



PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES REGULAR MEETING



June 8, 2018

Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation Department
3500 West River Road, Tucson, Arizona

Quorum having been established, Chair Lundin called the meeting to order at 9:36 a.m. on June 8, 2018.

Commissioners present were Michael Lundin (Chair), Jan Johnson (Vice Chair), Damion Alexander, Peter Chesson (via Skype), Richard Barker, Karen Cesare and Enrique Serna. Victor Rivera, Anita Kellman, and Kimberly Marohn were absent.

Staff present were Chris Cawein, Robert Padilla, Robin Hadden, Karen Simms, Elisabeth Van Der Leeuw, Mark Flint, Neil Stitzer, Joe Barr, Ron Odell, Sandy Reith, Eric Scheuering, Doris (EE Volunteer) and Ann Khambholja.

Those present recited the pledge of allegiance.

Consent Agenda

A motion was made and seconded to approve the April 13, 2017 minutes. The motion passed.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION/ACTION REQUEST

1. Informational update on Tucson Mountain Park Social Trails Project (Mark Flint): Mr. Flint informed the commission that NRPR has been systematically upgrading the Tucson Mountain Park trails system over the past five years. He explained that trails in the park were mostly a combination of old ranching/mining routes and social or wildcat trails made by users. These trails have not been planned nor have cultural or biological surveys been conducted to protect them. Over the years, the trails and access points have multiplied into a dense network of routes, often paralleling one another in close proximity. NRPR's goal is to weed out the duplicative social trails, leave the sustainable trails alone and assess the access points. The objectives are to protect resources by reducing habitat fragmentation and provide a higher level of aesthetic values for trail users. Mr. Flint informed them that the sixth meeting regarding the social trails would be held on December 13, 2018, in the NRPR conference room to accommodate the part-time residents who live in the area.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC: Brian O'Rourke, Olen Warrick, Curtis Larson and Michelle Hawk spoke on the Tucson Mountain Park trails item.

Commissioner Alexander invited Mr. Larson to join a trail crew to better appreciate the thought, planning and effort that goes into building sustainable trails.

2. Informational update on park projects and programs (Chris Cawein): Mr. Cawein provided the commissioners with a brief update on three projects, Canoa Pond, Manzanita Splash pad and Mike Jacob SportsPark. He informed the commission that the pond at Canoa Ranch is now filled and the area around it is being revegetated with over 800 different plants. He informed them that the pond has also attracted a lot of birds and other wildlife. NRPR received a grant of \$100,000 that will be used to install amenities like ramadas, picnic tables and benches around the pond. He also mentioned that bird watchers and the Audubon Society are very excited, as there have been at least three different species of birds sighted that had not been seen in the area for a long time. Mr. Cawein said it would be officially dedicated on Anza Day on October 20, 2018, along with celebrating the completion of the Anza Trail. He invited the commissioners to attend and informed them that more information would be provided later.

Mr. Cawein informed them that the Manzanita Splash Pad is heading towards completion and anticipates the dedication ceremony in mid-July. He informed them that one of the benefactors will also be present at the dedication. NRPR is also adding some reservable ramadas. He anticipates, based on splash-pad and ramada usage at Brandi Fenton Memorial Park, that this will be a great attraction in this area.

Mr. Cawein informed the commissioners about the status of the Mike Jacob SportsPark, which is a \$1.7m project. Construction is moving well and is estimated to be completed by the end of this month. After completion, the turf needs time to establish and NRPR hopes to open up the facility in August or September. Mr. Cawein informed them that NRPR would continue with the special use permits until an RFP is developed sometime in 2019 to find a contractor who will run the whole site. There were no further questions.
3. Informational update from the Natural Resources Division (Karen Simms): Ms. Simms provided the commission an overview of Pima County Ranches and Rangeland Management, guided by the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan. She provided background on ranch conservation through ranch acquisition, and informed them that rangelands, while being significantly important to our quality of life, protect our watersheds, provide wildlife habitat and conserve our western heritage and culture. Some also provide various recreation opportunities like hunting, camping, horse riding and OHV tours. She informed them that most ranches were leased back to the original landowners under Ranch Management Agreements – a formal lease and stewardship agreement that outlines the responsibilities of the lessee and Pima County. Ms. Simms works with the lessees to ensure that their grazing plans meet NRPR's rangeland management standards in the long term, and discuss range improvement projects proposed by NRPR and the ranchers. Ms. Simms and Ms. Van Der Leeuw also displayed GIS data for ranches and rangelands that include leases, building, cultural reports, photographs and recreation use. There were no further questions.
4. Addendum: Naming the new Manzanita Splash Pad, 'The Warden Family Splash Pad': Chair Lundin mentioned that the commissioners had been provided with background information about the Warden's family involvement with the project. Mr. Cawein informed the commission that Mr. Chandler Warden, who oversees the charitable work of his family's philanthropic organization, the Bert Martin Foundation, contributed \$200,000 to the construction of the Manzanita Splash pad. The estimated cost of the splash pad, in this underserved area, was about \$750,000, which was cobbled together using bond and departmental funding as well as the donation. He thus proposed that the splash pad be named "The Warden Family Splash Pad" in their honor. There was a motion and a second in agreement in the naming of the facility. All commissioners were in favor.

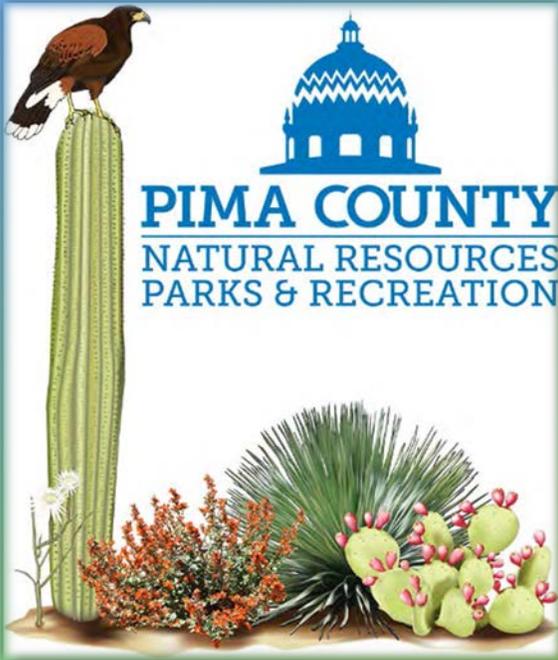
FUTURE AGENDA ITEM(S):

Commissioner Johnson asked Mr. Cawein if there was any more information that they should know about and Mr. Cawein informed her that he would update them on NRPR's plans for the next year; information about the plans to advance the new park rules; several new projects like a beach volley ball complex at one of NRPR's facilities; an update on pond #1 at Agua Caliente Park; enhancing lighting at Rillito Park; Canoa Hills golf course which may be developed into a Natural Resource Park; the list of infrastructure funding for repair and refurbishment of park facilities and structures. Commissioner Serna asked Mr. Cawein about the City Park's Bond initiative and asked whether there would be any overlap with Pima County. Mr. Cawein informed him that the City Manager and the County Administrator were in talks about how to help work together, however Mr. Cawein had no additional details on this matter.

ADJOURNMENT: As there was no further business to come before the commission, duly motioned and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 10:47 a.m.

Pima County Ranches and Rangeland Management Program

A Working Landscape
Perspective



Overview

1. Definition and Examples of Rangelands
2. Background of Pima County land acquisitions and the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan – the role of ranches
3. Rangeland Program Administration
4. Rangeland Monitoring
5. Ranch Planning
6. Watershed-scale Resource Management Planning for Rangelands -



Photo courtesy of Pima County Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation Department

Examples of Rangelands

Semi-desert Grassland –
Woodland mosaic (lower
elevation)



Mountain Shrubland



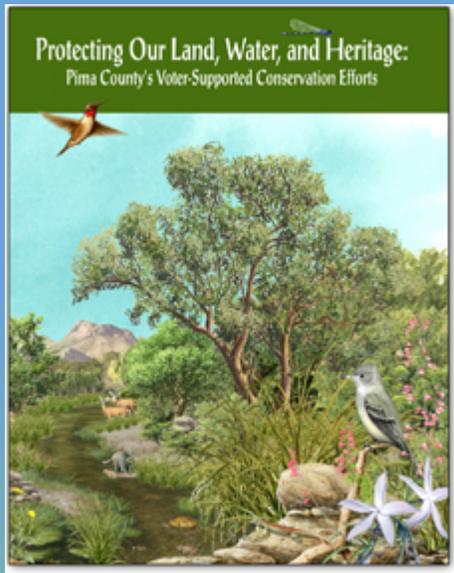
Semi-desert Grassland – Woodland mosaic
(higher elevation)



Semi-desert grasslands

Background:

Pima County Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan

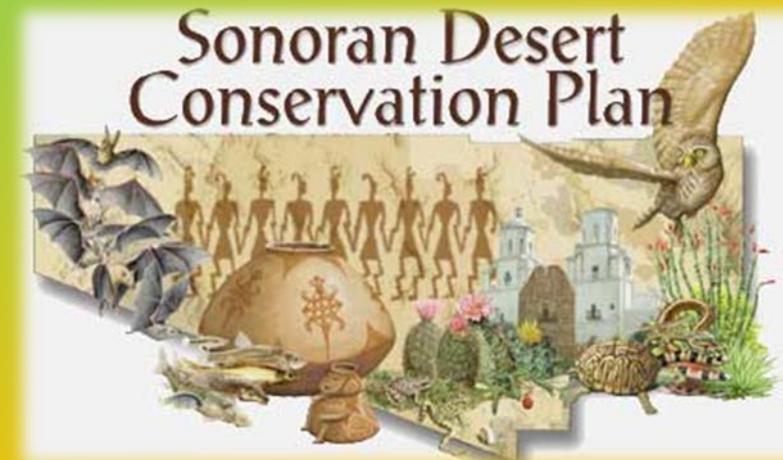


- Science-based Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan (SDCP) guides land and resource conservation while balancing community growth
- Initiated in 1997 by County Supervisors following Federal listing of Cactus ferruginous pygmy owl
- **44** plant and animal species included in the SDCP as essential or important to protect
- *Proactive* approach vs. *Reactive* approach!



Photo courtesy of Pima County Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation Department

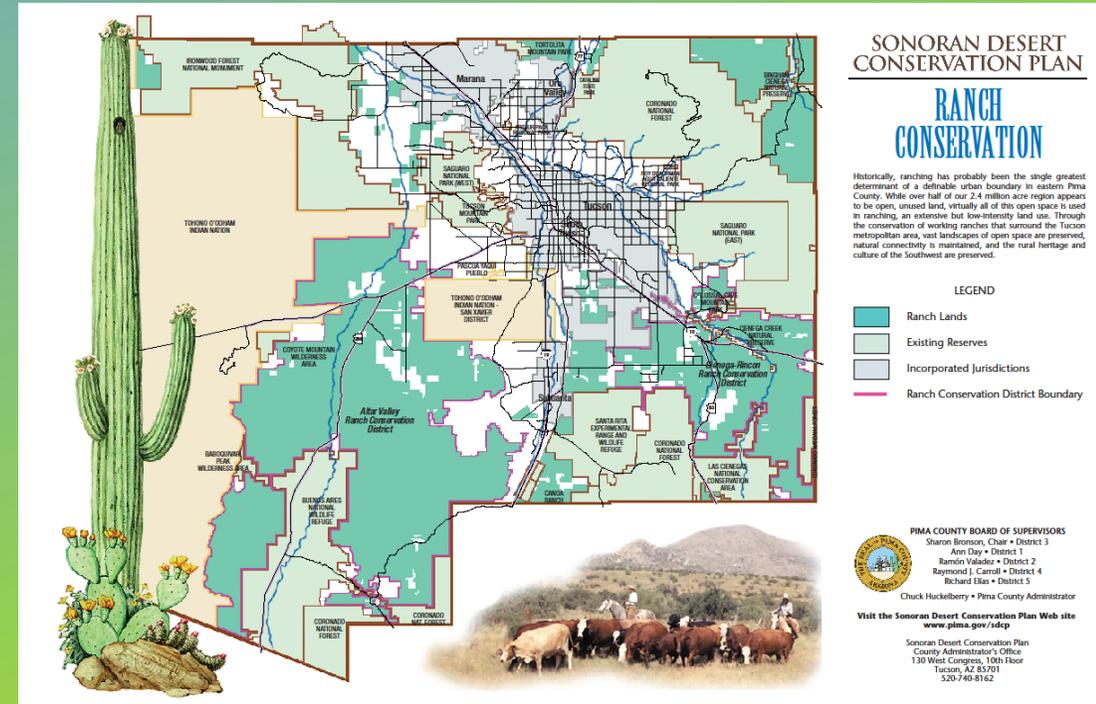
Available at:
<http://webcms.pima.gov/cms/One.aspx?portalId=169&pageId=52654>



Background: Elements of the SDCP

5 main conservation elements:

1. Critical Habitat & Biological corridors
2. Riparian Areas
3. Mountain Parks
4. Historical & Cultural Preservation
5. Ranch Conservation



Ranch Conservation Map. Available at:

<http://webcms.pima.gov/cms/One.aspx?portalId=169&pageId=159303>

Background: Ranch Conservation by Ranch Acquisition

- Fee land purchased with 1997, 2004 & 2007 voter-supported Conservation Bond Programs
- 14 working ranches acquired
 - Fee (private or deeded) Land
 - AZ State Land Grazing Leases
 - BLM Grazing Leases
 - Total ranchland = **190,350 acres (77,032 ha)**

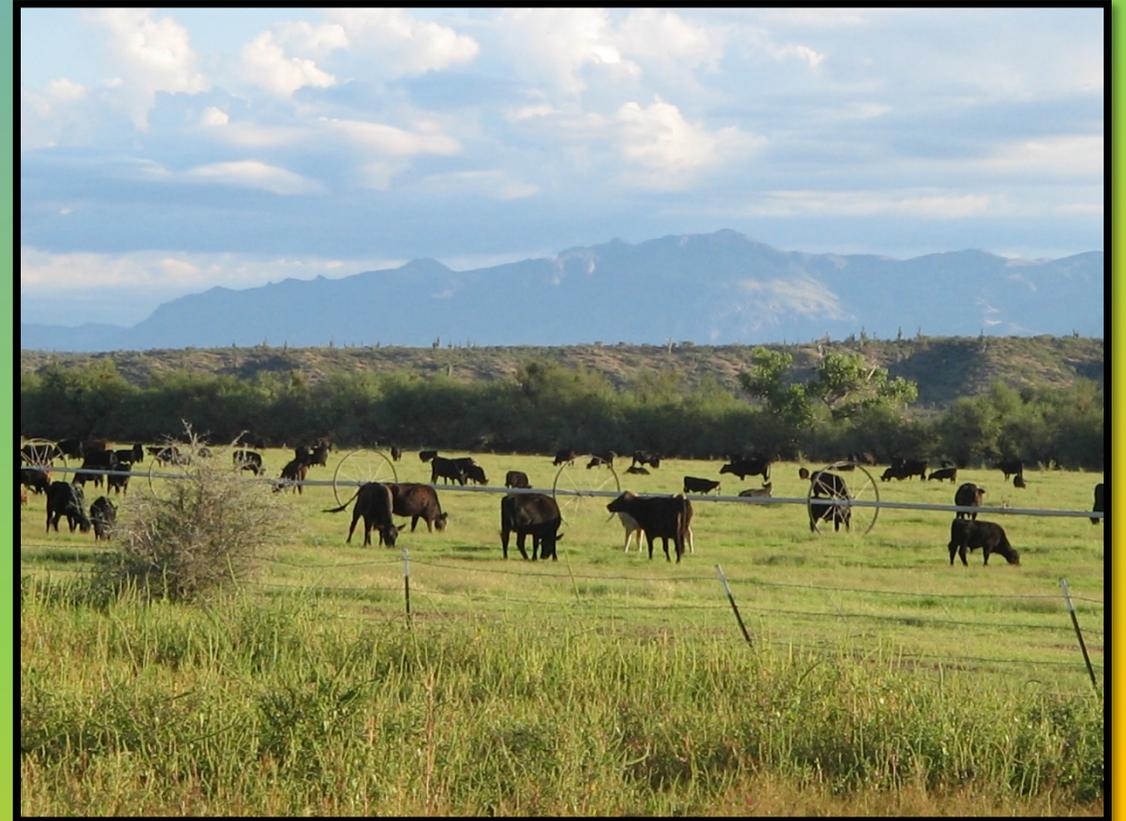
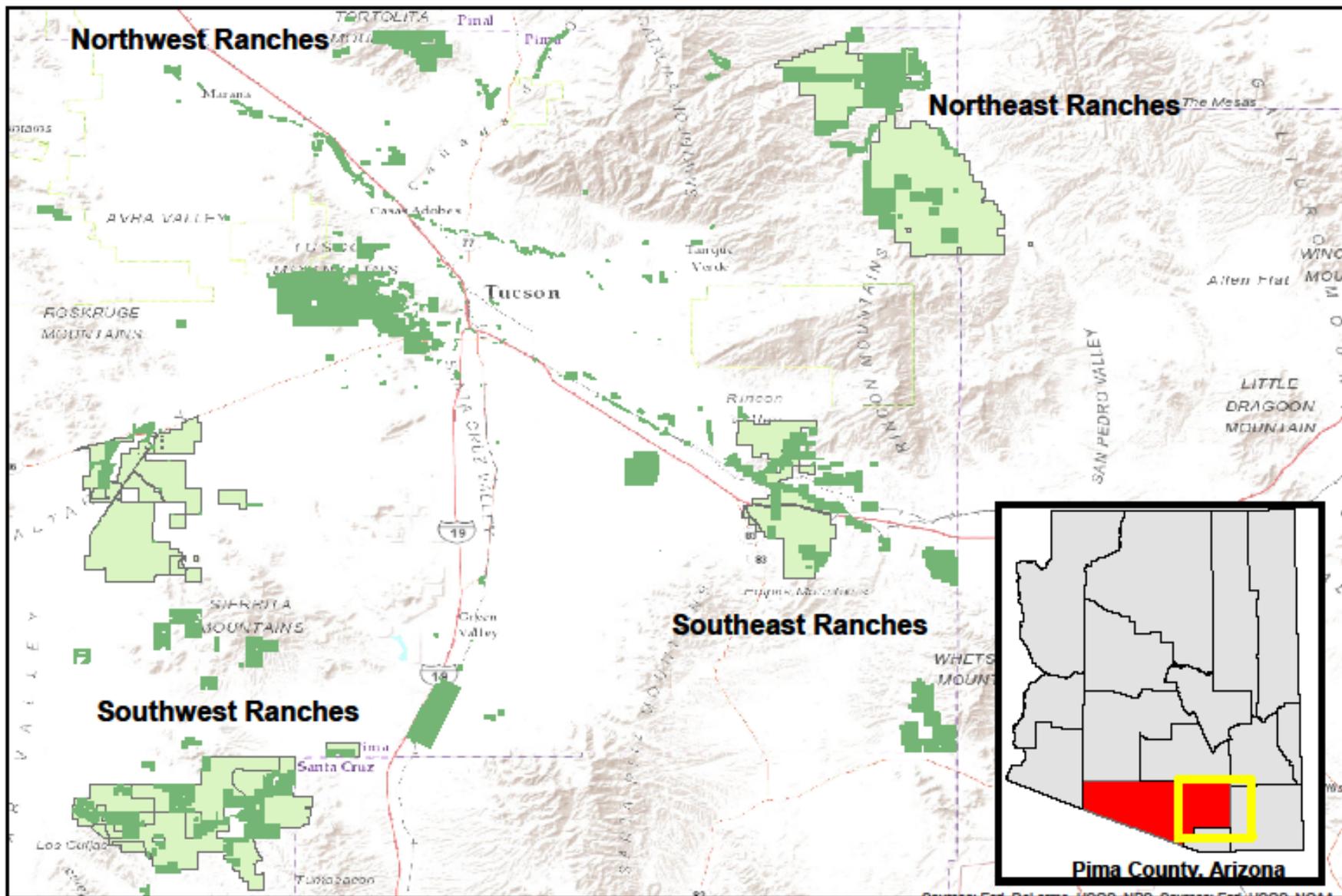


Photo courtesy of Pima County Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation Department



Pima County Open Space and Leased Land

- Pima County Fee-owned Land
- Pima County Leased Land



Property boundaries shown are not guaranteed. This is a general overview map and should not be used for legal purposes. The information is provided for informational purposes only. The information is not intended to be used for any other purpose. The information is not intended to be used for any other purpose. The information is not intended to be used for any other purpose.

The Values of Rangelands



LOCAL GRASS FED BEEF IS BEST.

HEALTHIER

- More vitamins & minerals
- Better Fatty acid profile
- More Omega 3s

SAFER

- Less Antibiotics
- No Growth Hormones
- Not Confined in crowded, disease promoting feedlots

SUSTAINABLE

- Better Soil Quality
- Better Water Quality
- Better Air Quality

www.ImSimplyDad.com



Rangeland Program Administration

- Most Ranches were *leased back* to original landowners via ***Ranch Management Agreements*** with Pima County
- **Ranch Management Agreement:** A formal lease and stewardship agreement that outlines responsibilities of the ranch lessee and Pima County on Pima County owned and leased land
- Similar to Grazing Permits or Leases on federal or state lands
- Annual Grazing Plan Meetings

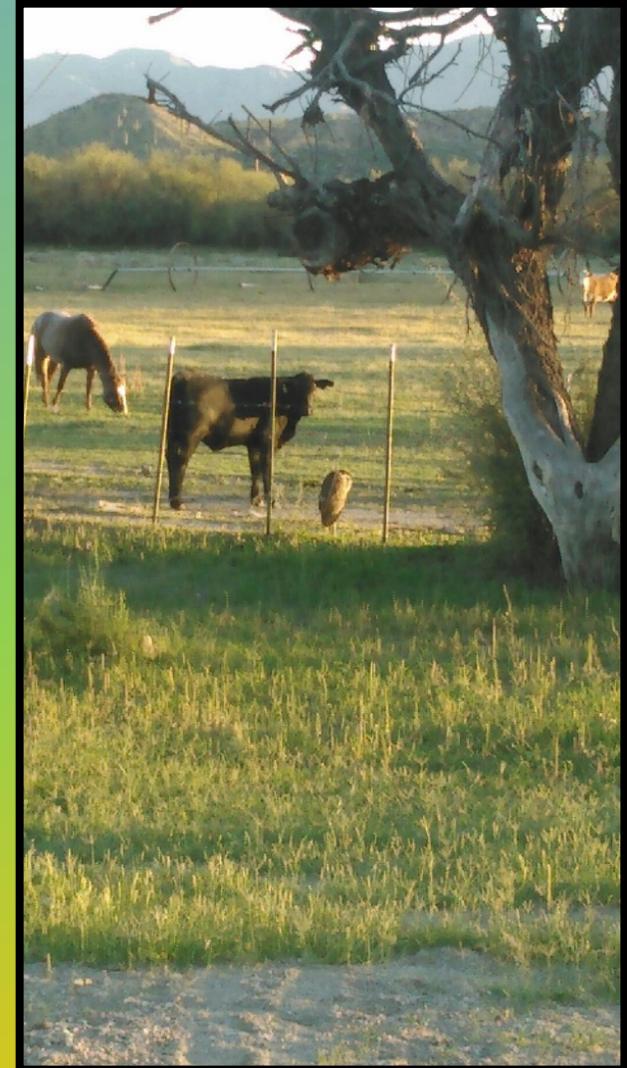


Photo courtesy of Pima County Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation Department

Ranch Planning



Rangeland Monitoring

- Pima County Range Management Standards & Guidelines (2010)
- Developed collaboratively with University of Arizona, NRCS, BLM and other participating Range professionals
 - Long Term Ecological Monitoring
 - Annual Utilization & Production Monitoring



Photos courtesy of Pima County Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation Department

Rancho Seco

Fee Lands: 9,574 acres

State grazing lease: 21,662 acres

BLM federal grazing permit: 5,669 acres

Conservation easement: 478 acres

Acquired: May 19, 2005

Fund: 2004 Bond Funds

**Values: part of critical wildlife corridor
between Altar Valley, Tumacacori Mtns, and
Santa Cruz Valley**

**Semidesert grassland habitat for game
species; special status bats; Bell's vireo and
Abert's Towhee.**

Upper Santa Cruz and Southern Altar Valley



Watershed Scale Resource Management Planning

- Taking a step back and looking at the bigger picture from an interdisciplinary perspective:
- What is the existing condition of biological, ecological and physical components of the watershed? Are there needs and opportunities for restoration?
- How has the cultural history of the watershed shaped the conditions we see today? How do we protect the significant cultural resources that inform our understanding of human occupation?
- Which recreational uses are occurring in the watershed and how should they be managed to protect natural and cultural resources and working landscapes?



Photo courtesy of Pima County Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation Department

Watershed Resource Management Planning

- What are the goals and objectives for the watershed?
- What actions could we take to achieve these?
- What should be monitored to tell us whether we are achieving our objectives?
- What opportunities exist to collaborate with partners in the watershed?



Geospatial Data for Ranches and Rangelands

Questions?



Photo courtesy of Pima County Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation Department

Contact Information:

Vanessa Prileson

Rangeland Program Manager

Pima County Natural Resources,
Parks & Recreation

Vanessa.Prileson@pima.gov

(520) 724 – 5266 office

(520) 349 – 4092 cell

PIMA COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
3500 W. River Road,
Tucson, AZ 85741



June 8, 2018

The Honorable Richard Elias, Chairman
Pima County Board of Supervisors
130 W Congress Street, 11th Floor
Tucson, AZ 85701

Dear Chairman Elias,

The Parks and Recreation Commission would like to propose naming the new Manzanita Splash Pad the Warden Family Splash Pad.

As president of the Bert W. Martin Foundation, Mr. Chandler Warden has been invaluable in supporting Pima County Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation. By providing funding in the amount of \$200,000 towards developing and building the Manzanita Splash Pad, Mr. Warden has provided the highly stressed and underserved residents of the community with meaningful positive impacts. Splash pads are immensely popular in all communities, and there was a severe lack of this recreational feature in this area. This will provide an opportunity for residents, especially youth, to experience the joys of a splash pad in their neighborhood. The facility is located near the Drexel Heights Community Center where after school youth programs are held, thus enhancing those programs.

In light of the fact that this facility will strongly benefit the community for years to come, and would not have been brought to fruition without the support of the Bert W. Martin Foundation, we strongly support recommending that the Board of Supervisors recognize the Warden family in naming the facility in their honor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mel Lundin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michael Lundin
Chair