

**Floodplain Management Plan Planning Committee Meeting Minutes
For
November 25, 2019**

Attendees:

Arlan Colton, University of Arizona Planning Program
Carolyn Campbell, Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection
Chris Burtrand, San Xavier District of the Tohono O’Odham Nation
Chris Gurton, Country Financial
Christina McVie, Tucson Audubon Society
Eric Holler, Community Water Coalition
Eric Shepp, Pima County Regional Flood Control District Floodplain Administrator
Greg Saxe, Pima County Community Rating System Coordinator
Griselda Moya-Flores, Pima County Office of Emergency Management
Jennifer Varin, United States Forest Service
John Baskett, San Xavier District of the Tohono O’Odham Nation
Jonathan Horst, Tucson Audubon Society
Mead Meir, Pima Association of Governments/Regional Transportation Association
Nicole Fyffe, Pima County Administrator’s Office
Steve Dolan, Tucson Mountain Association
Terri Tillman, Pima County Development Services Department

Staff:

Brian Jones, Floodplain Management Division Manager
Ann Moynihan, Civil Engineering Manager

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1) Welcome & Introductions

The Community Rating System Coordinator (Coordinator) welcomed the group and the members introduced themselves.

2) Project Schedule Review

The Coordinator noted being at Step 6 Goal Setting that the subsequent Steps 7 Review of Activities, and Step 8 Draft an Action Plan represented the hardest part of the Committees job. He also noted that while completing the draft plan represents 80% of their work, it would then be promoted publically prior to Board review. None-the-less we are targeting early 2020 for Board consideration. Followed by Steps 9 Implementation and Step 10 annual updates!

3) Problem List Approval

Members were given the opportunity to revisit the problem list and reached consensus that it was complete pending distribution of the revisions discussed. (See Attached)

4) Review Goals

Members discussed the existing District goals in relation to those of the organizations and areas they represent. This included the Development Services Department, former County Planning Director whom shepherded “Pima Prospers”, the most recent revision of the County Comprehensive Plan; and the Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection whom are the primary private stewards of the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan noted below, as well as the Community Water Coalition.

Members proposed and no objections were heard, with some caveats to making the language more assertive including: replacement of “minimize” with something more definitive wherever it occurs (Goals 1, 4, & 5); changing the word “encourage” in Goals 3 to “ensure”; and removing the word “encourage” from Goal 6. Members also agreed to add two new goals for purposes of the Floodplain Management Plan. One addressing floodplain management services resilience in the face of climate change and another inter-governmental collaboration. In addition, Goals 1 and 5 were combined, and clarified. Thus the numbering changed. The caveats included statutory and financial limitations. (See Attached)

5) Goal Setting and Prioritization Exercise

Members were asked to place colored stickers corresponding to their priority goals in flood problem hot spot locations throughout the set of watershed maps arrayed around the Public Works Building hearing room. This venue had been scheduled versus the District conference room to facilitate greater access to the maps by the participants. The complete set of 28 watershed maps were available including one set depicting density of structures versus aggregated floodplains and ownership, and another complete set of the hazard maps with more detailed floodplain and riparian habitat zones. Results will be tallied and reported at the next meeting. This tally and the proposed goals will then form the basis for our review of current and future activities from which staff will draft the proposed action plan. A sample action plan is contained on page 483 in the draft available on the project webpage and a draft action plan will be distributed with the next agenda.

6) Next Steps

The Coordinator will distribute the proposed goals and final problem list (attached) for approval at the next meeting. Staff shall prepare a review of current and proposed activities to address each goal and problem for presentation at the next meeting (Step 7). The detailed review of current activities, which will be summarized for this effort, is contained in the draft plan (please see Chapter 7). A draft action plan will be distributed with the agenda.

Members were encouraged to review the draft, in particular new elements including the survey results, review of activities and draft action plan, as they should be familiar with the hazard and problem assessment after the workshops conducted over the previous months and documents available on the project webpage.

A meeting invitation will be distributed after Thanksgiving as the Committee recommended scheduling the meeting at a location potentially more accessible to private sector participants.

7) Adjournment

Notes:

Where have we been?: Final Problem List

Unique Local Hazards

- Erosion
- Alluvial fans
- Distributary and uncertain flow paths
- Canyon wash floodways
- Sheet flooding
- Missing, outdated information and approximate mapping
- Subsidence and changes in topography
- Upper watershed land management

Future Environmental Conditions

- Changing weather
- Unknown hazards
- Vegetation changes
- [Climate change including extreme events and extended dry periods](#)
- [Post catastrophic fire impacts](#)

Population Exposure to Hazards

- Critical facilities and utilities in the floodplain
- Floodplain populations especially those with low mobility and resources
- All-weather and emergency vehicle access
- Underinsured and uninsured

Existing and Future Development

- Existing development that does not meet current standards(old and undersized infrastructure)
- Historic entitlements not based on current hazard information
- Increasing runoff volume due to cumulative improvements
- Loss of natural floodplain function
- Lot splitting and wildcat developments
- Infill and redevelopment
- Encroachment and channelization
- Regional scale projects
- Flow diversions
- Groundwater depletion
- Riparian habitat disturbance
- [Loss of tributary connectivity](#)
- [Water quality and spread of contamination](#)

Maintenance Needs

- Private infrastructure
- Public infrastructure
- Conveyance capacity
- Illegal dumping activities
- Invasive species

Emergency Response

- Inter-agency 2-way reporting during events for road closures and situation assessment
- Public tools for near real time reporting
- All-weather access for responders
- Advanced warning for road closures and flooding
- Publication of alternate routes
- Fire nexus
- Swift water rescues

Unauthorized Uses

- Homeless camps
- Off-road vehicles
- Grazing
- Utilities
- Encroachments
- Riparian habitat destruction
- Flow diversions

Awareness

- District services
- Pima County services
- Best practices
- Flood hazards in the desert
- [Interjurisdictional collaboration opportunities](#)

Proposed Floodplain Management Plan Goals:

1. Prevent flood and erosion damages including ensuring the operability of critical facilities during flood events;
2. Ensure that those who occupy areas within regulatory floodplain and erosion hazard areas assume the responsibility for their actions within those areas;
3. Ensure the most effective expenditures of public money for flood control projects;
4. Reduce the need for rescue and relief efforts;
5. Protect, preserve and restore natural washes and riparian habitat;
6. Protect, preserve and enhance groundwater recharge;
7. Ensure flexibility for adaptive floodplain management for changing climate circumstances; and
8. Offer inter-jurisdictional floodplain management services.