

SONOITA CREEK FLOOD and FLOW STUDY COMMITTEE

MISSION: The watershed is a vital component of this community's well being. The Sonoita Creek Flood and Flow Study Committee will (i) make recommendations to the Patagonia Town Council with respect to best practices within its jurisdiction to manage erosion, to enhance water flow, to create optimal flood mitigation and to promote the long-term health of the riparian corridor, (ii) look at the entire watershed area to influence upstream conditions and to optimize downstream consequences, and (iii) educate the public.

MINUTES for March 10, 2016 Meeting

(NOTE: this meeting's recording is available to Town administrative office)

ATTENDEES: Carolyn Shafer, Kate Tirion, Anne Townsend, John Hays, Meg Gilbert, Dave Teel. Guests: Susan Belt, Charlie Montoy, Karen Herther (Hudbay Water Resource Specialist), Jerry Bustamante (Hudbay Community Relations)

1. Approval of the February 11 minutes was deferred to the April meeting.
2. Discussion of Town of Patagonia Flood Damage Prevention and the Town's General Plan relative to water was deferred to the April meeting as only Carolyn and Meg had read the Town's documents. Carolyn explained that their purpose is to spell out that the Town is required to meet the State's minimum. Dave clarified that we're not required to adopt the State's code; it only says our regs must be at least as stringent. Per John, we have to have an ordinance or no benefits would be available to the Town, and there would be no flood insurance available to anyone.

John provided definitions of floodplain and floodway and mentioned the Community Rating System. Per Dave, legislation is in the works in Phoenix that would except older mobile homes. About 800 people live in our flood plain; if you have a mortgage, you are required to get flood insurance as it is a Federal requirement. (NOTE: a document is attached to these minutes which gives the definitions and the zones).

3. Kate advised that the sub-committee on sub-watershed projects had not yet met. She has reached out to Brent, but has had no response from him (re sub-committee on sub-watershed project). She would aim for "retention" to create flooding in bottom lands (from Red Canyon down to Sacaton area). Per John, we could get pre-disaster mitigation grants; plans for Patagonia should be included in the County Disaster Mitigation Plan because that would increase our prospects for funding from the Federal government.
4. The sub-committee on feasibility of a retention pond solution has not met.
5. Dave advised that the PRCF had declined to fund the "Story of the Creek" brochure. There followed a brief discussion of alternative funding such as the Southern Arizona

Water Protection Fund; Coronado Resource Conservation District; Sonoran Institute; Audubon; TNC; PABA; could ask the County; Tree Arbor-Forestry folks. We should all give Carolyn names of organizations and contacts for funding. Friends of Sonoita Creek might be willing to contribute up to \$500 toward the development of the educational Creek brochure.

6. There was discussion of FMA / PMA federal grants for the mitigation work.
7. UPDATES: (i) the Town Disaster Planning meeting with FEMA, NOAA, Red Cross, Santa Cruz County Emergency Management and Brownell (FEMA funded consultant) was held on March 2. There will be a Certified Emergency Response Team (CERT) training the first three weekends in May for our community. (ii) Laura Norman (USGS) presentation at Friends of Sonoita Creek meeting was well attended. Her slides will be available for sharing.
8. The Parking Lot and Radar Screen items were reviewed and revised. Two items were deleted: Clear Creek Associates report and Review of Town's flood plain regulation.
9. Next meeting: April 14 at 10 a.m.

PARKING LOT (future agenda items)
Town of Patagonia watershed designation by FS
Status of FEMA Meetings
Town of Patagonia water improvement projects
Santa Cruz County flood plain review
List of private owners of creek bed
Conservation easement
Public education program on water related issues
Flood mitigation plan
Active Water Management Area (AMA)
AZ Municipal Water Users Association

RADAR SCREEN

Hudbay property ownership
AZ Supreme Court ruling in AZ Dept of Water Resources vs McLennen