



Winkelman Natural Resource Conservation District

LSPI

May 13, 2015

Draft Minutes

Location: General Kearny Inn, Kearny Arizona

In Attendance:

Bill Dunn, Josh Avey, Charles Ffolliott, Katie Cline Steve Barker, Beverly Miller, Hattie Hedrick, Steve Spangle, Steve Turcotte, Bob Evans, Chris Pfal, Stephanie Smallhouse, Chris Postel

Called to order:

Meeting called to order by Bill at 10:04 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

No quorum for approval for February, March and April minutes

Presentation: Steve Spangle (USFWS) – Mitigation Banking

USFWS has developed umbrella Candidate Conservation Agreements (CCA) in cooperation with other federal agencies for the Sonoran Desert tortoise, such as BLM, National Parks, etc. Many companies (developers, mines, utilities) are evaluating their options, either create additional habitat or purchase conservation credits, Both Resolution and Asarco will be permanently taking out 3,500+ acres of tortoise habitat. Asarco has conducted a species status assessment in conjunction with their plan for a new tailings pond and determined it is a low population site for tortoise. Most companies would rather purchase conservation credits than purchase new land. These credits would have a free market value.

To acquire conservation credits on state and private lands (for example, Southwest Desert Tortoise (SDT)), ranchers would go through the CCAA process that Arizona Game & Fish is developing. The ranchers would need to submit a conservation plan on how the ranchers contribute to the conservation of the SDT. WNRCD's Best Management Practices would be very helpful with their conservation plan. The Feds would do an EA for a CCAA. If approved, permits (certificate of Inclusion) would be awarded.

Discussion: Key Resource Concerns for the Lower San Pedro watershed

The following overall goals were identified:

- Water
- Restore/Protect stream flows in the San Pedro
- Invasive species control
- Native plant and species restoration
- Inefficient water distribution

These goals were further divided:

- Upland Goal – Improve water infiltration rates by doing or using:

- Fire
- Removal of wood (Mechanical, biological, & chemical)
- Grazing management
- Erosion control and structures
- River System Goals:
 - Reduce flooding
 - Increase long term flow
 - Improve water quality
 - These goals would be accomplished by doing:
 - Planning for the Salt Cedar beetle
 - Establish seed sources for riparian areas to take over the new open areas
 - Grazing management
- Irrigated Agriculture – improve irrigation efficiencies using applied technologies
- Incorporate species of concern, such as SDT
- Maintain and sustain the habitat

Overall, keep the primary focus on the water system. These goals would drive our RCPP grant process, water and species. Our planning horizon should be for 30 years.

Next steps for LSPI to be completed by June meeting:

- Need a 6-page RCPP application for the initial stage
- Identify person to write 6-page RCPP application
- Get both board's approval for grant writing funding
- Need to identify potential partners or resources
- Need to evaluate the number and identity of LSPI board members and consider replacing those who haven't been participating

Time and date for next meeting:

Wednesday June 4, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. at the General Kearny Inn Kearny, Arizona

Adjourn:

Meeting adjourned at 12:01 pm