



For the Love of Trees...

An essential natural resource.

Of the many on-going projects under the umbrella of the School of the Natural Order, the community at Home Farm in Baker, Nevada has initiated an “Orchard Restoration Project”.

The property now known as SNO-Home Farm was established back in the 19th century being the Fielding Ranch and homestead at that time, as well as a supplier of many products to the camps in the Osceola mining district in the late 1800’s.

Our school’s fruit orchard is historic by standards, with many of the trees in the neighborhood of 100 years old, and several said to be much older than that. The orchard holds trees of apple, pear, apricot, peach, plum and almond. Many fruit trees have the inherent characteristic of flowering every other year, or even every two years. Three years ago, a small group of students set up a drip water system in the lower orchard to insure deep and consistent soaking of the trees. Approximately 2-dozen trees are being nurtured and attended to, with some extraneous needing to receive attention in the near future.

With board approval, in mid-December of 2023 the school enlisted the assistance of an arborist from Salt Lake City that specializes in the care of historic orchards. Eliza Clarke was referred to the school on the high recommendations from the Manager and Chief Arborist at Capital Reef National Park in Utah, Wayne Hanks, who also specializes in historic orchards, as well as the approximate 6,000 trees in his care. The initial 2-day project consisted of clearing the dead, diseased and damaged branches, with a complimentary educational introduction from Eliza for a small group of participating students. Come Spring of 2024, Eliza will return for the project of tree pruning while our orchard is still in dormancy.

The restoration of the Home Farm orchard is understandably a long-term project, and such a worthwhile one! The beauty of delicate blossoms upon tree limbs, the enchanting fragrance wafting, and the humming of tiny honeybees is unparalleled. Deliberate care and attention of any tree supports not only the individual tree(s), but benefits our human existence; endlessly giving us oxygen, shelter, clean air, a cooled environment, a home to wildlife, etc., etc.

It’s no mystery that Vitvan loved the orchards, gardens and the land, spending many hours of the day with students, talking and discussing the teachings, all the while taking care of tasks in the orchard and gardens, on the roads, in the buildings, etc. And so we welcome and encourage you to come and join our efforts for any or all of the SNO-Home Farm headquarters restoration projects. Your continued love, support and joyful participation joins in the nurturing of this field, and in doing so, adds to the beauty of the dynamic process as it unfolds!

Namaste

