

SONOITA CREEK FLOOD & FLOW STUDY COMMITTEE  
DRAFT NOTES FROM DECEMBER 10, 2015  
MEETING AT PATAGONIA TOWN HALL

IN ATTENDANCE: Carolyn Shafer, Steve Buckley, Brent Bowden, Kate Tirion, David Seibert, Meg Gilbert, David Teel, and Anne Townsend (recorder of these notes). Absent: Luke Reese

1. Carolyn opened the meeting at 10 a.m. Introductions were made.
2. The Committee welcomed Brent Bowden to the Committee as its newest committee member.
3. After a brief discussion of the minutes from the Committee's November 12<sup>th</sup> meeting, an amendment was suggested to ensure reference to “and educate the public,” and the minutes were accepted as amended (Steve moved; Anne seconded). The next meeting will be held Thursday January 14<sup>th</sup> at 10 a.m.
4. The Committee elected Carolyn as its Chair; and Anne as the Recording Secretary (note-taker). It was agreed that it would meet monthly on the second Thursday of each month at 10 a.m. And that an hour to an hour and a half was the ideal length of each meeting.
5. Next on the agenda was a discussion of possible additional Committee members. Dave has emailed John Hays but hasn't heard back yet. Brent will talk to rancher Bob or Bill Bergier. David and Steve will reach out to hydrologist Michelle Girard. Brent will also talk to Greg Lucero (on Nogales City Council & also with Arizona Mining).
6. The Mission of the Committee was discussed and, with the addition of an additional sentence, “To educate the public.” after the sentence ending “... downstream consequences.”, the Mission was approved as amended (Kate moved; Brent seconded). **I have started my trip to FL so I don't have my notes with me BUT my recollection is that “to education the public” became a distinct (and the third) paragraph of the mission statement.**
  1. – As part of the Mission discussion, the Committee agreed to think about the Committee goals and action steps to meet this Mission, and to bring them to the next meeting on January 14<sup>th</sup>. Committee members should share their ideas with each other **by January 7** in order to reduce discussion time at the meeting.
1. Story of the Creek. Kate showed us a fold-out brochure she had produced for The Escondido Creek Conservancy in California. Committee members were immediately taken with it, and Anne agreed to work with Friends of Sonoita Creek (FOSC) to help research and fund-raise for the Committee's production of such a brochure for the Town and Friends. David **Seibert** suggested seeking a grant for community outreach to fund this, too. Dave **Teel** will talk to Patagonia Regional Community Foundation about this. David **Seibert** will see if funds might be available for this in the Borderlands' grants. Kate would help on this

- and be paid for her time.
2. Borderlands (Kate, David and Steve) talked about on-going current best practices for water restoration, erosion control and flood mitigation. They're involved in a grant application for a watershed study for the Forest Service, but this isn't likely to take place (if it comes through) until next fall. They mentioned a major upcoming public/private meeting in February (sponsored by Forest Service?) that will address public/private forest and watershed management. Steve suggested we go online to [www.cuencalosojos.org](http://www.cuencalosojos.org) to review that foundation's video re restoring ranches. Such restoration also reduces fire dangers. They felt Laura Norman with USGS would be a good speaker for one of the Committee's meeting, with the public invited and plenty of publicity in advance. She would fill us all in on the latest science regarding various restoration efforts. Carolyn suggested we coordinate it to happen during the annual Earth Fest in April. Steve mentioned that the press release was going out today (i.e., the 10<sup>th</sup>) for the Sky Island Alliance, SIRC, work. It is on Borderland's website. Committee members agreed to read it and the Borderland's grant application prior to the next meeting.
  3. Dave Teel filled us in on the 1p.m. FEMA meeting today (the 10<sup>th</sup>) at the Town Hall and said the public is invited. It is primarily about emergency hazard responses. Brent mentioned that FEMA's regulations call for a 19' to 21' clearance beneath the bridge over the Creek. Currently, the bridge is only about 11' above the Creek (it has filled in over time). So, dredging is a major concern but until the upstream mitigation work is sufficiently done to curb and retain more of the flow, it is needed for now to get the bottom dredged out to keep the Town safe. Biggest mistake was when the crossing was put in near Piper's house. It causes water and debris/rocks to back up on the upstream side of it, and it erodes on the downstream side of it.
  4. Carolyn mentioned the upcoming Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors Meeting on December 16<sup>th</sup>. There will be a presentation by the former owner of Three Canyons. Anne said she will try to go (but I cannot due to a prior commitment).
  5. David Seibert mentioned that Borderlands has a good relationship with BLM and can get permits as needed.
  6. Brent talked about the need for monitoring gauges to be in keeping with FEMA requirements; need to fund-raise for these and to get high-school kids involved in monitoring.
  7. The next Town meeting is on 12/16 on the Doc Mock Park; major interest around water.
  1. There was a brief discussion of future agenda items (referred to as a "Parking Lot") and of items of concern. Brent explained that Hudbay had indeed purchased Lot 7 in Rail X, == the rest of this sentence: I don't recall this is exactly what was said and I think it is a mining company statement so one-sided; I would prefer to leave it out == meaning it now owns Sonoita Springs but it will turn this property into a marshy nature-oriented preserve for the enjoyment of the

public in return for Hubday's use of property in the mountains.

2.

At 11:30 a.m., Brent moved and Steve seconded to adjourn the meeting.

Draft notes taken by Anne Townsend