

The Wildwood Highlander is a periodic newsletter providing information to property owners in Wildwood Highlands, near Datil, New Mexico. It is published in Datil, NM by the Wildwood Highlands Landowners' Association (WHLA), Post Office Box 87, Datil NM 87821-0087. For further information, please contact any member of the WHLA Board of Directors, listed below. Alternately, you may visit the WHLA website on the Internet: www.wildwoodhighlands.org.

2020 Annual General Meeting

The annual general meeting, scheduled for May 16th, 2020 was cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic, although the election of directors took place as usual, via mail-in ballot. John Kell and Tracy Gandy were elected as Directors for two-year terms.

Landowners are encouraged to put their names forward to serve as WHLA directors.

A sample nomination form is available on the website.

Message from the President of the WHLA

Happy New Year Highlanders and a warm welcome to our new constituents!

It would be fair to say that up here in Datil we have been relatively insulated to the events of the past year...'relatively' being the keyword, but in actuality I cannot imagine pandemic life and the psychological duress in a metropolitan area during these times. It is an extreme reminder of how fortunate we are to be able to live or escape to this beautiful country life.

"Don't trust Google Maps" was another moniker of 2020. Residents at the west easements to Sugarloaf were bombarded with unwitting hunters (and a double-wide) because Google Maps had Aqua Fria as a through road. There were instances of honking at midnight, trespassing, and even gunfire after dark. One road sign sustained mild damage. This behavior was unprecedented but also followed a huge uptick in hunters this year likely due to the pandemic. We have been reporting this to Google Maps with some success.

If any newcomers have any questions about the area, various tradesmen, LOA covenants, cool places to hike, etc. don't be hesitant to introduce yourselves to your neighbors. It's a friendly group up here and we're happy to help. To finish with just the usual, there are young children, pedestrians, and bikers in the subdivision. Please ask guests to respect the speed limit when driving as many corners are tight and the roads are narrow. Also keep in mind we adhere to the New Mexico Dark Skies Act, so we don't need 24-hour nighttime flood lights. Lastly, please be extremely careful with campfires or slash burning. We have had a very dry Fall and going into the Spring, unless we get some real snow in the next few months, we will be entering a long year of high fire danger.

Welcome 2021 and feel free to contact the Board of Directors with any questions!

Sincerely,

Rob Sanders, President WHLA



Photo Credit: Jonille Shepherd

Board of Directors

At the meeting of the Board of Directors on June 4th, 2020, the following officers were elected for the next year:

- President: Rob Sanders
- Vice-President: Tracy Gandy
- Treasurer: Kathy Kanely
- Secretary: Vacant
- At-Large: John Kell

Minutes from the meetings of the Board of Directors are posted on the website.

In 2020, meetings were held on March 9th, June 4th, and December 31st.

2021 Assessment Amount

At the December 31st, 2020 meeting of the Board of Directors, the assessment for 2021 was set at \$75.00 per lot, as per Section 4.11.3 of the WHLA Bylaws. Payment is due by January 31st, 2021.

2020 Financials

Major items from the WHLA's 2020 Year End Financial Statement are shown in the table below. The complete report is available on the website.

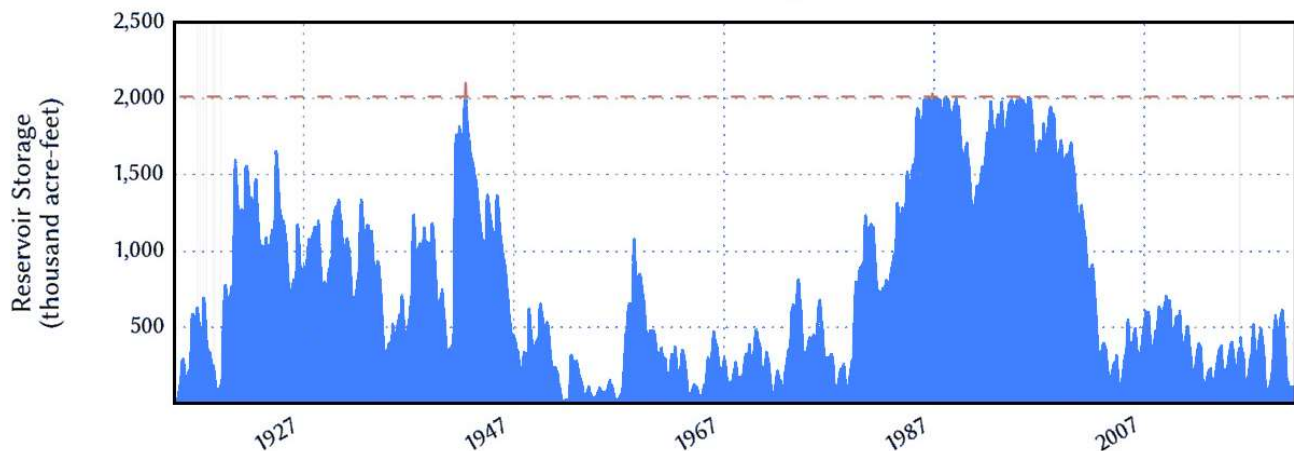
Income	Budget	Actual
Lot Assessments	\$7,178.00	\$7,004.00
Late Fees, Settlements, Liens, Other	\$200.00	\$435.00
Total Income	\$7,378.00	\$7,439.00
Expenses	Budget	Actual
Road maintenance	\$2,536.50	\$3,064.93
Road Improvement	\$3,170.63	\$2,113.75
Emergency Road funding (snow removal, flood repair)	\$1,000.00	\$0.00
Administration, Insurance	\$395.00	\$1,133.49
Total Expenses	\$7,102.13	\$6,312.17
Margin	Budget	Actual
	\$275.87	\$1,126.83



Photo Credit: Kathy Kanely

Water Matters - Elephant Butte Reservoir

Elephant Butte Reservoir, the largest in New Mexico, is impounded by the Elephant Butte Dam on the Rio Grande River, some five miles north-east of Truth or Consequences. The dam was built over a century ago to provide power and irrigation water to New Mexico and Texas. The dam and reservoir are both named after Elephant Butte, a volcanic vent that became an island when the reservoir was filled. At low reservoir levels, the butte becomes a peninsula. At capacity, the reservoir can hold 2,065,010 acre-feet of water. On December 31st, 2020, however, it was only at 6.2% (127,253 acre-feet) of capacity. The graph below shows reservoir levels over the last 100 years:



Wildwood Highlands Weather Review (January to October 2020) by Chuck Baker

So far 2020 has continued the trend of previous years, namely warmer temperatures, and less moisture. National Weather Service models predict more of the same for this coming winter as a La Nina pattern has begun in the eastern Pacific which will impact us through the first several months of 2021. Drought conditions persist in our area of New Mexico and have been plainly visible in the reduced number of wildflower blooms this summer with a generally drab landscape across the Plains of San Agustin and into the surrounding forests.

While the average monthly high temperatures only showed an increase during 4 of the first 10 months in 2020 compared to the 20-year average, with 3 months the same and 3 months below, the 2020 average monthly low temperatures were higher than the 20-year average for 8 out of 10 months in 2020. This can be interpreted as the daily low temperatures in 2020 have been not as cold as normal, and the daily high temperatures have been only a little warmer than normal, although the months of May and August had significant average high increases of 3 to 5 degrees above the 20-year averages.

Less precipitation in 2020 is best reflected in the summer monsoon moisture totals. The 20-year average for July, August, September is 7.81" and July through September 2020 only recorded 3.32", a difference of 4.49". January through October 2020 precipitation is down 4.43" from the 20-year average for the same period, which means the months outside of the summer monsoon were just slightly above average.

February was the snowiest month from a storm with a total of 9" over two days, followed by October (!) with an early taste of winter occurring just before Halloween when there was a storm with 6" of snow and temperatures remaining below freezing for almost 48 hours.

According to my weather station instrument at my location (Lot #3 on Apache Tear Trail), the hottest day of the year was July 10th at 95 degrees and the coldest was February 5th at 7 degrees. Other locations in Wildwood Highlands with a different micro-climate may have seen higher or lower temperatures.

COVID-19 Snapshot

From the New Mexico Department of Health, as of December 31st, 2020:

- New Mexico has now had a total of 142,864 COVID-19 cases.
- Catron County has had a total of 55 cases (17 in Zip Code 87821).
- One or more cases among residents and/or staff have been identified in 116 long-term care facilities.
- Currently, 803 individuals are hospitalized in New Mexico with COVID-19.

All New Mexicans are asked:

- to stay home except for outings absolutely necessary for their health, safety and welfare.
- to wear a mask or face covering when in public and around others.

COVID-19 Vaccination Plan

The New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH) is leading the State of New Mexico's COVID-19 vaccination planning and implementation in close collaboration with other state agencies, as well as public, private and tribal partners throughout the state. Vaccine availability will initially be limited and therefore must be distributed in a phased approach. These phases are as follows.

Phase 1A (winter 2020)

- Hospital personnel,
- Residents and staff of long-term care facilities,
- Medical first responders,
- Workers in congregate settings,
- Persons providing direct medical care and other in-person services,
- Home-based healthcare and hospice workers.

Phase 1B (winter 2020 – spring 2021)

- Persons 75 years and older,
- Persons 16 years and older at risk of COVID complications,
- Frontline essential workers unable to work remotely,
- Vulnerable populations.

Phase 1C (spring 2021)

- Persons 60 years and older,
- Other essential workers unable to work remotely.

Phase 2 (summer 2021)

- Persons 16 years and older

Editor's Note

The **Highlander** encourages feedback from its readers. Opinions, observations, reminiscences, concerns, and photographs are all welcome. Feel free to email me at: johndawsonkell@gmail.com

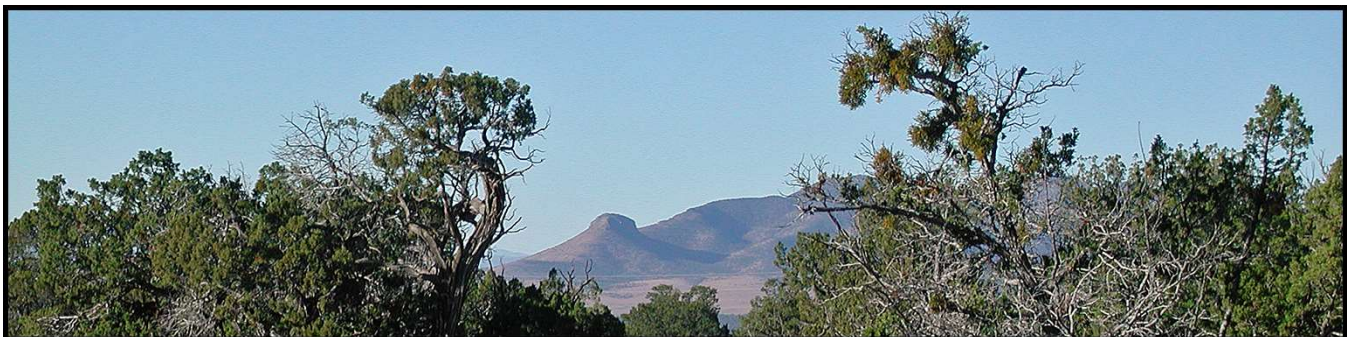


Photo Credit: John Kell