



# Friends of Alta Press Kit 2015



**For press inquiries, please contact:**

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## Who is Friends of Alta?

Friends of Alta is Alta's local land trust, which allows it to acquire and conserve undeveloped private lands in Alta. The lands acquired by Friends of Alta are protected for their watershed, open space, and wildlife habitat values. By preserving these lands, Friends of Alta can maintain the quality of life for visitors around the world and valley residents dependent on clean water. Friends of Alta continues to support the zoning policies of the Town of Alta and champions thoughtful development that does not threaten Alta's open spaces.

### **DEDICATED TO PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION**

Protecting Alta's natural resources TODAY means a legacy of outdoor recreation and clean water that your family and future generations can continue to enjoy TOMORROW.

## Our Mission

As Alta's local land trust, the mission of Friends of Alta is to protect the environment of Alta, including watershed and wildlife habitat areas; to preserve Alta's unique character and heritage; and to encourage stewardship and sustainability of Alta's environment and community.

Conservation of Alta's natural environment is critical not only to our businesses and residents, but also to surrounding communities. Simply put, Alta's environment is why our community exists; it's the experiences in the natural world that drive our local economy. As the Salt Lake Valley has grown over the last 100 years, water managers have turned to the Alta area and the Little Cottonwood Creek to provide culinary water. Alta's Albion Basin is the headwaters of the Little Cottonwood Canyon watershed, which provides:

- 100% of Alta and Snowbird's water
- 33% of Sandy City's culinary water
- 12-14% of the culinary water needed to serve Salt Lake City's service area

To successfully protect and conserve Alta's environment we provide educational materials to the public and our youth as well as encouraging stewardship. We support and encourage environmental studies and other research that provides information about Alta's ecosystems.

## Our History

The need for an organization like Friends of Alta came in 1979, when a timeshare company refused to follow the Town of Alta's zoning ordinances and started a lawsuit against the Town. Winter guests at Alta decided to start an "Alta Defense Fund" to help the Town of Alta with lawyer fees. By the mid-1980's, the Alta Defense Fund began acquiring land for preservation purposes, in addition to lending support to other community organizations. The board then decided that the name should be changed to "Friends of Alta" in order to better reflect its mission. Since then, Friends of Alta has sponsored teacher in-service programs, environmental symposiums, and multiple ecological studies.

## Our Programs

### LAND TRUST

Land is our legacy. As Alta's local land trust, it is our responsibility to facilitate the conservation of lands in Alta with conservation values. We actively seek to conserve privately owned undeveloped land in Alta. These properties possess watershed, wildlife habitat, natural, scenic, recreational, and open space values of importance

to FOA, Salt Lake City, and people all over the world. By effectively saving land, land trusts enhance the economic, environmental and social values of their communities. They provide clean water, fresh air, places for recreation and a connection to the land that sustains us all.

### **WATERSHED PROTECTION**

One of the biggest drivers behind Friends of Alta's mission is watershed protection. Utah has limited water sources and depends on precious watershed areas to provide culinary drinking water to the population. To this end, we acquire land for conservation, conduct stewardship efforts and help the Town in defense of its protective zoning regulations. Albion Basin is a critical recharge area for the Little Cottonwood Canyon watershed which supplies culinary water to the following: Salt Lake City 14%, Sandy City 33%, Alta & Snowbird 100%

### **STEWARDSHIP**

As part of our ongoing commitment to preserve Alta, FOA monitors the area and holds several stewardship events to remove invasive weeds, plant trees and educate others about the land. Many of these programs rely on our generous volunteers, and we are grateful for their support.

### **EDUCATION**

Friends of Alta partners with similarly driven organizations and learning institutions to better understand the environment of Alta and the Albion Basin. Friends of Alta is dedicated to making a positive contribution toward enriching education. In partnership with learning institutions, we are developing ways in which Alta's unique history and environment can be used in an educational setting.

# Friends of Alta Leadership

## Jen Clancy,

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Jen Clancy has been working with the Friends of Alta since 2005. She was working as the Executive Assistant until January of 2008 when she moved into the Executive Director's position. Jen grew up in the small town of Freedom, NH and earned a B.S. in Wildlife Management at the University of New Hampshire. As ski enthusiasts have been doing for years she moved to Utah in 2002 for the "powder" skiing, she quickly discovered that Alta has more to offer than just great skiing. Email Jen at [jen@friendsofalta.org](mailto:jen@friendsofalta.org) or call her at (801) 742-9719.

## Stella Day,

### EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

Stella grew up in Bellingham, Washington, where she developed her love for outdoor recreation and mountains. She graduated from the University of Oregon in 2011 with a B.A. in Planning, Public Policy and Management and went on to work for the City of Eugene Bicycle Transportation Planning department. Seeking lighter powder snow and a change of pace, she spent three winters working at the front desk of the Alta Lodge and quickly fell in love with the beautiful, close knit community of Alta. Email Stella at [stella@friendsofalta.org](mailto:stella@friendsofalta.org)

## Board of Directors

The board of directors includes people who have supported Friends of Alta from its inception and others who have since learned about the mission of the organization. Mimi Levitt, the founder of Friends of Alta, currently serves as the President of the Board. Thirteen directors and 22 advisory committee members dedicate their time and efforts to supporting Friends of Alta.

# Officers

## **MIMI LEVITT – PRESIDENT**

Mimi Levitt first became aware of environmental issues while attending the North Country School outside Lake Placid, N.Y., where she also learned to ski and found her love of the mountains. She received a B.S. degree in Early Childhood Education from Finch College in N.Y.C., and traveled west after college to ski. While working at the front desk of the Alta Lodge she was introduced to the owner Bill Levitt. Mimi later married Bill, who was the Mayor of Alta for a stunning 34 years.

Mimi first became active in supporting efforts to protect and preserve Alta's environment when the Town of Alta was threatened by a series of lawsuits. She organized the Alta Defense Fund (now Friends of Alta) which was instrumental in supporting the Town to stave off heavy intrusions of time-shares and condo development in the key watershed area.

As President of Friends of Alta, she has been a leader in gaining support for acquiring threatened land in Albion Basin. She is also an advisory committee member of Alta Community Enrichment (A.C.E.); previously served on the Alta Fire Department and is a strong skier and photographer. She also enjoys tennis, golf and horseback riding at her get-a-way place in Moab, Utah.

Email Mimi at [mlevitt@friendsofalta.org](mailto:mlevitt@friendsofalta.org)

## **TIM HOGEN – VICE PRESIDENT**

Timothy L. Hogen established Hogen Associates in 1980 to provide fund-raising services to nonprofit organizations. Hogen Associates specializes in the design and management of capital campaigns which over the past 34 years have raised over \$500,000,000 and provided a variety of development services to over 90 independent schools across the country. Mr. Hogen has also served as the development counsel to a number of other organizations in the areas of social service, culture, religion, and the performing arts.

Mr. Hogen has had over a decade of experience in public service. He spent six years on the staff of a federal agency and two years as a special assistant to a United States Senator. He has been a trustee of World Education, the Farmington River Watershed Association, and the Monroe Free Library. He was the first Chairman of the Board of

INFORM, a public interest research organization, and was a Director of the Andover-Abbot Alumni Association of New York Mr. Hogen was educated at Phillips Academy and Yale University where he majored in Russian studies.

#### **SKIP SILLOWAY – TREASURER & VICE PRESIDENT**

While living in Vermont, Skip Silloway became involved in a number of non-profits including a performing arts organization, Rotary Club, Chamber of Commerce and the local hospital on whose board he sat for 17 years (four of which he was chair). Skip was also part of several efforts to raise money for various local causes including the hospital and the local Boys & Girls Club.

After splitting numerous years between Vermont and SLC, Skip and his wife Molly moved to SLC in 2007. Skip and Molly are members of the Alta Club where Skip is also a member of the Board. They have two sons, two daughter-in-laws and two grandchildren who they hope will become third generation Alta skiers.

#### **RICHARD THOMAS - SECRETARY**

Richard Thomas learned his love of the outdoors from his father during innumerable family and Scout camping and skiing trips in the Cascades of Central Washington and the Allegheny Mountains of Pennsylvania and northern West Virginia.

A resident of Alta for over twenty years, Richard has witnessed steady growth in Little Cottonwood Canyon, both public and private, including the Town Office, the completion of the sewer and gas line, the re-building of Goldminer's and the Rustler expansion, many structural improvements for the benefit of visitors to the Alta and Snowbird resorts and the gradual build out of the available residential properties at Alta. He strongly supports the efforts of the Friends of Alta to assist the Town in its legal battles to enforce its zoning decisions, to maintain the watershed and to conserve the natural heritage of the Albion Basin.

## Directors

Nicholas C Besobrasov  
Peter Corroon  
Sheridan Davis

Cassie Dippo  
John Holland  
Becky Holt

Peg Kramer  
Chris Mikell  
Bruce Shand

## Advisory Committee Members

Albert Andrews  
David Arnold  
Brad Barber  
Jayne Belnap  
Gene Bliss, MD  
Skip Branch  
Laura McIndoe Briefer

Margot & Fred Churchill  
Michael Goldstein, MD  
Shannon Gordon  
Jack Hoag  
Barbara Hoffman  
Austin Hoyt  
Felicity Forbes Hoyt

Loren Kroenke  
Fay Michener  
Jeff Niermeyer  
Felix G. Rohatyn  
Dick Schatten  
Elfriede Shane  
Pat Shea

# Friends of Alta Fast Facts

## About

- Started in 1979 to financially support the Town of Alta in a legal battle regarding zoning regulations.
- Became a member of the national Land Trust Alliance in 2007
- Protects the culinary water supply in the Albion Basin which supports the Town of Alta, Snowbird, 33% of Sandy City's water and 12-14% of the Salt Lake City's Department of Public Utilities Service Area
- Selects an individual bi-annually to serve as the Bill Levitt Fellow and lead research and/or service projects

## Programs

- Organizes an annual Memorial Tree Planting day each September
- Funds staffing of the Alta Summer Booth Program
- Co-hosts the Alta Gala each spring
- Created the Database Project with the Alta Environmental Center
- Co-hosts environmental symposiums with its non-profit partners



## FAQs

### **IS FRIENDS OF ALTA THE ONLY ORGANIZATION PROTECTING THE LAND IN ALTA?**

Friends of Alta supports the protective policies of the Town of Alta, Salt Lake City's watershed management policies, and the U.S. Forest Service's policies and stewardship of the area's public lands. The organization works closely with all organizations in the area to provide stewardship of Albion Basin's conservation value.

### **HOW CAN I SUPPORT FRIENDS OF ALTA?**

We believe that by acting now, the beauty of Alta can be preserved for future generations. You can begin by visiting our website ([friendsofalta.org](http://friendsofalta.org)) to learn more about our programs and sign up for our newsletter. Friends of Alta also depends on contributions from people who share our mission. Your donations will help protect the land through conservation easements.

### **HOW CAN I TELL OTHERS ABOUT MY SUPPORT OF FRIENDS OF ALTA?**

Visit our website to order one of our Friends of Alta t-shirts, running socks, or stickers! You can also follow Friends of Alta on Facebook to spread the word among your friends.

# 2014 Successes

## **PROTECTING LAND**

- Feb. 2014: parcel in Cecret Lake area was purchased and conserved
- Nov. 2014: parcel in Albion Alps subdivision was purchased and conserved
- Actively participated in, and positively influenced the Town of Alta zoning updates for building height and coverage in the base facility zone

## **GROWING SUPPORT**

- 23% increase in contributors
- 20% increase in revenue
- Successful New York City Benefit at the Explorers Club in Nov. 2014

## **STEWARDSHIP**

- Invasive Weed Removal Program
- 6 volunteer events with 40 bags of invasive weeds pulled
- Bill Levitt Fellow Summer totals: 51.5 hours and 25 bags
- Planted 6 memorial trees and 100 seedlings in Albion Basin
- Little Cottonwood Creek Zinc Remediation, Completed 319 non-point source grant with the State of Utah and EPA
- Hydrologic Investigations in Albion Basin
- Research/Education

## **ALTA BIRD SURVEYS**

- New partnership with Tracy Aviary and Alta Environmental Center to conduct baseline bird surveys in Alta
- Bird feeding station installed outside FOA office with live camera and footage shown on website