



Working with
Volunteers to
Make an
Impact in
Communities

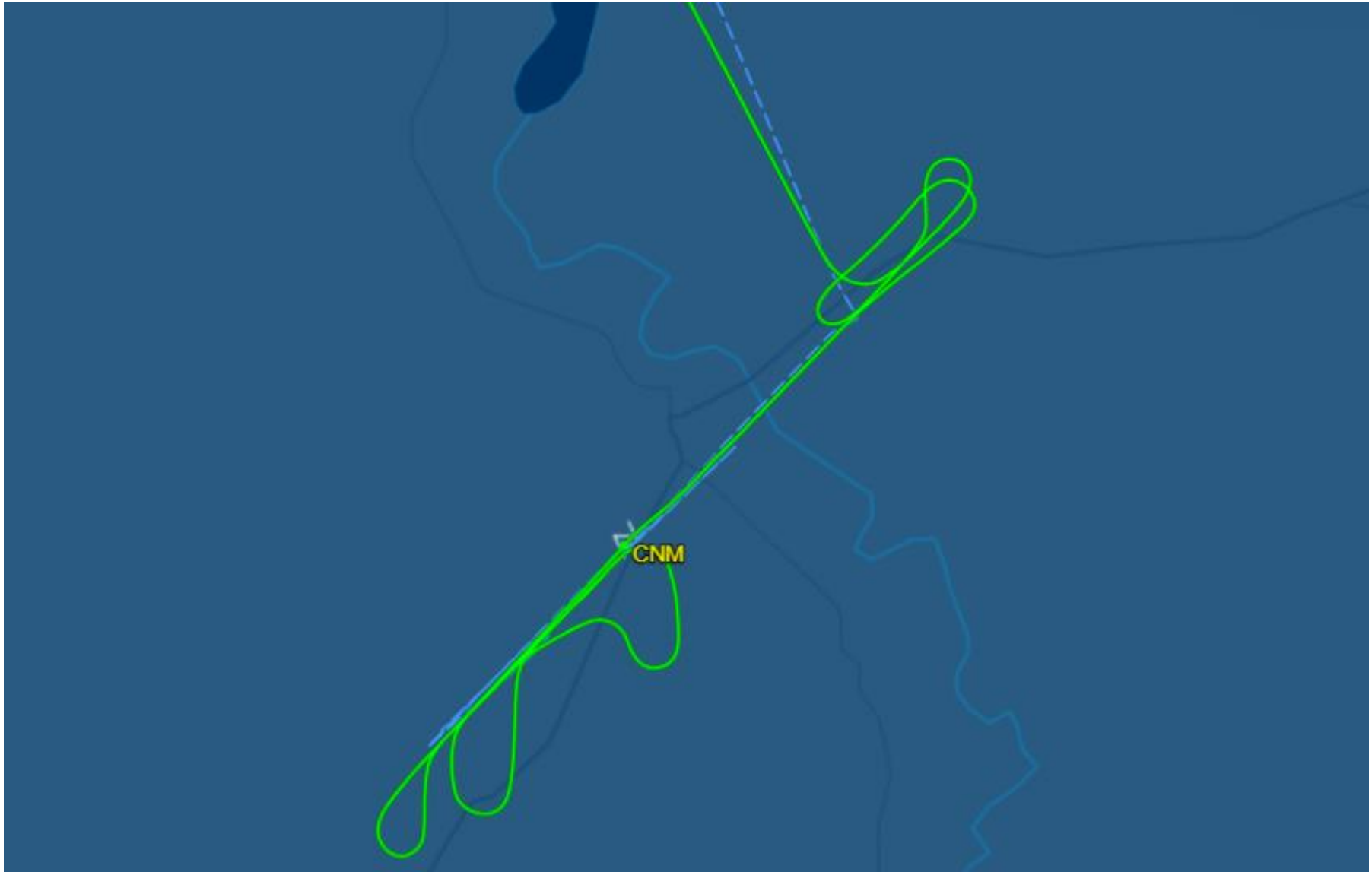


Tamar Randall

- TreeNM Development Director
- Since May 2020
- tamar@treenm.org
- TreeNM.org

Boutique Air Adventure







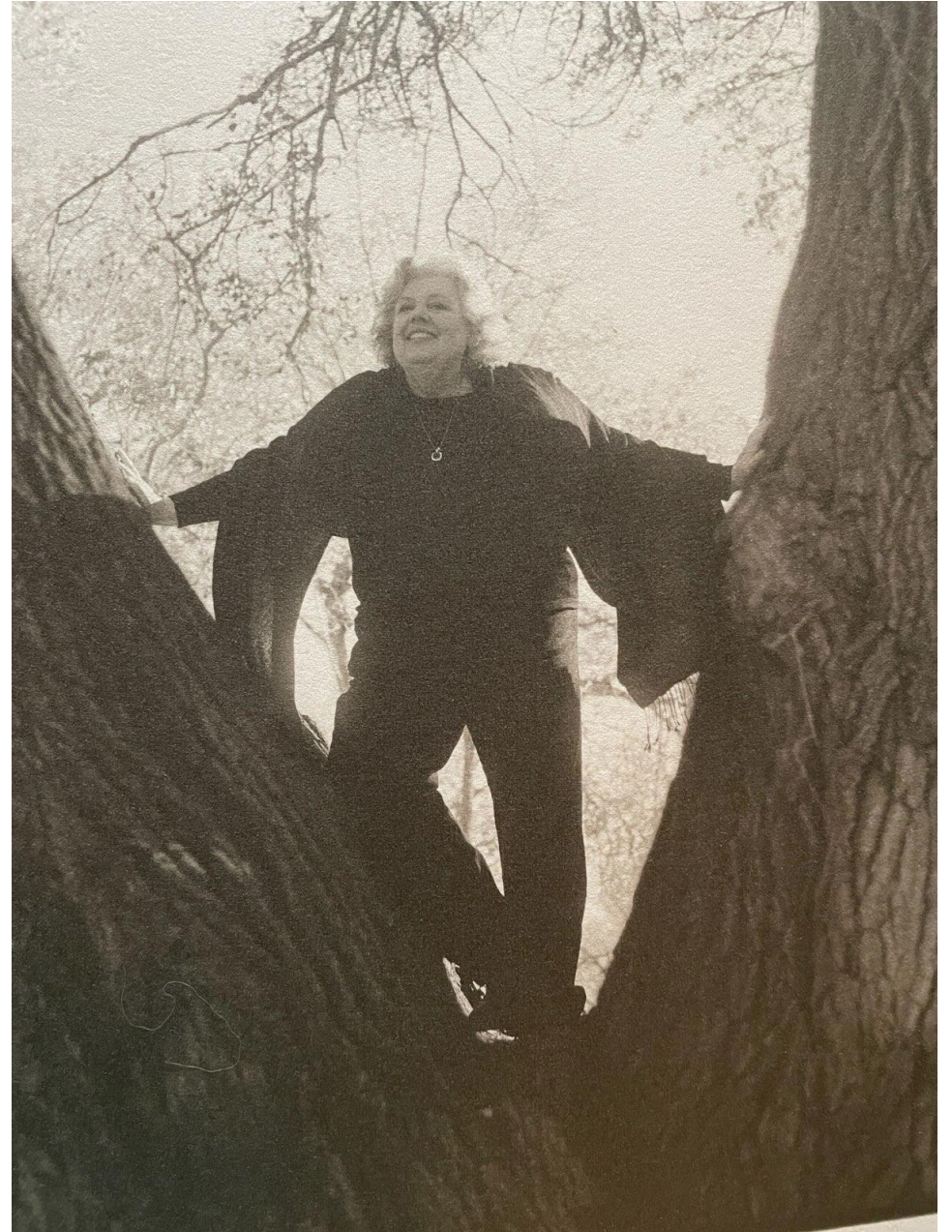
Mission: Tree New Mexico helps communities plant and care for trees in urban areas - large and small - throughout The Land of Enchantment.

- Since 2017, focused on urban forestry
- Increased tree canopy by 8,960 trees in ABQ , Santa Fe, and Los Lunas
- Educated thousands of volunteers to plant and care for trees

tamar@treenm.org



- Founded in 1990, by Suzanne Probart and a small group
- Involved in planting or distributing 1.3M trees
- Emeritus Board Member from 2018-2023
- Transitioned on January 11, 2023
- tamar@treenm.org





Current Programs

- **ABQ NeighborWoods** funded by ABQ City Councilors and ABQ Parks and Rec.
- **NM NeighborWoods** funded by EPA cooperative Agreement, NM Urban & Community Forestry, One Tree Planted and other foundations
- **Partner Plantings** funded by foundations
- **Campus Plantings** funded by multiple sources
- **Tree Education** funded by multiple sources
- **Tree Stewards** funded by NM Urban & Community Forestry and others
- **Woodward House Tree Nursery** PT staff funded by a foundation

- **Working on Expanding NeighborWoods plantings and Tree Stewards** across NM funded by NM Urban & Community Forestry, partners, and foundations

- tamar@treenm.org





Types of TreeNM volunteers

- **General Planters** (600-700 per year, have space for 900, some repeat.)
- **Trained Team Leaders** (20-40 per year)
- **Trained Neighborhood Canvassers** (4-5 per planting, 8-10 plantings per year)
- **Neighborhood Flyering** (2-3 per giveaway)
- **Trained Tree Monitors** (summer 10-15 people with several arborists)
- **Trained Volunteer Coordinator** (1)
- **Tree Stewards** (40 trained in ABQ currently, class going on now)
- **WWH Projects** (as needed)
- **Funder/sponsor/tree planters**
- **TNM Board Members** (currently 3, need to expand)

- tamar@treenm.org



Types of TreeNM volunteers

Using Marlene Wilson's book, the *Effective Management of Volunteer Programs*

- **General planters** [Affiliation]
- **Trained Team Leaders** [Achievement, Affiliation]
- **Trained Neighborhood Canvassers** [Achievement= 200 trees, Influencer]
- **Trained Tree Monitors** (Achievement, Affiliation)
- **Trained Volunteer Coordinator** [Achievement]
- **Tree Stewards** [Achievement, Influencer, Affiliation]
- **WWH Projects**
- **Funder/sponsor/volunteers** [Achievement, Influencer, Affiliation]
- **TNM Board Members** [Achievement, Influencer, Affiliation]
- tamar@treenm.org





Why do people volunteer? The TNM experience.

- Make a difference
- Worried about climate-change and want concrete/hands on activity
- Filling time
- Want to be seen doing it
- Employee engagement
- Want appreciation

Why do people volunteer with TreeNM?

- Wedding planners
- Easy to show up, receive clear directions, get to work, be done before lunch, and have contributed to the planting of 100 trees
- We provide tools, maps, clear directions, holes are pre-dug, trees and water source
- Constant appreciation from all TreeNM staff
- Have fun and enjoy each other
- tamar@treenm.org



Recruiting Volunteers

- **One ABQ Volunteers**
- **Word of mouth**
- **Website**
- **Flyers**
- **Reach out to groups that planted with us in the past**

- **Spreadsheet** for tracking volunteers
- **NM Expansion** (need NM-wide system like One ABQ Volunteers to include tree support)

- tamar@treenm.org

Tree New Mexico Volunteer Call

La Mesa
Neighborhood
Tree Planting Event

.....
August 26, 2023
8:30am - about 11:30pm

.....
No previous tree planting
experience needed

Tree Planters plant 5-8 trees with
trained Team Leaders who have
tools and maps.

Scan the QR Code to sign up or
visit bit.ly/LaMesaPlanting





Supporting Planting Volunteers

- Honor personal motivations for volunteering
- Honor their comfort levels
- Plan for bathrooms, water, snacks, and parking.
- Structure and policies/adaptable
- Constant appreciation for time and work
- Basic relationship building
- No reprimanding (Volunteers aren't employees.)
- Feedback loop after each event and make changes in the system
- tamar@treenm.org



Volunteer Appreciation

- **Constant appreciation in every interaction.** These aren't employees. We pay them in appreciation and pointing out what contribution they made.
 - **Annual or biannual appreciation event,** not expensive.
 - **Free t-shirts** to all planters. Branding TNM, people planting on private property.
 - **We give little gifts** to team leaders at each planting.
 - **Ask if they are happy with what they are doing,** regularly, if appropriate.
 - **Find other ways to recognize volunteers**
-
- tamar@treenm.org





Other Learnings about General Volunteer Retention

- Remember trained volunteer's preferences
- Ask how volunteers like to communicate/share how we communicate
- Plan for bathrooms, water, snacks, and parking
- Next Steps
- Listen to feedback from volunteers/make sure they feel heard
- No reprimanding
- Volunteers can set boundaries and still be great volunteers
- Avoid controversial topics
- HR common sense
- Know when to cut ties with problematic vols

- tamar@treenm.org





Learnings about Organizing Volunteer Events

- **Over-organize events and then be adaptable**
- **Be careful not to overload volunteers with too much work**
- **Check in regularly on what individuals specifically want to do**
- **Don't forget bathrooms, water, snacks, and parking**
- **Change systems if issues arise**
- **Not all staff on deck at every event supports TNM staff**
- tamar@treenm.org

