

**Recreation User Group**  
Meeting 22  
December 11, 2019  
**MEETING SUMMARY**

**Meeting Attendees**

<b>Representative</b>	<b>Organization</b>
Fred Gaudet	Arizona Trail Association
Bill Scott	Sun City Anthem Hiking Club
John Bricker	Tonto Recreation Alliance (TRAL)
Jim Schenck	LOST & Superior Community Working Group
Elizabeth Butler	Friends of Tonto/Equestrian
Mila Besich	Mayor, Town of Superior
Todd Pryor	Manager, Town of Superior
Sheryl Cormack	Tonto National Forest (TNF)
Mark Sando	TNF
Jason Scow	TNF
Mary Morissette	Resolution Copper Mining
Rick Schonfeld	WestLand Resources
John Godec	Godec, Randall & Associates (GRA)
Debra Duerr	GRA

**Welcome and Introductions**

John Godec welcomed everyone and noted that the Mayor needs to leave early.

It was suggested that the RUG should host Superior's AmeriCorps group at some time, before Feb 23, when they leave. They are interested in supporting overall economic development of the Superior area, not just in building trails.

**Remembering Kevin Patterson**

Godec observed that we have a major hole in our group with the loss of Kevin Patterson, who died suddenly in November. John Bricker said there is a memorial fund which is noted on the TRAL website. Bricker will send the information to Debra Duerr.

Kevin was very giving of his time for things other than TRAL projects. For example, he took it upon himself to work with Imerys to negotiate a road crossing of their perlite mine property, and the RUG suggested that if the road is approved it could be named after Kevin.

**Approve RUG Informational Flyer**

Copies of the pamphlet were reviewed by the RUG. Jim Schenck said it would be a good addition to information available at the Chamber of Commerce. The Mayor felt it is a good

primer for talking to the Congressional delegation and similar stakeholders. Others can distribute them as they see fit.

Several corrections to the text and map were made by members. These will be completed as soon as possible to create a print-ready final version of the brochure.

- Wood Canyon (not Woods)
- “plan ~~will be~~ WAS submitted”
- add Superior ARIZONA
- check Picketpost on USGS – 1 or 2 words?
- remove State Park reference to Arboretum (no longer associated)
- add LOST section in town

Members suggested that 1000-2000 copies be printed, by a printer in Gold Canyon or Globe if possible. Ideas for distribution included the caboose at US60 park, the Magma Hotel, tourist shops in Superior and Apache Junction, the Chambers of Commerce in Gold Canyon, Florence, and Globe, and at LOST events.

RUG members requested that PDF copies of the final brochure be sent to them. Brochures should be available in January to accommodate the start of LOST trail construction. The brochure should also be referenced and added to the Community Working Group website, the LOST website, and others as needed.

### **Update on Status of Funding & Maintenance Issues**

Mary Morissette reminded the RUG that the mitigation funding agreements for the RUG trail plan pertain only to the trail portion of the plan, not for the campground, which is a separate mitigation. Resolution has agreed to develop an endowment fund for this project, but it’s not “official” public information because the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) isn’t finalized. Details will be worked out between Resolution Copper Mining and the Forest Service. The town will be brought in at some point as well as the RUG, to determine commitments from these groups also. These discussions could perhaps begin in February. Godec observed that the RUG may have an important function in developing these plans and priorities. RUG members had the following questions:

- Who’s going to pay for it?
  - Resolution
- Who’s going to build, and who’s going to maintain the trail system?
  - This is where the Town and RUG groups will be involved in developing an approach.
- Who’s going to manage the fund?
  - not the town, not Resolution, but some independent entity that has nonprofit status and the required capacity, e.g. Arizona Trail Association, Arizona Community Fund, Legends of Superior Trail, etc.
  - Mark Sando of the Tonto National Forest said the endowment is intended to fund not only construction but long-term maintenance. Independent contractors may be used to build the trails. The fund may not be fully

endowed in the first year but staged as needed, and construction of trails will need to be prioritized.

Morrisette told the group that Resolution is still trying to talk to State Parks Department and Pinal County about managing the Castleberry campground. Both these entities like the Castleberry location and concept but there are many details to be developed, like dry camping versus water provision, etc. Resolution would like the same entity to manage both Oak Flat and Castleberry, but neither State Parks nor the county want Oak Flat. Resolution would fund whoever takes on the management. RUG members wondered whether the Forest Service could be paid to manage the Castleberry site (and Oak Flat until it can't be used any longer). Morrisette thought they probably wouldn't be interested in managing something on private property. Although Resolution owns 43 acres at Castleberry now, it is not known who would own it in the long run, e.g. Town of Superior.

The Mayor suggested that the town may have an interest in taking on the Castleberry site. She noted that the tri-partite agreement among State Parks, Boyce Thompson Arboretum and the University of Arizona was very complicated and confusing, but now it's been cleared up. The Arboretum wants to be annexed by the Town of Superior, the university sold Hill House to the Arboretum, who intend to rent it as a residence or for other uses. Now the Arboretum and State Parks are going to work together about managing Picketpost House. It was also suggested that the Arboretum could manage the Castleberry campground as part of their larger strategic tourism initiative.

The anticipated schedule for completion of the EIS was outlined as release of the Final EIS in mid-summer and adoption of the Record of Decision in November.

### **Discussion of Future RUG Activities**

Members agreed that they want to continue to be involved in future phases of both the trail plan and the campground, including implementation approaches, funding and priorities, construction, maintenance.

To accomplish this most effectively, members discussed other groups and individuals who should also be invited to join the RUG. Suggestions included a mountain bicycling group, and a member noted that Arizona Trail Association's regional steward is a mountain biker and may be interested. Mountain climbers should also be invited, and the group would like to contact Steve Holmquist for this. To represent ranching interests, TNF reported that the leaseholder for this area is Bill Dunn. It may also be prudent to invite the TNF geologists who work with mineral exploration applications.

### **Sun City Letter on Trail Designations**

A letter was distributed from Greg Waterman for the RUG's review at the next meeting. The issue raised is that there are a few trails that cross over Wood Canyon road, so that the concept of nonmotorized to the west and motorized to the east isn't 'pure'. From conversations he's

had with Pablo Burghard, Waterman feels that this may present a problem for the Forest Service in planning and management, and he wanted the RUG to weigh in on the question after they've had a chance to think about it.

Morissette noted that this plan has already been submitted to the Forest Service as the proposed mitigation, so now it's up to them to decide what they will approve. Therefore, the group felt that discussing or changing this before the Forest Service review is not productive. Mary said she will submit this letter to the Forest Service as a comment. Sheryl Cormack told the group that the Forest Service is aware of these concerns. It was agreed that the RUG doesn't want to change the plan at this point or submit comments about modifications, although they felt that Pablo could submit his own concerns.

Regarding the letter, Schenck pointed out that a separate effort is taking place to find a route across Imerys property. On this topic, Mark Sando reported that the Forest Service has met with Tom from Imerys about the planned reroute of the old FR 4. Imerys is comfortable with people walking through this proposed route as long as they keep to the trail, but they will not allow anyone to drive through the property. TRAL said they are taking several people from the Forest Supervisor's Office out to see this proposed route next week.

### **Superstition Mountains News**

Mayor Besich told the RUG that the Mayor of Apache Junction is trying to get the Superstition Mountains designated as a National Monument. Local communities are generally in favor of this, but State Land Department has concerns about its surrounding properties (Superstition Vistas). Rep. Gosar is surprisingly supportive. One thing that may affect this is that the Apache Trail is closed from devastation of the Woodbury Fire, during which landslides washed away the road, and "unofficial gossip" hints that it will take 10-15 years to fix. The economic effects of this are severe for visitation and tourism, and the loss of the road hampers the historic connection and loop trips that define the Supersitions. Godec asked the group if they'd like to hear from the Apache Junction Mayor, and they agreed as long as they can hear the 'cons' of National Monument designation as well.

### **Next Steps, Next Meeting**

A January meeting will be scheduled in concert with the January Community Working Group meeting, which needs to be moved from the regular date. The RUG will be consulted about this.

Jan. 15 or 22 – determined after CWG response  
10:00 AM  
Superior Town Hall – same meeting room