

CCA Membership Meeting
September 9, 2023
3:00 – 5:00 pm (Arizona time)

Present in person: Chris Eastoe, James Callegary, Katie Talbott, Tom Talbott, Susan Tollefson, Gail Loveland, Barbara Clark, Daniel Baker, Anna Lands, Birgit De Gregorio, Bob Evans, Alex Binford-Walsh, Sue Newman

Present via Zoom: David Omick, Pearl Mast, Tom Orum, Nancy Ferguson, Cindy Salo, Lisa Vogel, Bill Doelle, Jeannie Greven, Marissa Katz

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Introductions (Chris)
- B. Reading of sojourner reflection (Susan) - See attached Hermitage Report
- C. Approval of March 11, 2023 Minutes: Bob Evans moved to accept minutes. Tom Talbott seconded. All approved.

II. BUSINESS AND ADMINISTRATION

- A. Board matters and Outreach
 - 1. Susan Tollefson moved that Gail Loveland be accepted onto the Board of Directors. Birgit De Gregorio seconded. Motion was approved unanimously.
- B. Finances
 - 1. Financial Report: (See attached financial report) Tom Talbott moved to accept the financial report. Katie Talbott seconded. Unanimously accepted.
 - 2. A new CPA, Mary Huerstel, will set up Quickbooks in a way that will be easier for the treasurer to use. May cost between \$2000-\$3000 to do this. Mary will work with another CPA to submit the IRS 990 form by Nov 15. She has worked with other non-profits in the area.
- C. Report on McGinnis-Verbance land (Katie, Chris)
 - 1. Katie sent an email to Patrick and Layla on March 16, to let them know that the offer from CCA to purchase their Canyon Road property for \$77,000 is still available if they change their mind about their asking price. Katie also expressed some of the concerns brought up from the March CCA meeting about the buyer being an appropriate neighbor for the hermitage and SJ grazing lease.
 - 2. Layla replied, assuring her that they are looking for conservation-oriented buyers and are not willing to sell to just anyone. They said they had received offers that were closer to the asking price, which they did not accept because they did not meet their criteria.
 - 3. Most recent info from an email from Layla on Sept 3: "We do have some people who are very interested in both parcels, that we feel could be a good fit for the community. We are expecting some visitations soon. Please continue to know though and share that if anyone in the community is curious or interested, we

are still in the process of welcoming and viewing offers and still remain flexible within the considerations that I mentioned in the last email.” [Primarily not wanting to go below the current asking price of \$295,000.]

- D. Baicatcan Land Committee Report: (Erik was not able to be here for the full report.)
 - 1. Alex noted that the CCC is listed as a water site on the Western Wildlands Route (Canada to Mexico) for bikers and he is working with David, Pearl, and Erik to get Baicatcan listed as a campsite in their next guidebook. James brought up the possibility of us getting “loved to death” by too many visitors. Katie and Alex both said that it didn’t seem like adding the campground would substantially increase the number of biker visitors in this particular instance.
 - 2. Archeology SW—Bill Doelle thanked Marissa Katz for tending the agave plants. Currently, 50-60 *Agave murpheyi* and *Agave sanpedroensis* in pots. Next steps are to look at the area above on the far end of the lower runway and discuss how to get rid of the furrows, level the ground, and use hand installed rock instead. Small scale fencing to protect agaves. The botanical lab in LA that works with the Desert Museum has not been able to make multiple clones as quickly as they have wanted of *A. sanpedroensis*. ASW is searching for a new CEO—Bill is expecting to step down in January 2024 and planning to spend more time on projects like this. Hopes to be much more present in the community after he gets a replacement in Tucson. Marissa reported that a few plants have new pups.
- E. Saguaro Juniper announcements (James Callegary as SJ representative)
 - 1. Saguaro Juniper’s change to nonprofit was approved by the ACC in late August. Now working on the 501(c)(3) for federal status. Will probably take quite a while for the federal process.
 - 2. Fundraising: Planning a series of community-based fun events. Also have an annual gala at the end of February.
 - 3. Mesquite-pulling at Masons every two weeks on Sunday mornings from 7:00 - 10:00 a.m., followed by refreshments from Anna. Talk to Katie if you are interested in participating.
 - 4. Eight new calves so far this season.
 - 5. Alex proposed building a new fence between Pasture 1 and the Native Grass area at Masons and all the materials were donated for that. Fence is now mostly completed. Allows SJ to more easily control grazing in the native grass area.
 - 6. SJ was approved for an apprenticeship through the University of Arizona extension program. Nick Sandberg was chosen to be this year’s apprentice. Nick and his family own property in Cascabel and are out here from Tucson on the weekends. The apprenticeship has been working well. Martiza Broce, the coordinator, has been really easy to work with and a very good networker and administrator and visionary. SJ is looking forward to strengthening that relationship.

III. HERMITAGE PROGRAM

- A. General Program Update – Susan reviewed the Hermitage activity since last CCA meeting in March
 - 1. Six sojourners at hermitages since last meeting
 - 2. Naturalist Field trip last spring with Ralph Waldt to explore Hot Springs Wash.
 - 3. Lexie Williams did her third snake workshop—“Living Peacefully with the Malignant Rattlesnake”. Also an overnight snake workshop.
 - 4. Sabbatical Gatherings on the second Saturday of the month—this month will be the third Saturday because of the CCA meeting.
 - 5. Continue to publish the Sojourning News newsletter—one page about upcoming events.
- B. RISE Internship update (Resilience Internships and Student Experiences): (Susan reviewed her work with the two student interns from the RISE Program—see attached Hermitage Report for full details) - Hermitage program has two University of Arizona interns for the fall and spring semester. Thanks to the work of Andrew Volz and Tom Talbott for finding the RISE program. Susan wrote a proposal for two student interns to help identify small groups from the campus who might want to use the Corbett Center. Brady Monteith (a senior, graduating in Nutrition Systems) and Ivan Bennett from the Pascua Yaqui Tribe, (studying Native American studies.) They stayed for two days at the Corbett Center over Labor Day Weekend. Snake training from Lexie, Tom T. and Daniel took them on a hike up Hot Springs, visited the Caravan and the garden and ASW land. Finished with a potluck. Gail was impressed with how Susan put the program together and liked that it ended at the Community Center with people sharing why they are here—very touching. Dina Kagan also got funded for an intern and will find ways for all three interns to connect.
- C. Hermitage "Brochure": The Hermitage Committee (specifically Karen McKelvey) is creating an attractive bookmark as a way to spread information about the program. Sue suggested postcards as well, because they can be mailed. She suggested working with Michael Puttonen for graphic design.

IV. CONSERVATION PROGRAM

- A. Committee Summary Report (Pearl): Main focus is countering SunZia, but there are still other things happening. Wildlife cameras monitored by Joe Page. The Yellow-billed Cuckoo survey did not take place because Barbara could not find a qualified volunteer to do them. Barbara says that local birders are keeping track informally and we may be able to use that data. Still active with Lower San Pedro Collaborative (LSPC). The connectivity committee has been quiet because of lack of personnel—Bob Rogers retired and Scott Wilber has health issues. Interest in getting that more active. The Faraday Mine at the North end of the Galiuros (Copper Creek, south of Aravaipa)—BLM talk about how they are involved with that. Pearl has been trying to put the major activist there in touch with Earthjustice. LSPC had been trying not to take sides, but the mining project has been brought up at the last couple meetings of LSPC.

- B. The work to stop SunZia is very active, with Pearl and David spending a lot of time on it. Since March there have been several filings from Peter Else. He is working with the law firm Tully Bailey, LLC to counter the ACC decision to approve the SunZia amendments. The judge ruled saying the ACC's decision was reasonable. Peter will be appealing. David O. pointed out that the decision was in line with previous decisions from the AZ Superior Court, deferring to agencies, and that the AZ Appellate Court and Supreme Court tend to be more amenable to challenges. A group has been meeting to discuss a multipronged approach, including media and possibly our own lobbying. Previously, CCA agreed to have a special legal fund. The GoFundMe continues—Marissa is working on that. We will need ongoing support as Peter goes through the appeals process. CWG has info on SunZia on their website and Kai has a specialized website (<https://protectthesanpedro.net>). Sue wants to know if we need more postcards—all 500 are gone. The legal expenses to date have been covered and we are a little ahead. There will be more to come. LSPC also contributed substantially. Question was asked as to whether construction will start even with litigation happening? Meeting with SunZia / Pattern reps once a month attended by Anna, Barbara and Pearl. BLM has to give notice to proceed—BLM is doing it in a stepwise fashion. Had given limited notice to proceed to clear the work areas—laydown yards and equipment areas. Did a pilot project to remove saguaros and replant them. Arizona would seem to have given the go ahead to proceed, but it is uncertain whether they can without BLM.
- C. Bill Doelle spoke about the work Archaeology Southwest (ASW) is doing in conjunction with the tribes. ASW and tribes have filed a dispute about how SunZia has handled the archeology and historical places issues. Discussion of news coverage of this issue—ways that Pattern is getting its story out and ways we are trying to get our story out. James and Sue would like info about articles so they can share it on Facebook. Bill Doelle updated ASW stance: ASW, Tohono O'odham Nation, and the San Carlos Apache Tribe filed a dispute and they got a response last week from the BLM. It got their attention and they are calling for a set of meetings with the two tribes and ASW—very short notice for meeting dates. Bill will be meeting with the two tribal nations to decide how to move forward. BLM reiterated that the project will not be rerouted. ASW is noting that the book *History of the Land* which is about this area, was not referenced at all in the report, though it was published a number of years ago (2006). Hoping that more will come out of this process.

V. GARDEN/ORCHARD PROGRAM

- A. Committee Summary Report (Gail) - Garden has a wonderful chili crop and we are looking forward to roasting in the fall—need to keep picking them so we get more chilis when it is cooler and better for roasting. Okra looks beautiful, eggplant, tomatoes, onions are still available. Have done well in this heat with hard working volunteers. Ready for transition in fall to winter crops. Lexie Williams is planning her wedding in the garden in October. Some snakes in the garden have been moved out. Thanks to David O

for putting in a larger pump—made summer gardening pleasurable. Looking forward to people coming back for fall and winter gardening!

VI. EVENTS AND WORKSHOPS, ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. Tom Talbott has seen vehicle traffic in the river from El Potrero through BLM land south towards the Robles canyon confluence a couple times. Wanted to make people aware of that, as vehicle traffic is not wanted in that part of the river.
 - B. Tamarisk beetles have arrived and have completely browned the needles at the Commons and have arrived as far south at Chris and James' property. Some green tamarisk near River Ranch. Browned needles already greening up.
- VII. NEXT MEETING – Saturday, January 20, 2024 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. Arizona time. Potluck meal to follow