

Town of Patagonia, Arizona Flood and Flow 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 mitigate downstream consequences, and (iii) educate the public.*

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Carolyn Shafer-F&F **Chairperson** &
Patagonia Area Resource Alliance: **PARA**
Dave Ellis-Patagonia Area Water Study: **PAWS**
Marty Lawrence-The Nature Conservancy: **TNC**
Robert Proctor-Friends of Sonoita Creek **FOSC**

Kate Tirion-Deep Dirt farm: **DDFI**
Kurt Vaughn-Borderlands Restoration Network:
BRN
Howard Buchanan-Tucson Audubon Paton
Center: **TAPC**

Minutes of August 13, 2020 Meeting

Members Present: Carolyn, Marty, Kurt, Howard, Bob, Dave

Members Absent: Kate

Guests: Jennifer Varin (Coronado National Forest Watershed Manager), Chris Thiel (Coronado National Forest Natural Resources), Ron Robinson (Patagonia Town Manager), Bill O'Brien (NextGen Engineering), Peter Leiterman (The Nature Conservancy), Sarah Richman (South32), Tomas Goode (South32), Shelley White

Meeting called to order at 10:02 a.m. by Carolyn Shafer

1. Call to the Public - no one spoke
2. Approval of July 9, 2020 minutes- Motion to approve by Marty; second by Howard; minutes unanimously approved
3. Howard reported that the grant to fund a formal watershed management group is expected to be announced in November.
4. Carolyn reported that the Town Council at its August 12 meeting approved sending a letter to the Forest Service requesting a comprehensive surface and groundwater study and a letter to South32 requesting all its water reports.
5. Marty Lawrence reported that about a year ago The Nature Conservancy decided to update a Conservation Plan for the Sonoita Creek Watershed. The Plan was created in partnership with input from Borderlands, Tucson Audubon, and Circle Z Dude Ranch.
6. Kurt Vaughn presented information about funding opportunities for FMA and BRIC grants. At this time, Kurt recommended that the Town complete a Direct Technical Assistance application to focus on developing a holistic and well supported plan. Carolyn moves that the Flood & Flow Committee forward to the Town Council a recommendation to complete that application; Bob seconds; motion passed

unanimously. Kurt and Carolyn will draft the agenda item for the next Town Council meeting.

7. Jennifer Varin and Chris Thiel provided background information on the process in 2013/2014 to designate a municipal watershed for the Town of Patagonia. The FS Plan states there are 128,000 acres, but notations on a “proposed” watershed map do not add up to that acreage. The Research group (Howard, Bob, Carolyn) identified what might be the missing sub-watershed from the total acreage designated in the FS document. Following discussion on this topic, Carolyn made a motion draft a letter from the Town of Patagonia to USGS asking for assistance in identifying which sub-watersheds feed the Town’s municipal watershed; Marty seconds; the motion passed unanimously.

8. Jennifer and Chris also offered additional information about creating a Watershed Restoration Action Plan(s) (RAP) and suggested that the Town focus on the sub-watersheds that are a priority. After discussion, Carolyn moves that the Research Group (Howard, Bob, Carolyn) draft a request for RAPs for two of the sub-watersheds identified as “Functioning at Risk” — specifically Harshaw (HUC 150503010203) and Red Rock (HUC 150503010202); motion seconded by Kurt; the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 11:25 a.m.