From its humble beginnings in 1993, with five members and $35 in the treasury, Friends of Bosque del Apache has grown into a model organization, with one thousand members spread across the nation and around the world. Over the years, Friends has provided substantial financial and organizational support to Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge, literally changing the appearance and effectiveness of the refuge. If you’ve ever wondered where your membership and donation dollars go, read on as we detail some of the exciting projects that have been accomplished through the dedication, hard work, and ongoing support of Friends like you.

**Festival of the Cranes**
Rated among the top three wildlife, birding, and photography events in North America, the nationally recognized Festival of the Cranes offers over a hundred and forty event sessions in four days. Friends organizes and orchestrates this annual event, which educates the public and generates revenue that helps fund important refuge projects.

**Chupadera Peak**
Friends even improved the refuge by adding to it! In order to allow the completion of the 9.5-mile Chupadera Wilderness National Recreation Trail and to preserve the incredible views afforded from the top, Friends purchased 6,272 ft. high Chupadera Peak and the surrounding 140 acres and then donated them to Bosque del Apache.

**Manager’s Discretionary Fund**
Committed to supporting all the needs of the refuge, Friends established the Manager’s Discretionary Fund, which is issued to the Refuge Manager on an annual basis and can be used for a variety of purposes. For example, because cuts in federal funding have led to fewer paid employees, this fund has supported biology and maintenance interns for the last several summers.

**Visitor Center**
Friends greatly enhanced the refuge Visitor Center by adding the 2,100 square foot Christina Ann Lannan Educational Annex and conference room, built with funds raised by Friends and major donations by the Lannan Foundation.
Bus Scholarships
Friends makes school field trips to the refuge more affordable and supports the refuge’s goal of providing education programs that promote environmental awareness and conservation. The Friends sponsored Bus Scholarship Fund allows more than five hundred students and teachers to experience the magic of Bosque del Apache every year!

Bosque Nature Store
Friends operates the Bosque Nature Store, where visitors can find unique, hand-crafted, locally made and ethically traded merchandise for every occasion, and where net proceeds benefit Bosque del Apache.

Desert Arboretum & Pollinator Program
One of the newest trails on the refuge, the Desert Arboretum is a living classroom, boasting over a hundred species of native pollinator plants and cacti, all maintained by the Friends. Friends recently added two types of rainwater catchment systems to the garden, a 1,500-gallon tank and piping system, and this year, the first of four planned 550-gallon slimline tanks. Each of these will ensure that the xeric garden has a year-round supply of water while also educating the public about water conservation.

Publications
To ensure every visitor has access to a refuge map and pertinent information in every season, Friends publishes the annual Habitat! guide (also available with a supplement for Spanish speakers). Additionally, Friends publishes the Junior Refuge Ranger Activity Book, an interactive tool that refuge volunteers use to encourage young visitors to play an active role in protecting, learning, and spreading the word about conserving Bosque del Apache. Finally, Friends also publishes Bosque Watch, a quarterly newsletter that keeps our family of members connected and informed about refuge activities, programs, and upcoming events.

Greening of the Refuge
To reduce the refuge’s dependence on the grid and to lower energy costs, Friends has been installing solar panels and more efficient (LED) lighting in many refuge buildings. Federal money not spent on utility bills can be spent on preserving wildlife and habitat management!

Community Events
Friends plans and sponsors various cost-free community events throughout the year, such as Desert Arboretum Stroll, Bosque Conservation Days, Wildlife Zone at Festival of the Cranes, and Holiday Open House. For information about upcoming events and Program details, please visit our website at www.FriendsoftheBosque.org.
Water Infrastructure Improvements
With longer and more intense periods of drought and an increasing demand for the life-giving waters of the Rio Grande, water management is of critical importance on the refuge. Friends has provided funding for the installation of an improved surface-water delivery system for wetlands and croplands. This greatly benefits wildlife habitat for future generations.

Boardwalk
Friends provided front-end financing for construction of the wheelchair-accessible Boardwalk on the south loop, a favorite attraction of many of our 200,000 annual visitors. Additionally, thanks to a very generous donation, Friends recently purchased a new steel bridge to enhance access to the Boardwalk Trial.

Environmental Education
Children and their families can see raptors and reptiles up close, participate in duck banding, hikes, archery, and the young birder tour, learn about conservation and wilderness, and so much more—all for free! Friends sponsors this family friendly fun twice a year, during Wildlife Zone at Festival of the Cranes in November and Bosque Conservation Day in the spring. Additionally, the previously mentioned Friends Bus Scholarship ensures that environmental education opportunities are available year-round.

And So Much More!
For nearly three decades, Friends has been ready to support the refuge in every way we can. We have provided matching funds for the North American Wetland Conservation Act (NAWCA) grants, to restore native habitat to nearly 2,000 acres on the refuge; given funding to major research projects, including studies on rattlesnake/human interactions, elk populations and depredation on the refuge, and Sandhill crane migration and habitat; and aided in many other worthwhile projects that, for the sake of space, are not cited here.

We couldn’t have done it without you!
All of these exciting refuge projects were accomplished through the hard work and dedicated support of Friends like you. Thank you! The bulk of the funds to maintain this stream of generosity to the refuge comes in large part from membership dues, private donations from individuals, and grants from foundations. So as you can see, YOU are vital to the success of Bosque del Apache. Friends has come a long way in 25 years…imagine what we will continue to accomplish with your ongoing support!

Join our family of members or make a donation to the Friends by visiting our website at:
www.FriendsofBosquedelApache.org
Another important source of income to help the refuge comes from the Friends’ planned giving program. You can give a lasting gift by adding Friends to your will, or if you are looking for a good way to avoid paying taxes on your IRA required minimum distribution (RMD), please consider making a charitable donation to Friends of Bosque del Apache. And you won’t have to itemize your tax deductions to get this benefit, because the donation is deducted from your income!

Here’s all you need to do:

- Be 70 ½ years or older.

- Have the gift sent directly from your IRA trustee to Friends of Bosque del Apache.

- Ask your broker to send all or some of your RMD to the Friends. Your broker will need the Friends’ tax ID number (85-0415878) and the direct mailing address (Friends of Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge, PO Box 340, San Antonio, NM 87832, Attention: Deb Caldwell, Executive Director).

- Call (or write to) Deb so that she knows that the gift is coming from you (575-838-2120).

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☐ I also want to donate ___ $25  ___ $50  ___ $100  ___ Other

Credit Card Number ________________________________
Exp. Date ____________ Sec. Code ____________
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☐ Please contact me about planned giving.

Join or donate online at [FriendsofBosquedelApache.org](http://FriendsofBosquedelApache.org)

or send your contribution to:

Friends of Bosque del Apache
PO Box 340
San Antonio, NM 87832

Membership Levels:
- Snow Goose (Individual) $25
- Northern Harrier (Family) $50
- Sandhill Crane $120
- Peregrine Falcon $250
- Golden Eagle $1000
- Business Sponsor $350
- Corporate Sponsor $500