

Tucson Mountains ASSOCIATION SINCE 1934

Winter 2010

PO BOX 86117, TUCSON, AZ 85754-6117 • www.tucsonmountainsassoc.org • TMA@TucsonMountainsAssoc.org

Action Alert -- Urgent Action Required Before February 9th & 17th

The Joint Water Committee Report was submitted to a joint session of the Pima County Board of Supervisors and City Council. The report made a detailed assessment of the current and future water needs of Southern Arizona, evaluated scientific and technical data, and recommended a balanced approach to water policy, taking into consideration human, economic and environmental needs (<http://www.tucsonpimawaterstudy.com>).

Recognizing the historic nature of the Committee's report, the Board of Supervisors voted to accept its recommendations. A City Council public hearing will be held on February 9 at 5:30 p.m., followed by a decision meeting on February 17 at 5:30 p.m. There was concern among some about the cost and the basis of the recommendations for water policy, and the need for further public comment.

Please call, write or email the Mayor and Council to strongly urge them to accept the Joint Water Committee's recommendations at their meeting on February 17. (See contact information)

Here are some talking points to consider:

- The recommendations were thoroughly researched, and based upon scientific study.
- For the first time, this report balances human, economic, and environmental needs, seeking to preserve and protect the fragile ecosystem of the Sonoran Desert.
- The recommendations will help to decrease sprawl and promote infill, conserve water, and protect desert plants and wildlife linkages.
- This process was years in the making, and included 32 public meetings, with input from stakeholders.
- A permanent water policy, which is thoughtful and balanced, is required to preserve the unique Sonoran Desert environment, and the quality of life and economic health of the Southern Arizona Community.

Election of Officers

Elections were held at the October meeting. Continuing, re-elected* and new** Board members are listed below; officers were elected at the Board meeting January 12.

Ed Verburg, President
743-7728

Debbie Hicks* Treasurer
743-3906

Paul Eckerstrom* Board Member
743-1350

**Judith Meyer* Board Member and
Immediate Past President**
743-8058

David Slutes Board Member**
247-4141

Victoria Falcone* Vice President
305-9367

Peter Chesson* Recording Secretary
743-7223

Kurt Luscombe* Board Member
887-5767

Ivy Schwartz Board Member**
743-4251

President's Column — Ed Verburg



It is important that we acknowledge and express our appreciation for the leadership of Judith Meyer as our President for the last two and one half years. TMA prospered and accomplished a substantial amount during her tenure (e.g., tripled our membership, dedicated the Sweetwater Preserve, advocated for final Cottonwood Tower decision, influenced

outcome of Joint Water Committee report, recognized volunteers and community leaders, and many others). Our sincere thanks for a job well done!!

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your President this year. I have learned a lot about the organization, how it functions, and the importance of our mission. We have an excellent Board, and they work diligently on key matters of interest to our members. I look forward to working with everyone to

continue the long tradition of preserving our natural habitat and enjoying our quality of life on the West side!

We recently adopted a strategic plan for TMA after receiving input from members and the Board (see page 3). Our objective is to work on the goals and strategies over the next three to five years. We have Committee Chairs for almost all of the goals. They are named next to each goal in this newsletter. Please let me know if you would like to be:

- 1) Co-Chair of Goal 1, Stewardship of Resources
- 2) Chairperson of Goal 3, Educate the Public about Issues,
- 3) on a TMA committee

Here are some highlights of matters we are currently working on as a Board:

- Board Meetings: We periodically will have Board meetings at a public location to encourage more participation by members.
- Fiscal Needs of TMA (see Goal 7 in plan): We will continue to be a not-for-profit organization so we can make our views known in public forums. However, if we align with a 501(c) 3, we can offer a tax exemption for our sponsors and major contributors.

We are approaching the Sky Island Alliance (SIA) to see if they will be willing to offer this type of support. Establishing a separate fund of this nature (in addition to our operating accounts) will pro-

vide funding for natural resources issues in the future. If the SIA initiative does not materialize, any suggestions for other organizations that offer this service would be appreciated.

- And finally, the joint water committee. TMA probably has nothing more pressing. Please make your views known as suggested in the action alert on page one. Phone numbers are listed on page four.

Reminder:
Dues are due in January! See the form on the back.
Please stay with us, or join in our efforts, and share a copy of this Newsletter with your neighbors!

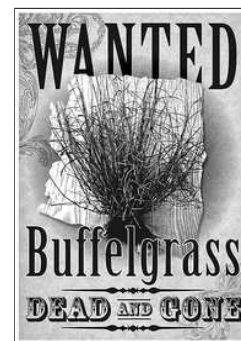
Just What is the Tucson Mountains Association?

The Tucson Mountains Association was founded in 1934 by families homesteading in the Tucson Mountains. It began as an effort to bring necessary services to west side homes. As such, it is the oldest neighborhood Association in Arizona. The members used to get together once each year for a big social gathering. They would swap back one another's cattle, which roamed freely through the grasses that abounded in the area then, and make plans to improve their living conditions.

That annual meeting event continues today, and we hope to make it as much fun now as it ever may have been!

TMA Members Seeking Volunteers to Help Eradicate Buffel Grass

We are organizing a group to work together by mid-March or before (when the weather is still cool) to dig out buffel grass along El Camino del Cerro and perhaps Ironwood Hills Road near Camino de Oeste. If we don't tackle it soon, it will be out of control. Right now with a couple small parties we can lick it before it comes into all our neighborhoods. We could accomplish a lot with two hours of work on a Saturday. We know there are many of you who are willing to help. Two hours can result in up to three big garbage bags of buffel grass. Right now it is controllable; if we wait longer it will be out in the desert and spread clear up to Sweetwater Preserve and Saguaro National Park. The Weed-wackers do a tremendous job, but they only work within Tucson Mountain Park. So let's band together and whack this one! Please contact Debbie Hicks at 743-3906 to let her know you can join us and we'll address another desert issue together!



Courtesy Pima Association of Governments

The area we serve is bounded on the north by Twin Peaks Road, on the east by Silverbell Road, on the south by the 22nd Street alignment/Starr Pass Boulevard, and on the west by Saguaro National Park and Tucson Mountain Park.

Today, we represent the interests of thousands of families who reside in or otherwise find themselves in the Tucson Mountains, and who care deeply about preservation and sustainably fine quality of life.

Most of the work of TMA is performed by our volunteer Board, which currently has nine members, but can have as many as fifteen. We endeavor to promote sensitive

area planning, represent the concerns of homeowners throughout the area, preserve neighborhood integrity and a rural lifestyle, support Pima County's Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan and the Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection, assure good trail systems and access to park lands and open space, expand Saguaro National Park, the Sweetwater Preserve, and the Tucson Mountain Park, keep our members informed through our newsletters, emails, and web site, and sponsor an annual picnic to bring our community together. If you want to become actively involved, contact a board member. Their phone numbers are listed on the front page.

Tucson Mountains Association Strategic Plan — Three to Five Years

MISSION

- To preserve and provide for the scenic quality of the area and to establish and maintain park and open space areas
- To protect the natural habitat in order to preserve biological diversity of the area
- To do all things necessary and desirable to protect the health and well being of members and the native flora and fauna

VISION

- To be an advocate and community resource for the Tucson Mountains region and its residents

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Goal 1: Stewardship of Resources — Ivy Schwartz, Co-Chair

- Encourage sensitive area planning
- Promote sustainable living in the Tucson Mountains & foothills
- Proactively help define a permanent and sustainable water resources policy for the Tucson region
- Support Pima County's Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan
- Promote the use of the Santa Cruz River corri-

dor for flora and fauna preservation and a wildlife corridor

- Preserve neighborhood integrity and a rural lifestyle, and promote the use of conservation easements by residents
- Represent homeowners' concerns in re-zonings and other land use issues
- Promote expansion of the Tucson Mountain Park, Saguaro National Park, and Sweetwater Preserve
- Promote the preservation of additional open space areas where needed to consolidate and connect existing preserved areas and to ensure adequate wildlife corridors and habitat
- Promote retention of zoning favorable to the critical corridor between the Tucson and Tortolita Mountains, and in all areas adjacent to or connecting preserved habitat and riparian zones
- Support regulations and habitat preservation for threatened and endangered species
- Participate in efforts for preservation management of the State Trust Land

Goal 2: Create a Sense of Community for Westside Residents — Judith Meyer, Chair

- Create a sense of community by stressing the shared goals among all who reside in and love our Tucson Mountains
- Build partnerships with

organizations having similar goals and values

- Sponsor an annual general meeting and events to bring our community together
- Sponsor neighborhood clean-ups and ecological restoration projects

Goal 3: Educate the Public About Issues Important to Our Mission—Newsletter Portion — Alan Tonelson, Newsletter Editor

- Inform our membership through the Newsletter
- Encourage participation in public meetings, committees, and debates on issues related to our mission

Goal 4: Membership—Grow and Retain — David Slutes, Chair

- Expand membership to 1,000 residents and homeowners' associations on the Westside
- Encourage members to invite new neighbors to join TMA
- Seek membership of homeowners associations as institutional members
- Survey membership periodically to determine interests and receive feedback
- Invite candidate members to attend Board meetings
- Distribute brochures to Real Estate agents and new neighbors
- Obtain mailing lists to publish our newsletter and other materials more broadly

Goal 5: Recognition and Performance — Rosa Terlep, Chair

- Recognize noteworthy community leader(s) on an annual basis
- Ensure recognition of past President and Board members of TMA
- Recognize sponsors, businesses, and members' contributions

Goal 6: Public Relations and Community Presence — Victoria Falcone, Chair

- Develop TMA directory of Westside businesses, phone numbers, emails, etc.
- Inform membership of activities and projects, and what is occurring in the community
- Provide for news coverage in the Star, Green Times, TV stations, and other outlets
- Develop links on website for city council, board of supervisors, and other important resources

Goal 7: Meet Fiscal Needs of the Organization —

Kathryn Leavey and Ed Verburg, Co-Chairs, Ron Carswell (Sponsors)

- Actively seek annual sponsors and expand base each year
- Establish a linkage to a 501(c)3 to encourage donations
- Contribute to land preservation and other natural resource requirements

Adopted by the TMA Board :1/12/2010

**City of Tucson
City Hall
255 West Alameda Street
Tucson, Arizona 85701**

Mayor Bob Walkup — (520) 791-4201

Ward 1 Council Member Regina Romero — 791-4040

Ward 2 Vice Mayor Rodney Glassman — 791-4687

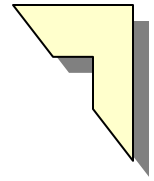
Ward 3 Council Member Karin Uhlich — 791-4711

Ward 4 Council Member Shirley Scott — 791-3199

Ward 5 Council Member Richard Fimbres — 791-4231

Ward 6 Council Member Steve Kozachik — 791-4601

PLEASE KEEP THESE EMAIL ADDRESSES AND PHONE NUMBERS FOR FUTURE REFERENCE.



Cottonwood Tower a “No-No”

AT&T Sues Pima County for Right to Mar Our Mountains

In our last newsletter, we reported that TMA would advocate against AT&T/Cingular’s application to build cellular transmission towers in the Tucson Mountains purportedly disguised as very large fake palm trees.

We were attempting to confine these structures to Silverbell Road and the area to the east, in accord with our mission to preserve the scenic quality of our mountains and their foothills. We also asked that the cell phone companies consider co-locating equipment of more than one company on each tower, as has been done in other cities, so that we can reduce the number of such towers.

The Pima County Board of Supervisors, like the Plan-

ning & Zoning Commission before it, voted unanimously to deny the applications to build these towers at Cottonwood de Tucson’s substance abuse facility on Sweetwater Drive and on Gates Pass Road near the former Evangelos Restaurant. Both of these are designated scenic routes. The basis for denial was based both on aesthetics and a lack of demonstrated need for the towers.

AT&T has now sued Pima County, claiming a right to build these towers despite community opposition. This is likely to be a lengthy proceeding, and TMA will continue to follow the issue and alert our members if it appears that community involvement would be helpful.

TMA would like to thank all members and neighbors who appeared and spoke at the various hearings.

Keep our Mountains and Foothills Beautiful!

Our Input Does Matter!

Share this Newsletter With Your Neighbors!

*TMA is striving to preserve the beauty of
our mountains and foothills.
We cannot do this without your help.
Our strength is based on our membership.
You can help by encouraging others to
join us in this endeavor.*



Neighbors Report Halili HDZ Violations

We were fortunate to have neighbors off West El Camino del Cerro inform us of hillside development (HDZ) code violations at a site adjacent to their homes. The property had been severely over-graded, and a large scar created on one of our beautiful hillsides.

After extensive work with the County staff, applicant, and neighbors, we developed proposals to mitigate the violations. TMA became a member of the Design Review Committee. We proposed a number of conditions for the development to proceed. Examples of changes include:

- reduction in the height of the structure
- landscape mitigation
- terracing of a major 1:1 slope
- relocation of a pool and related structures
- removal of fill over a wash
- monitoring provision to ensure future compliance

We appreciate these westside neighbors stepping forward on this issue.



Support Group Offers Help to Caregivers

If you have become a caregiver for a family member who is disabled or ill, you know that despite abundant love and willingness, it can be a painful and difficult life change.

One of our members recently told us about a program which has meant a great deal to her, and which is open to all Pima County residents, free of charge, staffed by Pima Health System's friendly, experienced professional staff. They hold support groups which meet once a week for eight weeks, for two hours each week.

Meetings are confidential and include topics such as setting limits and creating realistic expectations, living with loss, coping with difficult emotions, effective communication, stress management and relaxation techniques, and community resources. Meetings help caregivers to connect with others who understand their issues and concerns, and know they are not alone. Those who complete this program can attend ongoing monthly meetings.

There are currently no groups meeting in the Tucson Mountains, but if there is enough interest, both the initial program and an ongoing support group could be set up. Other short courses on specific topics

and some counseling are also available. If you, or someone you know, could use these excellent programs, call Mara Levin 243-8378 for more information.



National Guard F-35 Brings Noise Issues

Tucson International Airport is being considered as a location for the new aircraft for the National Guard.

The F-35 is much noisier than the F-16, but having the jet will be good economically for our metropolitan area. As the decision is made on the actual location in Tucson versus other communities, we have an opportunity to comment on the environmental considerations. Upcoming forums for different jurisdictions are scheduled for March 1-5.

Mitigating the noise factor might include flying at somewhat higher levels during landing, not using after burners below a certain elevation, timing of flights (day versus night), etc. TMA's Board is considering how best to approach participation in the forum that will be located in Tucson.

Letters to the Editor Sought

We would like to hear from you. Space available, we will initiate a "letters to the editor" column in the next issue. Send comments to:

Alan Tonelson, Editor
3950 W. Prosperity Mine Pl.
Tucson, AZ 85745

Climate Change in the Southwest



*Talk by Dr. Jonathan Overpeck
Hosted at Milagro Cohousing
March 2010*

How will climate change affect us who live in the American Southwest, specifically Tucson? That is the question to be answered by Dr. Jonathan Overpeck. "Peck" is a climate scientist and Co-Director of the UA Institute for the Environment. He will be speaking at the Milagro Cohousing Common house in March. The public is invited. The date and time will be announced closer to the time.

For more information contact Donna Branch Gilby. Phone: 520-743-9153 or visit the milagro website: www.milagrocohousing.org

*Sponsorship Levels: \$50, \$100, \$250, \$500, and \$750+

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Email Address: _____

Telephone: _____

(Home) _____ (Cell) _____

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Name: _____

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