. They are crucial to our identity and our future. Please continue to share them with us! And please share them with others you wish to experience life-changing adventures at Cottonwood Gulch.*



## Thank You to Our Contributors

The following individuals have given generously to the Cottonwood Gulch Foundation during the dates of **July 1 - December 31, 2011.**

We are extremely grateful for all of the support. Your kindness sustains the Trek. Thank you very much!

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### Write a Check to The Trek

Support the *Base Camp Maintenance Fund* or the *Scholarship Fund*. Donate this spring to help rebuild the Outfit Hogan, restore eroded areas around the Gulch, and repair Cabin 4 (below), recently damaged by a fallen tree. Also, consider donating to help kids like Tachii'nii Gorman (right), an 8th Grader at Native American Community Academy in Albuquerque, join the Prairie Trek this summer. Thank you!

