

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 8, 2018 Meeting

(NOTE: This meeting's recording is available at Town administrative office)

ATTENDEES: Carolyn Shafer, Anne Townsend, Marty Lawrence, Dave Ellis, Murphy Music, Kate Tirion. Guests: Sean Schrag (NextGen Engineering), Ben Costello, Rick Kulibert, and Brad Sander

1. Unanimously approved the minutes of the February 8, 2018 meeting as written was moved by Marty and seconded by Dave.
2. Carolyn reported 41 stakeholders attended F&F's February 27 Quarterly Meeting of Stakeholders and that it was an excellent presentation by James Callegary [sp? Title?]. Also, a University of Arizona professor of biology, offered to speak to this group at its May meeting on biodiversity in this area. Carolyn mentioned that Edward O. Wilson, a renowned scientist, named this as one of the most important ecological systems in the U.S. to protect. Carolyn will work

on getting the U of A professor committed for the May stakeholders workshop meeting.

3. The Town Council approved Kurt Vaughn, Borderlands Restoration Network, as a new member of the F&F Committee; it also approved seeking funding for the next phase of our Watershed Management Plan. Dave and Anne will work on this (also see below).

4. Dave reported that the Patagonia Area Watershed Study (PAWS) is funded by AZDEQ, but that it is nearly impossible to raise funding for studies like the one proposed by NextGen in its Roadmap write-up. He has asked AMI to join PAWS and for possibly assisting with funding the Roadmap; they have to be asked. We need data from untouched areas' flows as well as from Flux/Alum canyons and Harshaw Creek. Their training and volunteer turnout has been so good that AZDEQ has asked them to help with studying the stretch from the Town to Patagonia Lake (currently, there isn't enough dissolved oxygen in the Creek in that stretch, meaning it's difficult to keep fish and other waterlife healthy). AZDEQ is trying to improve its existing protocol up to PAWS standard.

Sean explained for the guests that the Roadmap by NextGen is a follow up of the original proposal and would result in a write-up of prioritized objectives as well as rounding up and analyzing all the different data from various sources. This would be made available to the public and would be a necessary and good baseline. The resulting baseline would need to have an ongoing check to keep it current. Everyone wants high quality water in the watershed and we need scientifically-verifiable data on what it actually is now plus what, if any, changes (good or bad) happen going forward during future years. Marty commented that the Roadmap would also show not only what we have but, importantly, what we don't have. Carolyn

said we had originally considered asking the stakeholders for something like \$300 each; do we want to proceed with that? She wants the funding for the Roadmap to be on an equal-share basis, in order to keep it from being seen as a biased report with biased results. Carolyn will draft a letter to this effect, send it out to F&F before the next meeting, and it will be on that meeting's agenda (April 12) for discussion. Ben asked if NextGen was the proposer of the Roadmap project. Yes, Sean explained the prior work done by NextGen leading up to this proposal. Carolyn pointed out that, as an official Town committee, we don't have to go out for competitive bids. Ben suggested that we try setting up a Go Fund Me page to help fund this effort.

5. Murphy briefly explained what "CRS" means (Community Rating System that affects premiums for flood insurance) and the tasks required that led up to the recent exciting news that the Insurance Services Officer (ISO) is coming to town on March ?? to meet with the Town Manager and him. If the ISO approves our application by verifying its accuracy, we'll be accepted into the CRS, and with additional improvements around the Town toward flood control, be able to lower flood insurance premium costs.
6. Dave covered an update on PAWS during item 4., above.
7. Dave reported that Anu hadn't realized the amount of work done to date and also sent him 8 documents helping to explain. He then essentially said he hadn't been aware of what's been done. Dave thinks he's sort of withdrawing from his initial ideas.

8. The Friends of Sonoita Creek's Annual Meeting is March 17 with five panelists to explain each organization's interest in protecting and enhancing the Sonoita Creek watershed.

9. The next F&F Committee meeting will be at the Town Hall, 10 a.m. April 12.