

Cascabel Conservation Association
Winter Meeting Minutes
January 20, 2024

In person attendance at CCC: Chris Eastoe, James Callegary, David Omick, Pearl Mast, Karen McKelvey, Anna Lands, Bob Evans, Kai Staats, Colleen Cooley, Carl Howard, John Welch, Cindy Salo, Susan Tollefson, Tom Talbott, Katie Talbott, Alex Binford-Walsh, Sue Newman, Gail Loveland, Jim McPherson, Elna Otter, Birgit De Gregorio, Joe Page, Erik Revere, Casey Hubbard, Barbara Clark, Andrew Volz, Bill Doelle, Steve Nash, John Riley, Daniel Baker, Marissa Katz, Edith Robinson **Zoom attendants:** None

I INTRODUCTION

- A. Introductions and moment of silence- Chris Eastoe
- B. Reading of sojourner reflection- Susan Tollefson (the reflection is included in the attached Hermitage Report)
- C. Approval of Fall meeting minutes from 9/9/2023 Motion- David Omick, Second-Tom Talbott
The minutes were unanimously approved

II BUSINESS AND ADMINISTRATION

A. Board matters and Outreach

1. Proposal related to water conservation

Chris noted that in a board meeting Barbara Clark had asked how CCA could show leadership in our small portion of the San Pedro river watershed. He believes that CCA could provide information about how water supply varies over time. Currently data is being collected on 3 aquifers. He proposed that he write a report detailing and explaining the data.

Motion- Pearl Mast

Members give consent for Chris Estoe to write a report to offer to the community on the status of our water supply, using information currently being collected by others. Second-Tom Talbott

Discussion: Susan hoped that this data might increase awareness of how much water one actually uses. General agreement indicated that the geographic area would run from the Benson narrows to Gamez road, that the information would be non-threatening, and that distribution would be via email and the CCA website.

Motion passed unanimously

2. Newsletter

Pearl raised the question of whether we should continue to have a newsletter, or how better to communicate. Also, that there is not currently a website manager. These have been ongoing issues. Alex felt CCA could benefit from having an outreach coordinator. Katie queried whether there was anyone present, or known to those present who would be interested in taking this on.

As no volunteers came forward, Chris agreed to organize a board workshop to explore the issue. Susan will also address the issue in the next Sojourner News.

B. Finances

1. Birgit reviewed the financial report (see attached)

Pearl noted that a portion of funds is earmarked for SunZia legal defense. Susan issued a reminder to document volunteer labor hours. Discussion ensued about the importance of this. Karen emphasized that it could come under scrutiny by the IRS in maintaining 501C-3 status and is important in grant application considerations. Erik stated it would be useful for committee chairs to pay attention and remind members of this. Cindy reiterated that documenting labor hours needs to be taken more seriously. Bill Doelle was asked about how ASW does this and he said their policy is to report what they consider "accurate estimates," as they track activities and attendance.

Pearl reported that she is working extensively with Mary Huerstel, CPA to establish the new bookkeeping practices. She also requested permission to consult with attorney James Jutry to review documents and provide clarification of the legal status of the Meader endowment fund, in terms of principal vs interest bearing.

Motion- Pearl Mast Second- Alex Binford-Walsh (consent for above)

Motion passed unanimously.

2. Report on McGinnis-Verbance land

In early December a couple of people floated the idea to engage an appraiser agreed upon by both parties in order to end the stalemate regarding the value of the property. Patrick and Layla agreed to this in principle. Two willing appraisers were identified; however they had reservations about one of the proposed appraisers. We are still awaiting a response regarding the other appraiser. The estimated cost is \$900. Katie wondered whether CCA could get an independent appraisal, however Barbara wondered if that was legal. A question arose about using the assessed value to gauge value, and that that information is in the public domain. And Chris reminded members that as a non-profit, CCA can't pay above market value. It was agreed that our offer is still on the table and we are waiting for Patrick and Layla to get back to Chris about the assessed value.

C. Baicatcan land committee

1. Erik Revere read a letter from Jodi and Brandon Wert outlining their intentions for homesteading at Baicatcan. It expressed gratitude to CCA and ASW for their life-long lease, acquired at the sale of the property, which has enabled them to find their way back to living in Cascabel. They expressed their intention to stay attuned to the land and to live outdoors as much as indoors. In summer of this year they will drive their 1991 Bluebird school bus (adapted to serve as a domicile) from NC and settle it at the lower airstrip at the hangar. Erik clarified that the lease extends to their life only and is not in perpetuity and does not include heirs.
2. Erik reported that Brandon Wert provided an extremely productive work trade for time spent by the Wert's at Mick's Cottage

3. Bill Doelle reported on the agave project and expressed appreciation to CCA for overwintering the agaves in the garden greenhouse. Marissa reported that since moving to the greenhouse there has been considerable new growth. ASW still has no fixed idea about where to establish them and is still assessing the landscape. Some questions will be addressed with researcher Wendy Hodgson.

D. Saguaro-Juniper announcements

1. James Callegary reported on progress of converting SJ from for profit to non-profit status. State approval has been obtained and SJ is waiting on federal approval of 501C-3 status. He emphasized the overlap between CCA and SJ in regards to range management, including nurturing native grasses, curbing invasive plants, and spending time in “attentive stillness” on the land.
2. SJ will hold a “Home on the Range” event on the weekend of March 2-3 which will involve time spent on the land and with each other envisioning a 3-5 year plan. All are welcome to participate.
3. James gave a moving account of the recent slaughter of Konchita, an aging cow, at El Potrero. This was a sacred and powerful event that involved a large swath of the community.

III CONSERVATION PROGRAM

A. Committee summary report (see attached)

1. Pearl reviewed recent advocacy, monitoring, and collaborative activities of the conservation committee from September 2023-January 2024, details of which are covered in the attached report.
2. John Welch (ASW) reviewed the nature of the lawsuit filed by multiple Native American tribes, Archeology Southwest, and Center for Biological Diversity against the Bureau of Land Management, for failures relating to the SunZia transmission project. CCA has signed a letter of support for this action.
3. Regarding the GoFundMe site to raise funds for legal expenses relating to Sunzia opposition, Kai requested that members continue to monitor the site and supply even small donations when there is noted to be a lag, so that people will know that the site remains active.

IV HERMITAGE PROGRAM

A. See attached Hermitage Committee report

1. Susan reviewed the report which details Sojourner participation, Sabbatical Gatherings, Sojourning News (newsletter) and UA Rise intern activities. She welcomed anyone desiring to participate on the Hermitage Committee to contact her.

V GARDEN ORCHARD PROGRAM

- A. Gail reported the extensive recent plantings of onions and garlic, and that greens are starting to produce. She reiterated that the garden is a community effort.

VI EVENTS, WORKSHOPS, ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. Bill Doelle's official retirement from ASW was announced and his successor Steve Nash was introduced. Appreciation and congratulations were offered. Bill graciously donated several conservation and archeology books and pamphlets to the CCC library.

VII NEXT MEETING

- A. The **Spring Meeting of CCA** was scheduled to be held on **SATURDAY APRIL 13, 2024 3-5pm at the CCC**
The meeting was adjourned and potluck gathering commenced