**SONOITA CREEK FLOOD and FLOW STUDY COMMITTEE**

MISSION: The watershed is a vital component of this community’s wellbeing.  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.

**MINUTES for Hybrid Meeting**

**in person at Town Council Chambers or**

**via ZOOM: Meeting I.D. 957-511-4862 Passcode 338501**

**10 a.m., Thursday, July 13, 2023**

1. Call to Order—Bill called the meeting to order at 10:00am.

Roll Call: Bill O’Brien present, Ron Robinson present, Carolyn Shafer present, Bob Proctor present, Kate Tirion present, Aaron Mrotek & Howard Buchanan present via zoom Rodrigo Sierra-Corona & Tess Wagner absent.

Public Present: Tomas Goode (South32), Robert Gay via zoom, Ashley Hullinger (UofA) via zoom, Shelly White via zoom, Maria’s iPhone via zoom, Ruth Ann LeFebvre, Lucy Caine, Chris Kuzdas (EDF), Pam Lemke, Alex Johnson, Stephanie Smith, Mary Tolena, Darcy Alexandra, David Christiana.

1. Pledge of Allegiance—Bill led the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. Correction and/or Approval of Minutes from June 8, 2023, regular monthly meeting

Motion: Ron moved to accept the minutes from June 8, 2023, regular monthly meeting

Second: Bob

Vote: Approved by unanimous consent

1. CALL TO THE PUBLIC: A. R. S. §38-431-01(H):  AT THIS TIME, ANY MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC IS ALLOWED TO ADDRESS THE TOWN COMMITTEE, SUBJECT TO REASONABLE TIME AND MANNER RESTRICTIONS.  THE PUBLIC WILL ONLY BE RECOGNIZED TO SPEAK ON AGENDA ITEMS LISTED FOR PUBLIC INPUT PURSUANT TO TOWN CODE SECTION 2-5-6.  PURSUANT TO THE ARIZONA OPEN MEETING LAW, AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE CALL TO THE PUBLIC, INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL MAY RESPOND TO CRITICISM MADE BY THOSE WHO HAVE ADDRESSED THE COUNCIL, MAY ASK STAFF TO REVIEW THE MATTER, OR MAY ASK THE MATTER BE PLACED ON A FUTURE AGENDA.  HOWEVER, MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC BODY SHALL NOT DISCUSS OR TAKE LEGAL ACTION ON MATTERS RAISED DURING AN OPEN CALL TO THE PUBLIC UNLESS THE MATTERS ARE PROPERLY NOTICED FOR DISCUSSION AND LEGAL ACTION.

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. Discussion on the role of the Flood & Flow Committee with respect to the Town of Patagonia being designated a Participating Agency with the Forest Service relative to the South32 Hermosa Critical Minerals Project (see attached June 20, 2023, letter from Forest Supervisor Kerwin Dewberry and its attachment. The Town Council has accepted the invitation.

Carolyn presented a FAST-41 Dashboard timeline for the Hermosa Project and said the Town is now a Participating Agency.

1. Presentation by Environmental Defense Fund Senior Water Program Manager Dr Christopher Kuzdas: In rural Arizona, covering 80% of the state and home to a growing population of 1.5 million people, groundwater pumping is completely unregulated. Over the last several years, a growing number of rural communities in different parts of the state have come to face significant water supply challenges as groundwater supplies – often rural communities only water supply – decline. As a result, more and more rural communities are coming together to develop solutions and advocate for more options and tools that give communities a choice about their future.  This presentation will walk through groundwater basics and facts, including what groundwater is and how it is managed, and takes a statewide view of the recent history of how rural communities are approaching water challenges in recent years and engaging on state water policy in new ways, including a recent proposal called Local Groundwater Stewardship Areas that many rural communities are supporting at the Legislature. To understand where we are going on water, it is helpful to understand where we have been. The presentation is intended to be educational. Recent polls show [water is now the #1 issue with Arizona voters](https://www.waterforarizona.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/2023-LGSA-Public-Opinion-Survey-_final-.pdf), surpassing even immigration, inflation, and education.  The presentation is ultimately an invitation – regardless of views - to join the rural water discussion that is quickly ramping up statewide. There is nothing more important to Arizona communities than ensuring water security and stability for all. See on-line information at waterforarizona.com.

Dr. Kuzdas had a power point presentation that was not compatible with our system and we had to change to his computer for the display. Unfortunately, we lost sound on video. Questions were asked and answered. Lucy spoke about her program.

**OLD BUSINESS**

1. Update on the University of Arizona Water Resources Research Center on the Town of Patagonia’s “Drought Response Planning for Water Resilient Communities.” (Howard Buchanan and Bob Proctor). Ashley will be making a presentation in person at our next meeting in August.
2. Update on working with the Coronado Forest Service to begin drafting Watershed Restoration Action Plans (Bob Proctor, Howard Buchanan, Tess Wagner).

Bob talked about meeting with the Forest Service and they are underfunded and under staffed.

1. School Canyon Failure of CCC Structures (Manager Ron and Bob Proctor)

Bob met with USFS and they are working on an action plan. Bob also approached Santa Cruz County to request assistance from the new Flood Plain Administrator, Alan Sanchez.

1. Updates, if any, on these Parking Lot items:
   1. Patagonia Regional Flood Control Project Feasibility Study (Bill O’Brien)
   2. Flood Control Permit for South32 relative to Cross Creek Connector road (Carolyn)
2. Next Regular Monthly Meeting: August 13, 2023, at 10 a.m. Via Zoom Meeting.

1. Future Agenda Items
   1. Environmental Defense Fund Water Leadership Institute program.
   2. Presentation about Drought Resilience by Ashley Hullinger of WRRC.
2. Adjourn

PARKING LOT (future agenda items)

Comprehensive Groundwater Study

Town of Patagonia Municipal Watershed Plan

Sonoita Creek Watershed Stakeholders Group

Community Database of Water Studies

RADAR SCREEN

Hudbay property ownership